

Social learning is very important

Acquisition of information is influenced by observation of, interaction with another individual

Processes of social learning:

Teaching



What is the role of teaching in human evolution?

Teaching deemphasized

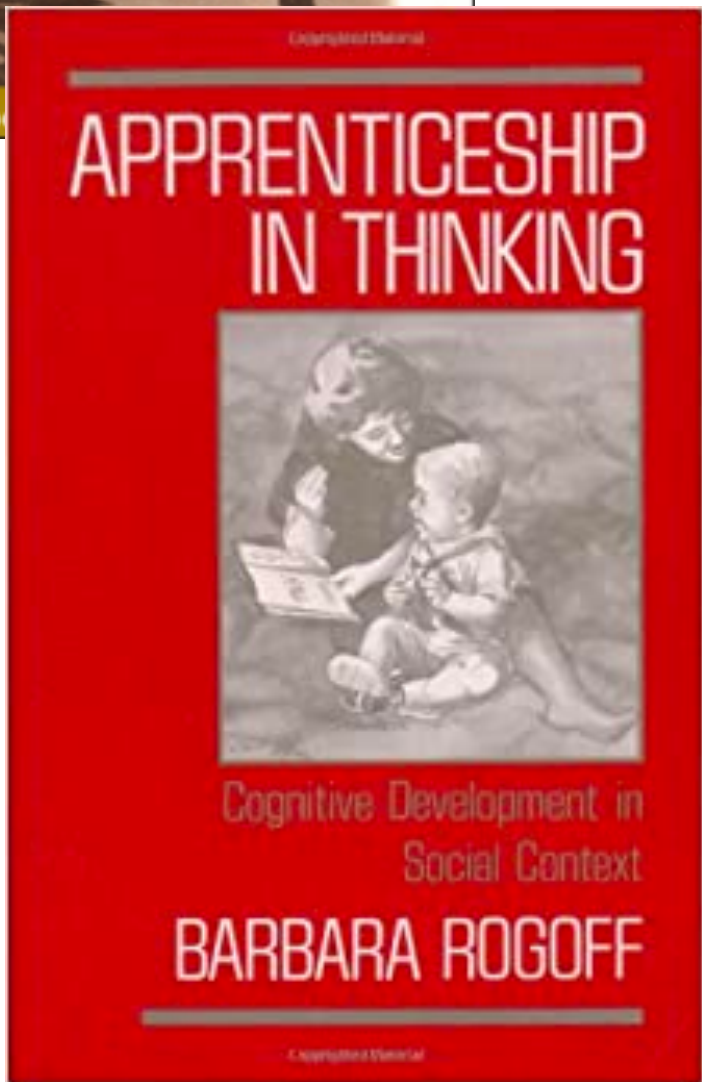
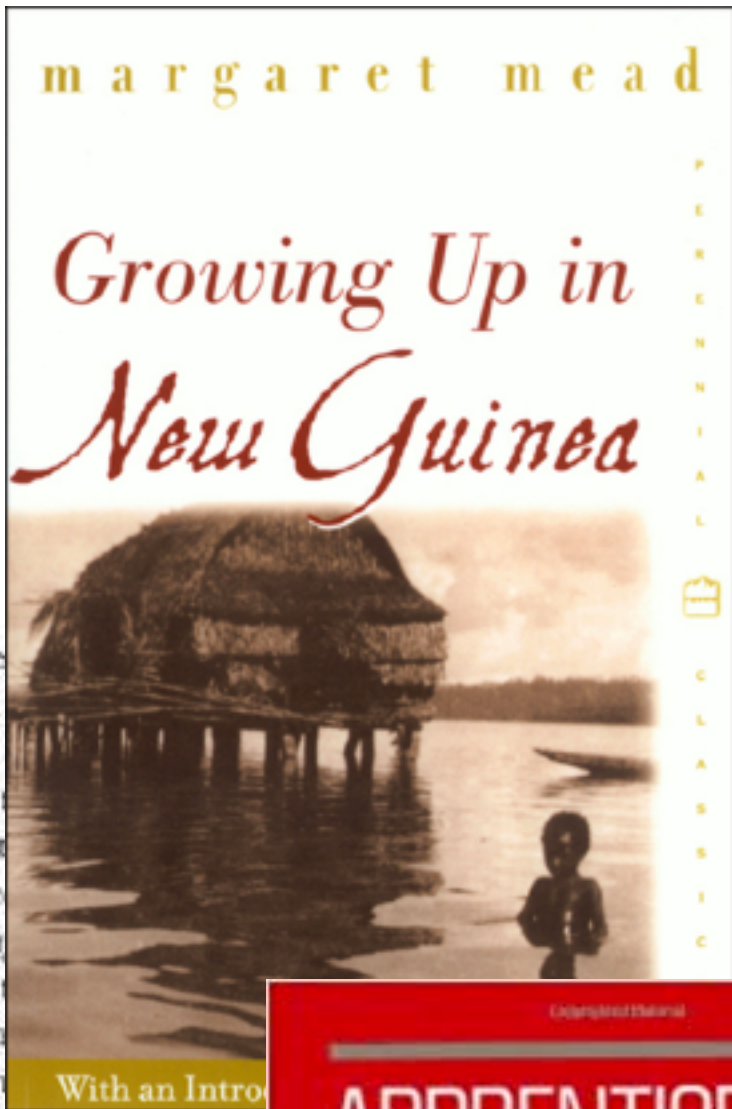
THE ROLE OF ADULTS IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING

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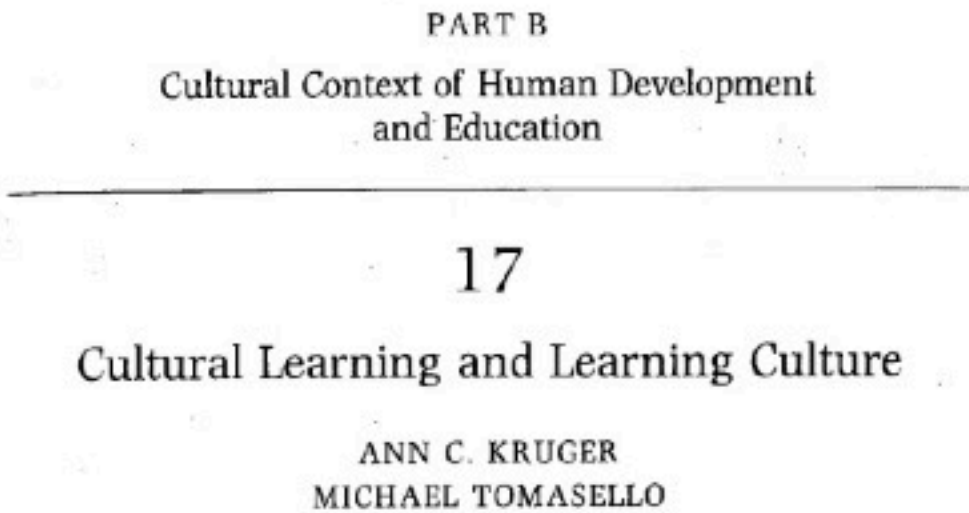
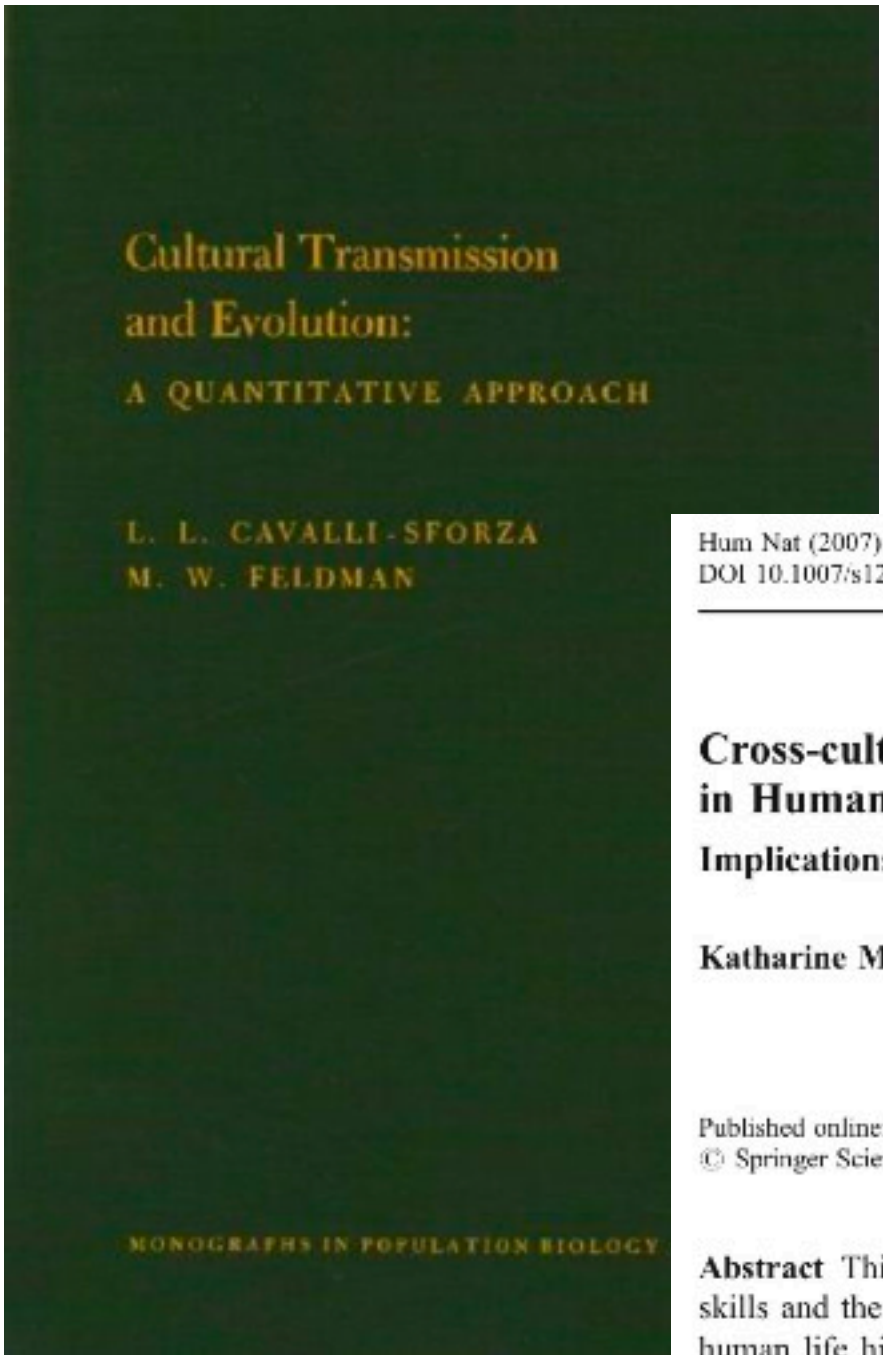
Anthropologists who study children in traditional societies universally note the absence or great rarity of adults teaching children in the village setting. Children are encouraged to learn on their own. This chapter teases out those instances where, in the absence of adults, independent learning is not sufficient. In some situations, adult intervention—usually falling short of “teaching”—is deemed necessary. The chapter focuses on four very general issues. At what age is a child targeted for a course correction or intervention to facilitate her development and socialization? What is the substance or goal of the intervention? What should the child be doing that he or she isn't already? As we shall see, two very broad goals are to socialize children to “fit in” and to facilitate the child's becoming a contributor to the family, providing a return on the family's investment. How does the adult intervene? What strategies are used to change the child's behavior? Lastly, what general principle or theory guides these course corrections in the individual's path through childhood? These themes are woven throughout the chapter, which is organized to follow the child from infancy through adolescence.

The Absence of Teaching

Early ethnographic studies of childhood (Fortes 1938; Raum 1940) noted, with some degree of wonder, the near total absence of children



Teaching emphasized



The universals and cultural variations of human development have been the focus of fruitful study by anthropologists for decades. In recent years psychologists also have directed their attention, long overdue, to understanding development in cultural context. There are striking differences among psychologists, however, in the approaches they take to culture and development. Most markedly, Cole (1989) distinguishes two very different theoretical perspectives on cultural psychology and its approach to human development. In one perspective the focus is on culture as a collective enterprise (e.g., Gauvain, in press; Shweder, 1990; Super and Harkness, 1986). There is no need in this view for focusing on the individual development of individual children since all important forms of learning are socially distributed: children simply become more skillful over time at participating in various collective activities (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Indeed, in some versions of this more sociological view of cultural psychology the focus on the cultural

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Cross-cultural Comparison of Learning in Human Hunting Implications for Life History Evolution

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Abstract This paper is a cross-cultural examination of the development of hunting skills and the implications for the debate on the role of learning in the evolution of human life history patterns. While life history theory has proven to be a powerful tool for understanding the evolution of the human life course, other schools, such as cultural transmission and social learning theory, also provide theoretical insights. These disparate theories are reviewed, and alternative and exclusive predictions are identified. This study of cross-cultural regularities in how children learn hunting skills, based on the ethnographic literature on traditional hunters, complements existing empirical work and highlights future areas for investigation.

Keywords Cultural transmission · Human evolution · Hunting · Learning · Life history

Lancy & Grove (2010), Mead (1930), Rogoff (1990)

Kruger & Tomasello (1996), MacDonald (2007), Cavalli-Sforza & Feldman (1981)