

Jagdish Mehra: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to tonight's lecture which is part of the second annual series, humanities series of SMTI. [Southeastern Massachusetts Technological Institute, now University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth] It is a very special event that we celebrate tonight. Our lecturer is a distinguished anthropologist and a most remarkable woman, Margaret Mead. She is curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and professor of anthropology at Columbia University. Margaret Mead was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was graduated from Barnard College and received her Ph.D. degree from Columbia University. Dr. Margaret Mead started her professional career as a National Research Council Fellow in biological sciences, with the study of the adolescent girl in Samoa. Since then she has been a most persistent student of the human phenomenon and the human condition. Dr. Mead has spent many years living with various South Sea peoples in the course of which she has had to learn to use seven primitive languages. During the last couple of years she has again worked on a project on cultural systematics in the Admiralty Islands and New Guinea, from where she has just returned after a tour of several months. So it was that while she pursued the ways of the wonderful people of New Guinea, we pursued her with our invitation to visit SMTI and kept watch on her calendar. We are indeed happy that she is here tonight. Dr. Mead has lectured widely in the United States and abroad. She holds fourteen honorary doctorates; she has been the recipient of many honors and awards including the citation as the Outstanding Woman of the 20th century. Dr. Margaret Mead has written many books, monographs, and scientific papers dealing with the various problems in the field of ethnology, social forces and cultural change. Whether she is writing on the coming of age in Samoa or on.. or on growing up in New Guinea, whether she discusses the changing culture of Indian tribe or the Soviet attitudes to authority, be people and places, or continuities in cultural evolution, Dr. Mead affirms a message of cheer and hope. From her work there emerges a reconstruction of the cultural past of diverse peoples, and her vision provides a challenging picture of white might... of what might be attained by modern man who have so many possibilities for controlling the direction in which their culture will move. Recently, she has persuasively argued the case for a shared worldwide culture in the near future. A culture free from ideological certainty and scientific dogmatism. Dr. Mead is going to entertain questions at the end of her lecture. So may I request to you to stay on for the discussion. Ladies and gentlemen, to speak on alienation in modern society, it is my privilege to present to you tonight the Madame Curie of anthropology, Margaret Mead. [applause]

[Margaret Mead:] Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, uh this title was given to me. I was also told I could talk on other things if I wanted to, but as the series was on alienation I thought I probably better talk on it. Um... and I accepted it partly because it isn't a word I use. It isn't a concept with which I am very happy or familiar, and therefore I thought it might be useful to think about it. When you ask an anthropologist to think about something that's happening in modern society, this means of course that one, as an anthropologist, moves from the primitive to the civilized. The thing we learn to think with are small, primitive societies and if we've stayed there long enough, and learned enough about them, we sometimes can bring them back as models for thinking about more complicated societies. Because it is so very difficult in the world today to start by learning to think about anything as complicated as the United States or even as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or possibly even as New Bedford and North Dartmouth. [clear throat, laughter] And it's those of us who grow up amid all the complexity and amid all the specialization of the modern world are not accustomed to thinking about the whole. We

think about politics or we think about economics or we think about the arts, we worry about building a bridge or damming a river, but we have very as yet, very few skills that make it possible to think about the whole. And one of our few resources at present is to send people to study small worlds of various sorts. Some people of course can go and study the life in a small pond. This gives them a kind of a model of a small universe in which many living things are related to each other. And out of studying a small pond, which has been fashionable in New England for a long time, [laughter] one can build a kind of ecological model of interdependence from which it's possible to move, as Professor Hutchinson of Yale has done, back and forth between a small pond and the physical, chemical analysis of the universe. (Those are the two subjects he's interested in.) And we hope by the same token that if we study our small, isolated, primitive societies carefully enough we can make some contribution to thinking about the modern world. So when I was assigned this topic of alienation, at first I thought that perhaps the thing to do would be to discuss the sort of society in which alienation simply doesn't occur. That is if one took the word alienation to mean that people in their own minds or in the minds of other people no longer wholly belonged to the society in which they lived. There are small communities still left in isolated places in the world, where the idea of any person leaving is something that people still cannot quite grasp. Uh...they have no idea how you could live anywhere else, how living anywhere else would have any meaning, where would you find a wife?, if you found one what would you do with her,[laughter] um how would you rear your children, and where would you get any protection from the supernatural because their gods are so local and so specialized that they are only related to maybe four or five hundred people, this is true in many parts of New Guinea, and if you went other places you met other gods that belonged to other people and could have no possible relationship to you yourself. And in such a society the only thing that can alienate a member is if they go continuously, dangerously mad, but it has to be continuous as well as dangerous, because a very small community adjusts very quickly to people that are only dangerous part of the time. [chuckles] Um..they learn when they are likely to become violent, they learn to read the signs, they know what to do. And in a small village in Bali for instance, we had a man who, if you asked to borrow his machete, once in a while just hit you with it instead. [laughter] Now everyone knew he did this but didn't stop them from borrowing his machete. [laughter] And people only got cut once in a while [laughter] and not very badly [laughter] because um there... there was a certain amount of slight excitement in borrowing his machete [laughter] that probably [laughter] contributed to the whole. And in many small communities even in the United States where we are far more complex, you will find that quite strange people are tolerated rather gently, other people learn to read the signs of their peculiar behavior and to put up with them, so that you have to have extremely strange behavior and a person has to be very alienated from themselves, which is of course the old use of the word alienation when we used to call a psychiatrist an alienist and he dealt with people whose minds were alienated in a sense from their souls or their bodies. So in such small societies we have a model that we can oppose to the modern world where so many people are lost, so many people have no sense of belonging anywhere, um have no roots, no permanent sense of identity and are, we think of, in the modern sense as suffering from alienation. However, since I've arrived in New Bedford I've had a chance to discuss this topic a little with a few citizens and uh I've found that in listening to other people talk about the word, something that hadn't occurred to me before, and that is the extent to which we are using the word alienated, both to apply to the painter, or the artist, or the musician whose work is not understood or appreciated by the rest of his period, the people of his time.

And we are also using it for the dispossessed, the culturally deprived, those members of our own society who have been cut off either by their ethnic identity, or by their location in some remote pocket of the United States who today we speak of as the culturally disadvantaged or the culturally deprived.

And then I realized that a couple of weeks ago a young psychiatrist came to talk to me about work with what is called multi problem families. They are the families that have been on the town for three generations, I mean on the town um... finances, and have everything wrong with them and whatever you try to do, you run up against some other difficulty. And he started talking about deviants and claiming that even if you came from a multi problem family and showed great deviance that maybe deviants weren't happy. And he kept talking and talking about deviants, and I suddenly realized that to him [cough] the word deviance meant only deviate down. That he was thinking of alcoholics and drug addicts and sexual deviants and people without one of their arms or legs or eyes or... That he only thought of deviance as a disadvantage of some sort, people that deviated downward from some kind of ideal. Whereas I had always thought of the deviant as ...very often specially gifted people who you might say deviated upward. And that what we have done with deviance, the word, is to demote it so that we could no longer speak of Shakespeare as a deviant without impugning his morals [laughter] and we could no longer speak of those individuals who have been outstanding because they stood at variance with their generation as deviants. What we use the word today for the maladjusted, the deteriorated, the less than the normal. But the word alienated hasn't quite got there yet - it may.

But at the moment it is applied both to the best, in the sense of the most gifted, the most sophisticated the most sensitive, perhaps, or at least some of the most gifted and sensitive members of the community. The most articulate, those who are most concerned with their time, who are most concerned either with the condition of man or with the condition of mankind, which I think probably should be discriminated because one belongs to man and one worries about mankind. Uh...the artist, the philosopher, perhaps one shouldn't say the statesmen, but those who do some of the thinking they wish statesmen would do. [laughter] And we think of them as in many cases suffering from alienation. That the paintings they paint show that they feel cut off from many of their fellow men, that they wander the streets composing their poems and feeling that they don't belong to the age that they live in. But then we also use the word for the very poorest, least articulate, most provincial, most lost people. For the very rural people who've never have any education, who have never had any chance, who've come into the cities and don't know how to live there. And that we are in a sense, in the use of this word, doing what people have done through the ages when they have put the thing that they revered most and the thing that they either feared or pitied or were afraid of, together. As has been a customary thing in primitive religion, when in Polynesian for instance, anything that pertains to the chief who is thought of almost as a god, but anything that pertains to death which is frightening and polluting are put together under one word. And the ways that you treat them are described as taboo. And so that there is a...a tendency in human beings that sometimes is expressed to a very great extent in a religious system, sometimes not so much, to put together the most precious and in a sense the most rejected in one phrase. It's confusing when it's done in religion and when we aren't quite sure whether the emotion that we feel towards the sacred is one of horror and fear or one of deep reverence and adoration.

And it probably is becoming and may become even more confusing when it's applied to members of a complex society. Because we look at very rural people coming into a city, we look at the people who are streaming into the cities all over the world. Into Calcutta, into Mexico City, into Copenhagen, into Tehran, all over the world people who have lived in small, self-contained communities based primarily on kinship are streaming into the cities and they are streaming into a place where they will be strangers and where they do not know how to live. And we look at their plight and their plight is extreme. They are almost certain to be very poor, they have no place in the economy of the cities that they have come to, they understand almost nothing of what there is about them, and mothers who once carried their babies down a village street where everyone they met was familiar and everyone was called by a kinship term, now walk through streets where everyone they meet is a stranger. And as they walk among strangers they hold their babies in a different way. Instead of turning the baby out towards the world, they turn it in towards themselves to protect it from the strangeness within which they live and in turn impart a sense of strangeness to the child. So that the spectacle over the world of many millions of people who are moving from a place where they had deep familiarity and a deep sense of identity and an environment that they knew by heart so that when they woke up in the middle of the night they knew what time it was by the sounds that they heard about them or even by the...a slight shift in temperature and have moved into a world that is totally strange. This picture is frightening. It may arouse our pity, our compassion; it may arouse our determination to do something about it. To try to redesign our cities and change the nature of our society. But at the same time, contemplating these millions and millions of people who are streaming into cities everywhere in the whole world. And astonishingly enough this is happening in tiny little islands of New Guinea just as much as it is happening in great ancient civilizations like India.

Um...in my little archipelago in the Admiralty Islands where we had 13,000 people in 1928 and have over 20,000 people now and there are 600 people who live in the small capital and we are beginning to have problems of urban overcrowding. [clear throat] Slums, water pollution, and problems of this sort. And even in my tiny village uh..which is uh..many hours by canoe from the capital, we are also having problems of this sort. The next village moved in because we had such a good school and they wanted it too. So 200 people moved in on 400 people and then we had overcrowding. So that everywhere in the world alienation is occurring, that is people are living in a place that they are no longer closely related to because they have moved. And because essentially they have moved too fast and in a manner that was pri...on the whole rather meaningless. That in many instances they are fleeing the countryside without knowing why they are fleeing it and going to the city without any reason for going to the city beyond the very simple one that they will starve. Less like...They are less likely to starve in the city than they were in the country. That in most cities of the world today people won't quite let other people starve unless they themselves are starving. But that they are moving under the impetus of worldwide conditions that have very little relationship to individual migration or individual choice. Uh, this is the group that we talk about: people who live in cities and don't belong there, people who know no one in the city, who suffer from what the French sociologists called anomie, uh... who may exist either with a job or today increasingly in relation to welfare of some sort [cough] and go through life with a sense of lack of relationship to anything except the place that they've left that they can't go back to. And are unable to

teach their children how to live in a city, so that the next generation may also grow up, in a sense alienated, because they haven't learned how to live under the new form of life.

Now this is one group of people. Now we put beside them under the same rubric, Camus or Colin Wilson writing about the outsider. Um...artists who say that you can't expect today that people will understand art as they have in other regions. Poets who write only for six other poets. [laughter] Intellectuals, artists, and thinkers who themselves, for quite different reasons, also feel cut off from the stream of life around them. And when we put these two together, we are in a sense affirming a kind of society which no one really lives in today, but which has become a kind of retrospective utopia in which we think back to an age that none of us ever lived in and in most cases our grandparents didn't live in. To a stable, totally stable society where nobody ever came nobody ever went out, except they came in by birth and they went out by death and a few brides from the next village. Everyone was related to everyone else, everyone from birth to death lived among people all of whose peculiarities they knew and who knew all of theirs. Where you had no escape throughout your entire life from the personality that was built for you by the people around you who knew those Jones' and had known them for generations and knew just what that family was likely to be like. And who furthermore looked at you when you were a small baby and began saying you were going to be one of the stupid Jones' [laughter] or one of the bright branch of the family. Where your place was set in relation to all the other small boys or all the other small girls and would never change again as long as you lived. This is the model of non-alienation. This is the society in which everyone belongs, in which it would never occur to anybody to doubt their position. Which no one would say you don't belong here, because they have no notion that anyone could not belong there. This is the model that we think we're talking about and idealizing, when we worry about the man who doesn't feel that he is an absolute part of the group that he's working with. Who can stand aside and stop and think "what am I doing here? What does it mean that I'm.. was born here and now instead of Ancient Egypt. What does it mean that I am an American instead of a Persian or a Javanese? What does it mean that I am living on one continent instead of another? What does my relationship to my period, to the nation in which I live, to the occupation to which I've committed myself? To the friends that I've made. What does this mean?" This is a question that people in a totally non-alienated society would never ask, with no possibility of asking it. They simply belong and they may live from birth to death under very hard conditions on the edge of starvation, subject to the head hunting raids of the next village, or the black magic of the next village. They are not necessarily happy at all, but the idea of questioning is not there. Because the idea of questioning only comes with comparison. And it's when you've had a chance to look at other people that you're able to look at yourself with the sort of questioning that means a genuine awareness.

Now, Americans particularly have the habit of constructing these retrospective utopias. The little red schoolhouse where everybody learned the whole of human culture from a McGuffey reader. [laughter] And in the days when we were all whole, um, the American pioneer family that did everything for itself, and a pious father and a devoted spinning mother brought up all the children, and the family was self-sufficient and enjoyed each other every evening [laughter] and this family has been disappearing ever since. [laughter] And it only existed on very isolated farms when there weren't any other people to enjoy [laughter] in any event. But we've built it up as a picture and we progressively idealize pieces of

our past that weren't there in the form that we think they were. And today in the face of so much movement, so much strangeness so much estrangement, I think we are doing the same sort of thing. To the extent that we say for instance "isn't it dreadful that modern man is so lonely?" This is one of the things that one says very often. And in fact today in the announcement of the great ententes between the Vatican and the world council of churches, which was announced in the paper today, as the greatest ecumenical move that has yet been made because they've agreed to feed hungry nations in concert instead of doing it separately. But they said that they...they are not meeting in terms of discussing any of the great ideological issues, but only in terms of the loneliness of modern man. Now in a primitive society you are not lonely. You are never alone. No one is alone for any length of time at all as a rule. I have lived for months in a primitive society where I never had more than 5 minutes out of other people's sight and attention. I never was allowed to walk 10 feet by myself and where no one was allowed ever to be alone with the general assumption if they were alone they were up to no good. [laughter] And no person who wasn't engaged in black magic or some other illicit activity would ever want to be alone. uh...Aloneness in the sense that is possible to modern man is something that simply wasn't achievable in a society where people were so close to each other at almost a biological level that it would ever occur to them that anyone would want isolation and a time for contemplation. Now if we think, also, that the present alienation of many university students, and these are ones, supposed today to be one of the most alienated groups. It's very curious; they are...they are alienated when they go to Selma, which some people might consider as an active participation in our contemporary society. They also regarded as alien...alienated when they just grow beards and write poetry and won't go to Selma. [laughter] We are again making a strange dichotomy where we are contrasting the young people who are trying to fix something in society, who don't like a particular thing that's going on. We call them alienated today. Now, which is very curious, because within our whole English speaking tradition we have always relied on fairly large groups of people making a tremendous fuss about things that needed to be righted. It's the only real way that we know for...for change. So, people have to march or tie themselves to the pillars of the House of Commons or the White House or go on... um, or starve themselves or demonstrate or complain or quake in some fashion or other. Uh, to bring to the attention of the rest of the community something that is urgently needed. Uh, a generation ago, I think we would have talked of these young people as the least alienated, as the people that were closest to the heart of ethical change, who were most concerned about it and we might have spoken of those who had no interest in what was happening as alienated. But we wouldn't have talked about the people who were actively concerned. Yet today they call themselves alienated, in many instances. They tend to feel that if they themselves see something that they believe is wrong in the contemporary society, that the sight of the wrong in a sense alienates them, instead of involving them or tying them in.

One of the things that I've found, I've only been back in the United States three weeks from New Guinea, so my judgments are a little superficial, and at the same time they have the freshness of first impressions that are sometimes quite accurate. And one the things that I'm encountering I think in the country at present is the number of people whose response, for instance, to the Vietnam War is to say they want to go to Canada. [laughter] Now, and this I've met at all levels, people who can't stand what's happening to the image of the United States so they want to go to Canada. People who are dissatisfied with the response of the administration or to..of the uh, legislative branches of the government, to their

pressure, who want to go to Canada. Now going to Canada is a most peculiar form of alienation. [laughter] It is to begin with exceedingly cheap. [laughter] You don't need passports, you're not going to be examined in any way, you can live there as long as you like without getting into trouble. Safe on the North American continent among English speaking people of more or less the same background. But somehow one's crossed a line, a rather famous line, and one can temporarily disassociate themselves from a country that is doing something that is not liked. Now this is a form, a new form, of alienation. I think an interesting one, I'm not sure it's a very promising one. Uh...it's certainly different from the type of alienation that we read about and understood before World War I, when a writer like Henry James or T.S. Eliot would go to live in another country because they didn't feel this was their country, but they did feel another country was their country. Well they went and lived in a different country and made it their own. I think going to Canada is a sort of intermediate position [chuckles] that's pretty closely related to no man's land. [laughter] Don't let me overemphasize this, I don't think there is a tremendous immigration to Canada at the moment [laughter] and I..I hope that the press won't treat it this way. People aren't going to Canada, they are talking about going to Canada, [laughter] it's become a kind of symbol, that's all. But is a very curious situation.

Or you will talk to young boys on the verge of entering the university who will say "Well, if I'm drafted I won't go, I'll just walk out." And of course you say "Walk out where?" And that hasn't exactly been worked out. [laughter] .And it isn't the same thing as the pacifists who are burning their draft cards; I mean they're staying in. But there's a kind of, and so of course are the people who are working on many problems inside the United States. But the tendency to believe that the people who are working are alienated in some way, spreads so that uh, you then build up this peripheral position of "count me out, I'm not part of this, I'm not part of this because it is not the kind of country I want this minute, it is not doing what I would like, I don't like the condition of the poor or the oppressed or ethnic minorities and therefore count me out." Now, and this puts together two forms of alienation, which curiously enough we also found in the early days of the Russian Revolution. There were the young people who moved out of contemporary Russian society, many of them committing suicide or moving towards a philosophical or artistic position that didn't fit, and there were also the revolutionaries around Lenin who were, also felt themselves not part of that society, but were working for a different society and were working with deadly concentration. If we have, find that we are today combining under one head those who feel emotionally not a part of the contemporary society and those who feel politically active, this is going to produce a new set of ethical problems that I don't think we yet have any idea how they are going to work out. And whether they come partly from the fact that the young people who are very much concerned for instance with civil rights, identify with those for whose sake they are fighting and treating them as a group who've been alienated from the benefits of our society, then feel themselves alienated from the concerns of our society. Whether this is the mechanism of what's happening I'm not quite sure, but it is arousing very new problems in people's minds and we are out of it, we tend to move towards a position where we say modern man is going to be more and more alienated. Look at all the people that live in cities who are alienated now, and their children will be equally alienated and we are moving towards a world in which and then you know it gets described either that we are a number in an IBM machine or um, we are mere ciphers in an enormous group of people. There are a variety of symbols that we use. But in which we take uh, the definition of the present as we have made it, say it will

increase and make the future less bearable. And one of the very curious imperatives of the present period is our responsibility for defining the future in a way that will make the present generation willing to work for it. There have been other periods in...in parts of the world, in parts of human history where this has been so, where waves of despair and self-destruction have swept over the world, but we've probably never lived in a period before where the way we define the future is as important as it is today. Because for the first time with the responsibility that we have for not destroying the world and the capacity to do it, it means that the definition of the future as a place in which people will lead a better life or the definition of a future in which everyone will become more lonely, more alienated from the rest. This definition can be terribly important in terms of people's willingness to work that there shall be a future at all.

And if we turn now from this rather generalized picture to a question of what sort of conditions we will need in the world if children are to be reared to be sensitive, to be aware, to be able to think critically and thoughtfully about the world they live in without feeling alienated by their thought and their awareness. Then I think we go back and look at the conditions under which so many people in the world today can be said to be an..alienated. And they are people who have moved too far, too fast and without sufficient human links along the way. If you compare the position of very, very poor rural people crowding into a city in their own country, living in slums, picking up a living, related in the most casual way to the city in which they live, having no knowledge of its government, or place in its policies, or delight in its higher art and blessings. If you think of how lonely they are and compare them with the immigrants that came to the United States, who in most instances came to relatives to whom they were very close and were introduced to the new country and the changes quite gently. Uh..gently in a way, of course their relatives exploited them rather badly when they couldn't speak English. And you came over and you worked for your brother-in-law until you learned English and you left. [laughter] But at the same time - and of course we know what this did to politics. [laughter] Uh [clear throat] But at the same time, if you take say the Italian immigrants coming to the United States, they knew why they were coming, they worked quite hard to accumulate the finances to come, they went to someone when they came, whom they knew..knew and the people they went to taught them how to live in another country. All of the steps were mediated by human beings who had been there before and knew more about what was happening. And we have had the astonishing picture of the millions of people who were made Americans in one generation, so that they did feel at home here, they felt that this was their country; they felt they belonged here, although their parents had been born and bred in a quite different environment. Because at every step their movement into the country was mediated by other human beings. Which is after all the way in which the little primitive group that we've been using as a model, people belong there because they were brought up people who belonged there, who belonged there with every breath in their body and taught them how to live there. And one of the things that appears to be a weakness in the world at present is that too many people are attempting to take steps either to move from the country to the city, or to move from one occupational group to another, from one educational group to another with no human being who knows how to live in the new position mediating their steps towards it.

In the early part of this century, and settlement houses were very popular among the dedicated intellectuals in this country, and the plan that underlay the great settlement house like Hull House was the idea that people who were both fortunate, highly educated and concerned would go and live among those who were poor and unfortunate and knew nothing of their possibilities and would by their personal presence illuminate the imagination of the gifted and ambitious among the poor, who then could identify with them and use the settlement house in a way as a kind of ladder into another world that they had glimpsed, in which they were able to move. By the 1930s the settlement house was looked down upon. It was regarded as sentimental, the whole settlement movement had lost its hold for a generation that thought they could... that the..all the remedies that we needed could be stated in economic terms. And what we needed was economic justice and if we had economic justice we had no longer any need individuals to mediate what would happen. So all you need to do was set up...have enough food, enough jobs,..proper working conditions and gradually greater control of the political process. Everything else would work itself out. And we had an interesting experiment during the War when Oak Ridge was set up. Because Oak Ridge which I don't know whether, there is a middle generation I'm not quite sure where they fall or don't know what Oak Ridge is, just as there, about 50% of the children in Switzerland don't know who Hitler was. But Oak Ridge was the city in Tennessee that worked on developing the atom bomb. And they had wonderful conditions. Everyone who moved there was young, young married people with children. They had wonderful jobs, good salaries, plenty of food - it was all brought in specially, fine schools. And in the planning for Oak Ridge there was no provision for anyone to care for any kind of individual breakdown whatsoever. No psychiatrists, no social workers, they wouldn't be needed! You see, if you had...if you were young and healthy and married [laughter] umm...with a good job and plenty of money there wasn't anything that could possibly happen to anyone. And the first year people were very surprised that there were still broken homes, abandoned wives, broken hearted people and disturbed people even under these utopian conditions of enough employment and food and housing and everything else that they needed.

And we've gone through and are to a degree still going through a period where those who are concerned with what is happening in the country, feel that all the solutions in the sense that they can think of are impersonal. Their laws, new legislation or new anti-poverty programs where the importance is laid on the amount of money rather than the individuals that mediate them, and where a great mass of our students today go to college, students whose parents did not go to college, and go to college without having met anyone who did go to college. This is quite a s... you may no...this may not happen in New England, I always tend to accept the place I'm speaking to from any pejorative remarks. [laughter] But a University of Chicago professor worked out the details why which is was possible to go through the Chicago schools and get a B.S. without ever having met an educated person. [laughter] And this means something very significant because it means that children whose parents didn't read books and weren't part of the academic world, whose teachers don't read books either and aren't part of the academic world, then have to go to a college and in a great impersonal atmosphere which is characteristic of so many of our large institutions, but I'm sure won't be characteristic of this institution, [laughter] never meet other human beings who know how to live there. And that if one pulls together all of these different threads, the poverty stricken driven from the country into the city, the minority group coming into the city where they are not welcome and there is no place for them, the young people on

our college campuses who, although alive and sensitive to what's going on in the world, nevertheless feel somehow alienated from it. You can put them all together under the heading of people who haven't met other people who knew how to live there.

Well, one of the very striking ways in which this is seen on college campuses is in the disappearance of friendship, as compared with 50 years ago and as compared with campuses in Europe, friendship has almost disappeared from the American scene. Uh, boys learn to depend on their dates, uh, at a very early age for someone to sympathize with them and they marry them almost at once. [laughter] And... once having set up a heterosexual sympathetic union, uh, there is very little room for friendship and furthermore where 40 years ago, if you were really concerned about something, if you worried about religion, or political choice, if you were in love and broken hearted, uh, if you were uncertain about your career choice and where you were going to be placed in the world, your roommate sat up all night and listened. Today he... he or she says go to a psychiatrist. And we have substituted a large number of ameliorative agencies of one sort or another to deal with problems of identity and alienation instead of constructing a world where each person who has to take a new step that was not taken by their parents and their brothers and sisters, will find age mates and older people there ahead of them to teach them how to live. If we can build our cities, so that instead of being as they are today a place where people learn how to live in a slum, learn how to live maladaptively, miserably, alienated from the rest of the community, if we can build our cities so they are a way in which people learn to live in a city, after having all the space and freedom of the country, and learn to live in a city from other people who know how to live in a city, we would be able to bridge a great deal of this contemporary alienation. I watched in Rabaul which is the old capital of the mandated territory of New Guinea, the effect of building little model houses for government employees. Now these are people who twenty years ago lived in the bush, whose fathers and mothers were headhunters and cannibals and many of them wore no clothes at all. They'd been brought into Rabaul as day laborers in many cases with only..only uh, manual skills, but in the light of worldwide public opinion you must have decent housing for government employees. And the government has built them, quite pleasant little houses with chemical toilets and electric lights, and a kerosene stove, three rooms and a water tank. They took one family and spent two weeks teaching them how to live there, someone who lived there herself and had learned how everything worked and how to keep them from turning on the wrong things at the wrong time. And she spent two weeks, a social worker who moved in and lived there herself, learned to live there and then taught one family for two weeks then moved in another family, only one a week and they've had no breakdowns of this technical equipment in this new housing. And these are people who are ten years away from the most savage conditions in the world, while we continue to talk about coal and bathtubs and or what happens in elevators in high rise buildings as a result. So it's possible in building a picture of the future, and the kind of future that we might have, that we need not look forward to greater alienation but can look forward instead to sufficiently analyzing the conditions of negative alienation and sufficiently valuing the positive alienation, that is the awareness of difference and the awareness that things are not as they should be and...and should be corrected. So that we needn't look forward in the future to increasing alienation either of the dispossessed or of the sensitive and gifted.[applause]

Jagdish Mehra: Dr. Mead will entertain some questions. Yes, please. [Inaudible question].

Margaret Mead: Um, I am going to repeat the question. I understand that everyone can't hear them. The question is how about the people who aren't alienated and who are able to move in a changing world and move positively. How about the Neolithic Revolution?. There are such people and uh, my question referred to the people that I described in an article "Neolithic Revolution" in Think, who are the people that I've been studying in New Guinea for the last 37 years, so that I've seen out of savagery into the present where now the major concern in the village is will the children will pass the examinations that are set in Australian and you have almost as much nervousness as we do when college board results are coming in. [laughter] Uh, the conditions however under which these people move are very interesting. New Guineans: they all moved, the entire community including the grandparents. There were just two men out of the whole 2,500 people who stood out against change. The grandparents didn't do it very well, in some instances they..they took women who had been dancing [inaudible] bald heads and nothing but grass tails and two spears screaming and sometimes they were rather [particulars?] [inaudible] at PTA meetings. [laughter, applause] The younger people said, "You see you have to forgive them because they didn't have the right education at a younger age." [laughter] Um, the conditions under which these people moved, and they are rather exceptional there are very few groups who have done this well, everybody moved at once, they moved under their own taking and they changed things that had to be changed all at once. They changed the way they laid out the town, they changed the form of their houses, the set up a complete new [inaudible] And one of the lessons that I think we can draw from them is, or several lessons, one is we've got to give the grandparents [inaudible]. Now in today in our society, the grandparents know more about change than anybody else, except the great grandparents, who knew much more than the young people. They all changed remarkably. And so that if our [inaudible] because the mom is [inaudible] so we need to realize that if we involve the older people in the change for now, they will be able to communicate to the children that change is a good thing, quite possible, doesn't kill you and the children will grow up more or less [inaudible] next [inaudible] able to live in change and without [inaudible].

[remainder of lecture Question and Answer is inaudible].