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AMERICAN INDIANS AND WHITE PEOPLE*

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As the English have pointed out, when people come into troublesome contact with each other, popular and scholarly attention is usually focused on only one of them. Thus the relationship between Indians and the persons of European extraction, known as whites, is commonly termed the "Indian problem". While these authors agree that such emphasis is natural, they call attention to the fact that the unit of racial or ethnic relations is no single people, but the situation - the frontier of contact of the two or more peoples inhabiting a community or region.

This paper is an attempt to describe one of the more intimate aspects of just such a frontier situation, namely what happens when American Indians and white people meet in the course of their day-to-day activities and try to communicate with each other. It does not attempt to define the major areas of difference between Indian and white American culture or personality, nor does it discuss the major reasons for conflict and hostility between the two, but rather tries to explain how and why they find talking to each other difficult. It is, therefore, directed as much to the Indians as to the white reader.

We are aware that there are significant differences in behavior and personality among the various kinds of Indians and, likewise, among the various kinds of white men, and that interesting exceptions may possibly be found to all of our generalizations. Nevertheless, our observations have convinced us that most white men who live in the United States share ideas and practices about proper behavior that are very different from those shared by most Indians.

Social discourse is one of the areas where Indians and whites most easily misunderstand each other. Placed in an informal social gathering, such as a small party where he knows only the host, the Indian will usually sit or stand quietly, saying nothing and seeming to do nothing. He may do this so naturally that he disappears into the background, merging with the wall fixtures. If addressed directly, he will not look at the speaker; there may be considerable delay before a reply, and this may be pitched so softly as to be below the hearing threshold of the white interlocutor; he may even look deliberately away and give no response at all.

In this same situation, the white man will often become undiscourageably loquacious. A silent neighbor will be peppered with small shop talk in the hope that one of his rounds will trigger an exchange and a conversational engagement. If the neighbor happens to be an Indian, his protracted silence will spur the white to ever more extreme exertions; and the more frantic the one becomes the less the response he is likely to elicit from the other.

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Ironically, both parties are trying to establish communication and good feeling. But, like Aesop's would-be friends, the crane and the fox, each employs devices that puzzle, alienate, and sometimes anger the other.

From childhood, white people and the Indians are brought up to react to strange and dangerous situations in quite different ways. The white man who finds himself in an unstructured, anxiety-provoking situation is trained to react with a great deal of activity. He will begin action after action until he either structures the situation, or escapes from it, or simply collapses. But the Indian, put in the same place, is brought up to remain motionless and watch. Outwardly he appears to freeze. Inwardly, he is using all of his senses to discover what is expected of him - what activities are proper, seemly, and safe. One might put it this way; in an unfamiliar situation a white man is taught to react by aggressive experimentation - he keeps moving until he finds a satisfactory pattern. His motto is "Try and try again". But the Indian puts his faith in observation. He waits and watches until the other actors show him the correct pattern.

Once he has picked up the cues and feels relatively certain that he can accomplish what is expected, the Indian may respond with a sudden energy and enthusiasm that can bewilder his white partners. For example, at a party given for a group of Indian college students by the white members of a faculty, the Indian students sat and said virtually nothing. The faculty members did their best to draw out their expressionless and noncommittal guests. Even the stock questions of school and educational plans brought little response. At length in desperation, the faculty members talked to each other.

After refreshments were served the party broke into small clusters of guests, and in each cluster an Indian student did most of the talking. He delivered a modest but well organized address describing his educational plans. From questions put to him, each had concluded that his role at the party was to paint his academic future. When opportunity offered, he gave the faculty members exactly what he thought they wanted.

The active experimenting disposition of many white men and the motionless alertness of Indians may be related to different cultural attitudes toward what white people call success or failure. Indian friends tell us that they do not praise or reward their children for doing what is proper or right; they are expected to behave well, for this is "natural" or "normal". Thus a "good" Indian child reflects no special credit on himself or on his parents. He is simply behaving as a child of his people should behave. On the other hand, the "bad" or ill-intentioned child is censured and the child who makes mistakes is shamed, which, in an Indian community, is a grave punishment. As one sophisticated Indian remarked: "As a result of the way they are raised, very few Indians will try to do something at which they're not good (adept). It takes a lot of courage."

As an example, he cited a phenomenon, common in his tribe, of men gathering to help a relative build a house.

You watch a housebuilding among my people. You see some men struggling with the work of erecting the structure, and, over there, sitting on the grass, may be a man, just watching, never lending a hand, even with the heaviest work. They get the structure up, and all of a sudden there's that man on the roof, working away, laying shingle - because what he knows how to do is lay shingle. All these men that were there are kin come to help with the housebuilding, but each person only offers his assistance in what he knows he can do.

He also reminded us of how an Indian girl who had been making tortillas at a picnic immediately stopped when two highly skilled girls began to help her. She excused herself and disappeared. But a white girl who knew nothing of Indian cookery pitched in and was quite unembarrassed by her lack of skill.

Many other examples of the Indians' reluctance to exhibit clumsiness or ineptitude before others appear in the literature. For example, Nash relates how a Maya girl learns to operate weaving or spinning machines in a factory by silently observing the operator. Only when she feels competent will the observer take over and run the machine.

She will not try her hand until she feels competent, for to fumble and make mistakes is a cause for "vergüenza" - public shame. She does not ask questions because that would annoy the person teaching her, and they might also think she is stupid.

Again, Macgregor mentions that an Indian school track team was reluctant to run because they knew they could not win, and a basketball team did not want their parents and neighbors to come to an interschool game for fear they would laugh at their mistakes and failure to win.

Perhaps it will be reassuring to the Indian to realize that the reckless torrents of words poured out by white people are usually intended as friendly or, at least, social gestures. The more ill at ease a white man becomes, the more he is likely to talk. He is not nearly so afraid of making mistakes as is the Indian and it is almost impossible (by Indian standards) to embarrass or "shame" him. By the same token, he will rarely hold an Indian's mistakes against him. Conversely, the white person who has had little experience in talking with Indians should find it heartening to know that the silence and downcast eyes with which his first conversational gambits may be received spring from shyness and, often, from courtesy. He is not being snubbed or ignored; on the contrary, his words and actions are being observed with minute care. Once the Indian has discovered what his response ought to be, he will make it. This may take a little time, but the person who is not willing to spend a little time ought not to try to talk to Indians.

The over-sensitive white man may take comfort in the fact that the Indian who wishes to insult him will generally make his intentions quite clear. The Indian who looks away when you address him is being considerate - to stare

into your face might embarrass you. But the Indian who treats you as if you were invisible is putting you beneath the notice of a highly observant man.

In every human relationship there is some element of influence, interference, or downright compulsion. The white man has been and is torn between two ideals; on the one hand, he believes in freedom, in minding his own business, and in the right of the people to make up their minds for themselves; but, on the other hand, he believes that he should be his brother's keeper and not abstain from advice, or even action, when his brother is speeding down the road toward perdition, death, or social isolation due to halitosis. The Indian society is unequivocal; interference of any form is forbidden, regardless of the folly, irresponsibility, or ignorance of your brother.

Consequently, when the white man is motivated as his brother's keeper, which is most of the time when he is dealing with Indians, he rarely says or does anything that does not sound rude or even hostile to the latter. The white, imbued with a sense of righteousness in "helping the downtrodden and backward", does not realize the nature of his conduct, and the Indian cannot tell him, for that, in itself, would be "interference" with the white's freedom to act as he sees fit.

In a general sense, coercion has been and is a fundamental element in the social orders of the Western world. Social theorists have characterized the state as that national institution that effectively claims the legitimate monopoly of violence. Lesser institutions utilize a variety of corporeal and spiritual sanctions to effect cooperative action, and the economy prides itself on utilizing the lash of need and the lure of wealth. These characteristics of Western social structure have stimulated the more idealistic to the proposal of new communities in which the elimination of brute compulsion would ensure the release of the creative energies of man; but so deeply entrenched is this system of hierarchial and enforced organization that these are ridiculed as "Utopian". In contrast, many of the Indian societies were organized on principles that relied to a great extent on voluntary cooperation and lacked the military or other coercive instrumentalities of the European.

Recent years have seen a marked shift in the general American social patterns. The use of physical violence has been curtailed and the emphasis has shifted toward verbal manipulation; this has been evident in such diverse areas as the armed services, business corporations, educational institutions, and the family. Educational movies shown to children at school impress them with the fact that the admirable leader is the boy or girl who can "get other children to do what he (the leader) wants them to do by convincing them that they really want to do what he (the leader) wants them to do." Children are taught by parents and playmates that their success in most areas of life will depend on their skill as an influence on or manipulator of others. Thus white children begin to practice influencing other people very early in life and they conscientiously try to improve their skills, if we may judge by the letters sent to columnists asking for advice on how to get parents, dates, spouses, or children to do things that (one assumes) these parents, dates, spouses, or children are not particularly eager to do.

This ability is justly valued by the white people since a great deal of modern industrial and organizational work could not be carried on without it. For example, an office manager or foreman finds himself in charge of a group of people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds, different ages and temperaments, and widely varying moral and ethical views. If he is going to get the job done he must find some way of getting all of these folk to work together and does this by being an extraordinarily flexible, agreeable, and persuasive influencer.

Perhaps because these "human relation skills" are a social replacement for physical force, white people tend to be insensitive to the simple fact that they are still interpersonally coercive. The "non-directive" teacher still wants the children to work as a group and on the project for which she has the materials and the skills. Similarly, the would-be hostess who will not listen to an excuse and interprets a refusal as a personal affront may not realize that she is forcing her guests to do what they do not wish to do. Even when white people do not wish to accomplish some end, their conversational patterns are structured along coercive lines. Thus, at a casual party, the man who remarks that he plans to buy a pear tree may anticipate that someone will immediately suggest that he buy a peach tree instead. If he remarks that he is shopping for a new car, someone will be happy to tell him exactly what kind of a car he ought to buy. The same thing happens if he ventures an opinion about music or politics. Someone is bound to inform him (in a friendly way, of course) that he ought to be listening to, reading, or attending something for which he has no particular inclination. Perhaps these patterns of conversation entertain white people because they play with the forms that are so serious in their society. The man who can out-advise the other is "one up", and the loser is expected to take his defeat with good grace.

The Indian defines all of the above behavior, from the gentlest manipulation to the most egregious meddling, as outside the area of proper action. From earliest childhood he is trained to regard absolute non-interference in interpersonal relations as decent or normal and to react to even the mildest coercion in these areas with bewilderment, disgust, and fear.

Though most sensitive white persons who have lived with Indians are aware of this phenomenon, we have found none that have successfully described it in general terms.⁵ Under these circumstances it might be wise to follow the Indian pattern of communication and describe the Indian "ethic of non-interference" by examples.

One of the more spectacular examples is the behavior of the Indian passengers in an automobile. If the car is the property of the driver, no passenger ever considers giving him suggestions or directions. Even though a rock slide or a wandering steer may have blocked the right of way, no one says a word. To do so would be "interference". In consequence, accidents can occur which might have been prevented, had any one of several passengers chosen to direct the attention of the driver to the hazard or obstacle. As the car rolls merrily into the ditch all that may be heard is a quiet exhalation of breath.

An example of this "ethic" was noted over thirty years ago among the Pit River Indians of California and recorded by Jaime de Angulo:

I have heard Indians say: "That's not right what he's doing, that fellow. . ." "What d'you mean it's not right?" "Well. . . you ain't supposed to do things that way . . . it never was done that way . . . there'll be trouble." "Then why don't you stop him?" "Stop him? How can I stop him? It's his way."⁶

A more personal example was given by an Indian friend. The friend was living with his wife's family and customarily drove to work every morning. One morning at breakfast he noticed that his sister-in-law, Mary, had dressed up as if she were going to town. Curious, he asked his wife; "Is Mary going any place?" "Oh, yes," said his wife, "She's going to Phoenix."

"Does she have a lift to the bus station?" asked our friend. "no," said his wife.

Our friend then asked his sister-in-law if she would like him to give her a lift on his way to work and she accepted. After driving for some time, our friend suddenly became aware of the fact that he had automatically driven directly to work, passing right by the bus station without stopping. His sister-in-law was calmly looking out of the window. She had made no comment when he overshot the bus station and she made none now. Without a word, he turned the car around and took her to the bus station.

Characteristic Indian "non-interference" was shown by Mary, not only when she did not comment of the fact that her brother-in-law was passing the bus station, but also in her behavior before they set out. To have asked her brother-in-law to take her to the bus station would have constituted an indelicate attempt to influence him. Perhaps he would not wish to take her with him. By asking him she might "force" him to refuse and thus cause him embarrassment and discomfort. Again, if he took her unwillingly he would feel resentment toward her. By dressing up she could communicate her desires in a way that could accept or reject without arousing any "bad feelings". That is, he could invite her to go along or he could "be occupied" and go without her.

Great delicacy and sensitivity of feeling are essential to even a moderate standard of Indian good manners. If one is extending invitations to a get-together one does not urge people to come; such urging would be "interfering". For, if they wish to come, they will come. Again, under ordinary circumstances, one does not address another human being unless he has given some indication that he is willing to give you his attention. Thus, if one wishes to begin a conversation, even with a spouse, or relative, one first puts oneself in his line of vision. If he does not acknowledge your presence this is a sign that he is occupied and you wait or go away. To address him while he is talking to someone else or meditating would be gross interference. If one is talking with a friend and he unwittingly brings up a delicate or painful subject,

one lets him know this by pretending not to hear, by looking away, or by changing the subject. Most Indians follow these rules of etiquette unconsciously. Even so-called assimilated Indians follow them in part, and are not aware that they do so.

A profound respect for the interests, occupations, and responsibilities of other human beings begins to show itself even in the very young Indian child. We have, for example, conversed with Indian parents for hours, while half a dozen children played around us, and, not once, did any of the children address a word to us. A little girl of three or four might leave the playgroup for a while and lean against an adult relative or sit in a lap. But only in a grave emergency did she try to attract the attention of an adult and even then she tried not to interrupt what they were doing. Thus, if a bold child wanted to know if it might have a piece of the watermelon that an adult was cutting, it might creep up and whisper into its mother's ear.

We have asked a number of Indians how it is that even very young children do not bother older people. We are usually told something like this: "When I think about it, I see you're right. We never did bother grown-up people when I was a kid. It's funny because I can't remember that anybody said anything to us about it. We just didn't do it."

Such statements suggest that the Indian child is taught very early not to interfere with or bother older people who are otherwise occupied and that both instruction and learning may proceed on a subconscious level. Indeed, we have noticed that even little toddlers do not make the loud and vigorous attempts to monopolize their parent's attention which are characteristic of so many white infants.

Since the human infant must be taught to demand the attention of its parents and since Indian parents simply do not respond to "interfering" demand, it is possible that many Indian infants never learn some of the coercive and aggressive oral and verbal techniques available to children in other cultures. We do not suggest that Indian children lack aggression, but rather that their culture gives them virtually no opportunity to express it by interfering with the activities of others. On the other hand, they are taught consideration through the example of their elders, for Indian adults consistently treat children with the same respect they expect for themselves. To interrupt a child at play, or force it to do something against its will but "for its own good", are contrary to all precepts of Indian child rearing.⁸ Indeed, Erikson tells of an Indian man reared by whites who felt that his wife ought to forbid his children to use profanity. His wife, reared as an Indian, regarded her husband's interfering attitude as evidence that he was sick in mind.

Indians rarely discipline their children in a fashion noticeable to white persons. In the few cases where Rosalie Wax has seen an Indian child punished, parental disapproval was directed against "interference". In one case an Indian boy of about six who had played a great deal with white children repeatedly interrupted a conversation between Indian elders. At first he was

ignored or gently set aside. When, after five or six rejections he was still persisting, his father addressed him directly: "Son," he said, "You're making it hard for all of us." This boy's father says regretfully that he thinks his son will grow up to be a white man. "When my wife or I show disapproval, it no longer makes any impression on him. He behaves just like the white boys he plays with."

In another case R. Wax was engaged in a conversation with an Indian man. His wife, a woman of notorious impatience, wished to go home. Not venturing to intrude herself, she sent her five year old daughter to tell Papa to come home. Papa, though very fond of his little girl, behaved as if he neither saw nor heard her. I noticed that the child was very distressed and frightened, but I did not realize at this time how severely her father was rebuking her.

By this time some non-Indian readers may have concluded that the upbringing of Indian children must be harsh indeed and that the little tykes creep through their days behind a wall of silence created by adults. Nothing, of course, could be farther from the truth. Indian parents are by no means "busy" all the time, and when they are unoccupied they like nothing better than to coddle, play with, and talk to little children.¹⁰ Moreover, when an Indian gives anyone, child or adult, his attention, he gives all of it. Thus, when he is interacting with an adult, the child is not only treated with the warmth and indulgence noted by so many observers, but he is given an attention that is absolute. As we have already noted, this intense concentration on the emotional and intellectual overtones of a personal relationship also characterizes adult interaction. Thus, there really is no such thing as a casual or dilatory conversation between Indians. If they are not "en rapport" they are worlds apart; if they are giving their attention, they use every sense to the utmost.

As we have noted, the first impulse of an Indian who encounters an interloper (with whom he is on terms of friendship) is to withdraw his attention. If the ill-mannered person does not take the hint, the Indian will quietly go away. If it is impossible for him to leave, he does his best to make himself inconspicuous. By disappearing he avoids provoking the disturbed individual to further outbursts and also avoids embarrassing him by being a witness to his improper behavior. Simultaneously, he rebukes him in a socially sanctioned manner. In the past an entire community might withdraw from an incorrigible meddler and leave him quite alone.

Perhaps because these social sanctions are usually effective in an Indian community, Indians have not yet developed devices for dealing with an interloper who claims to be peaceable but aggressively refuses to permit them to withdraw. They can only marvel at his bizarre behavior and wish that he would go away. Sometimes, when prodded past endurance, Indian women will lose their self-control and try to drive out intruders with harsh words and even physical force.

Since the white man from infancy has been encouraged to defend himself and "face up" to unpleasant things, he almost invariably interprets the Indian's withdrawal from his verbal "attacks", not as an unostentatious rebuke, but as evidence of timidity, irresponsibility, or even as a tendency to "flee from reality".¹¹ This Indian trait more than any other seems to baffle the white man, for though he has been exposed to Christian doctrine for many, many centuries, he still cannot begin to understand the man who will not fight back.

We regret that some social scientists are among the least perceptive persons in this particular matter. (Perhaps their training makes them over prone to equate a disappearing informant with personal failure.) For example, we have seen a social scientist of some repute attempt to initiate a discussion with Indians by suggesting that they no longer possessed any culture of their own but were unrealistically clinging to an impoverished "reservation" culture. What they ought to do, he went on to say, was to leave the reservations and become assimilated. When this remark was received in expressionless silence the scientist suggested that this "lack of response" supported his point, for no one present had been able to defend the existence of their culture. The faces of the Indians became even more impassive, but the scientist did not notice that the feet and legs of some of the young men from the Plains tribe had begun to tremble as with the ague. A white person in the audience could no longer control his impulse to interfere, and in the ensuing debate, much of the Indians' tension was dissipated.

On another occasion a psychiatrist whose initial overtures had been observed in silence by his Indian audience began to prod them with remarks intended to arouse their anger. The Indian men, as usual, made themselves inconspicuous. A few stole out of the meeting. But some of the women lost their tempers and the session ended in a loud and rather vulgar brawl.

After these incidents we talked with both the white and the Indian participants. Both of the social scientists assured us that they had merely been trying to elicit a response from the Indians and the second one seemed naively pleased with the "discovery" that "they'll only react if you get them mad". The Indians seemed to feel that it was best to ignore the whole thing. As one older man remarked: "You do not take the words of an insane person seriously or get angry at him."

The reader, by now, may be able to appreciate the blunt truth of a statement made by a middle-aged Apache who was attending a college class on the behavior of ethnic groups. Hoping to stimulate a discussion of accommodation and assimilation, the instructor asked: "What develops when two different peoples meet?" Laconically, the Apache replied: "Bad feelings."

One cannot examine a situation as distressing as the Indian and white frontier of sociable contact without wondering what might be done to make it less painful for both parties. To tell most white people that they can get along with Indians fairly well if they do not interfere is almost like telling them to

give up breathing. It is, perhaps, equally difficult for an Indian to appreciate that the "mean" and "crazy" deeds of the white men do not necessarily have the same significance as the mean or crazy deeds of an Indian.

We have noted that there is less tension and distress in those situations in which the atmosphere of power and authority in which the Indian and the white man usually meet is mitigated or absent. Thus, the white man often finds it easier to get along with the Indian when he is gambling, trading, partying, or simply "chewing the rag". This is not because there is anything particularly friendly or brotherly in these activities but because they represent some of the few remaining social situations in which the white man cannot always immediately assume an authoritative or interfering role. In such situations the Indian learns to make allowances for or take advantage of the white man's restlessness, his incomprehensible "pride" and his reckless "courage". The white man, for his part, learns to accommodate himself to the slow pace, sudden temperamental outbursts, and unexpected disappearance of the Indian.

We have noted that most white people who have a tolerably good relationship with Indians consciously or unconsciously subscribe to the notion that white men ought to keep their noses out of Indian matters. However else they may behave seems to make little difference. Thus, one of the finest field workers known to us is an anthropologist of so gentle and unaggressive a nature that one sometimes wonders how he can maintain himself in the modern world. When he is in the field, the Indians spend a good deal of their time seeing that he comes to no harm. Another white man has no tact at all and breaks some rule of Indian decorum in almost every sentence he utters. Both men, however, subscribe to non-interference in Indian matters and both are admired and liked by Indians.

On the matter of interaction between groups composed both of Indians and whites, we have noted that "good feelings" are most likely to arise when the situation is clearly defined as one of contact. By this we mean that the participants from both groups come to realize that they are interacting in an entirely new situation, alien to both, and that their comfort, enjoyment, and accomplishment will depend on their ingenuity in inventing new forms and rules applicable to this new situation.

It is remarkable how rapidly and spontaneously new social forms comfortable to both parties may be defined, provided that both parties strongly desire to act or play together. We were, for example, unable to accomplish much in the Workshop on American Indian Affairs until we redefined the teaching-learning situation and we were obliged to do that before we could participate in picnics and dances at which both white people and Indians could have a good time. It is possible that such "accommodating" contact situations are established more frequently than social scientists realize. Their recognition and study might help to throw light on problems of great importance. We are aware that we have presented a picture and analysis of Indian child-rearing practices not entirely

compatible with those of certain other observers. However, we think that the significant differences are quantitative rather than qualitative and rest on the fact that we emphasize what other scholars have overlooked.

We agree with Dorothy Lee that it is misleading to call Indian child-rearing practices "permissive" or "indulgent".¹² It might be more accurate to say that it usually does not occur to Indian parents to permit or forbid their children to do anything, much less permit or forbid them to move their bowels. White parents, on the other hand, see themselves as "permitters" and "forbidders". Nevertheless, from the Indian point of view, they leave vast and very important areas of their children's behavior completely unstructured. Thus one might suggest that in both cultures parents and elders subject infants and children to an intensive and careful training, but that they use very different methods and emphasize very different skills.

Again, we believe that Erikson has overlooked something very important when he depicts Sioux upbringing as one in which the child is introduced to social discipline "in the form of a tradition of unrelenting public opinion" only after an infancy in which he "is allowed to be an individualist" and is subject to no frustration of impulse.¹³

According to our observations, Sioux and other Indians begin to train their children to be highly sensitive social beings long before they can talk and, perhaps, even before the age when white infants are subject to oral and anal frustrations. Here we again agree with Lee in the view that Indian training in social sensitivity and in respect for others begins at birth, and, apparently, is reinforced with every interpersonal experience.

Perhaps, on occasion, too intense a focus on a formidable theoretical framework may serve to blur important aspects of the phenomena one intends to observe. This may be especially so with an alien culture. Thus, a people who do not practice the classic Freudian instinctual disciplines may be characterized as lacking in discipline, whereas the fact that they may practice a kind of subliminal "sleeptraining" on their children (as do the Papago) may be overlooked. On the other hand, we may anticipate that, in time, cross-cultural studies will help to refine and develop our existing body of theory.

REFERENCE NOTES

- ¹Everett Cherrington Hughes and Helen MacGill Hughes, Where Peoples Meet, (Glencoe, Illinois, 1952), pp. 18-19.
- ²We have not heard an Indian use the old-fashioned term "decent" in this context though we note that Kluckhohn used it to describe the Indian point of view (cited in Dorothy B. Lee, Freedom and Culture, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1959, p. 130). We find it apt since in the white society of a generation ago, decent behavior was expected of children and brought no reward while indecent behavior was severely punished.

The Indian conception that decent or proper behavior deserves no particular notice or praise is, nevertheless, rarely appreciated by white people. We, for example, have heard teachers and other professionals complain that their Indian students and clients never thanked them for their work and devotion. And Margaret Mead remarks that to Indians "All government employees, no matter how honest, how tireless, how enthusiastic, would be voted as merely 'doing their duty' and given neither laurels or thanks". This Indian behavior does not reflect hostility or ingratitude. It merely reflects the Indian view that medals or laurel wreaths are not given to people for doing what they ought to do (Margaret Mead, The Changing Culture of an Indian Tribe, New York, 1932; cited by Erik H. Erikson in "Observations on Sioux Education", Journal of Psychology, VII, 1939, 123).
- ³Manning Nash, Machine Age Maya, Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, No. 87 (1958), pp. 26-27, 46.
- ⁴Gordon Macgregor, Warriors Without Weapons, (Chicago, 1946), p. 137.

Lowie's examples of the attitude of Indian parents toward their children's property is, we think, an example of non-interference (Primitive Society, New York, 1925, pp. 233-34). See, also, Paul Radin, The Trickster (New York, 1956), p. 9 and p. 55, n. 9. On p. 153 Radin suggests that part of the Trickster Cycle criticizes the chief, since "one of his functions was to interfere in all kinds of situations". MacGregor's statement that the Indian respects the individual's accountability to himself for his own action is helpful and Lee's remarks on individual autonomy and social structure are extremely acute. Indeed, only Lee seems to see that Indian "respect for the individual" is an integral part of Indian "respect for social structure" (Macgregor, op. cit., p. 65, n. 7; Dorothy Lee, op. cit., Chap. I). Erikson (op. cit.) has made an uncommon attempt to describe how white people and Indians see each other and often notices the Indian reaction to "interference" without quite understanding what is going on.
- ⁶"Indians in Overalls", Hudson Review, III (1956), 369.
- ⁷Some fine descriptions of the extremely delicate interaction demanded in Eskimo communities may be found in the works of Peter Freuchen.

⁸White people frequently interpret this consideration as indifference or gross indulgence. As Macgregor remarks:

(Indian) Parents do not force their children to conform because 'mother knows best' or to avoid damaging the parents' reputation or self-esteem. A child who runs away from school is usually not asked why he came home. Likewise, a grown son who leaves the reservation and is not heard from in years is rarely questioned on his return about what he has been doing. (Op. cit., p. 67, n. 7.)

⁹Erikson, Op. cit. p. 130

¹⁰The men of some tribes do not play with little children but they usually seem to enjoy talking to them.

¹¹Even Erikson, who is far more aware of the withdrawing disposition of the Indian than are most other white men, does not see that it is, to the Indian, a matter of self-evident good manners. See for example, his complex discussion in op. cit., pp. 124-25.

¹²Op. cit., p. 6.

¹³Op. cit., pp. 152-53.