

were born from two to five hours short of a full sixteen days from the time of copulation.

Twenty-eight days is probably the youngest recorded age of attainment of sexual maturity in a mammal, as well as in the vertebrates generally.

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CONCERNING THE TERM "RACE DIFFERENCES" AND THE CONCEPT "CULTURE"

WOULD it not serve to clarify the current controversy between Professors Garrett and Herskovits and their respective adherents if those concerned could agree first of all on the meaning of the term "race differences"? Professor Garrett has twice emphasized the fact that "studies in this country over the past forty years have regularly and consistently found differences as between the American Negro and the American White."¹ On the basis of this fact Professor Garrett seems to argue that there are race differences (of a psychological nature), even while admitting that the differences in question are subject to a number of interpretations. Now the very fact that these differences *are* subject to more than one interpretation is what makes most anthropologists unwilling to call them "race differences." Until it can be proved that they are subject to only *one* inter-

pretation—namely, that they are the result of genetically determined biological differences between the two groups compared—it is not justifiable, from the anthropological point of view as regards terminology, to speak of them as race differences.

As for the concept of "culture," anthropologists can hardly have reacted with anything but amazement to Professor Garrett's side challenge to Professor Herskovits for a clarification of this "nebulous concept." There may be some differences of opinion among anthropologists, and particularly among archeologists, as to what constitutes "*a* culture," but certainly there is none as to what constitutes "culture" in general. Lowie's definition is explicit enough:

By culture we understand the sum total of what an individual acquires from his society—those beliefs, customs, artistic norms, food-habits, and crafts which come to him not by his own creative activity but as a legacy from the past, conveyed by formal or informal education.²

So far as I am aware, no question as to the meaning of this concept has arisen in the anthropological literature of the past decade, nor has it come up in seminars or professional meetings.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

MAINSPRINGS OF CIVILIZATION

Mainsprings of Civilization. By ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON. xii + 660 pp. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1945. \$4.75.

As always, in reading a book by Dr. Huntington, the reviewer finds himself torn between admiration for the ingenuity displayed in devising hypotheses to explain vast areas of human conduct and in ferreting out facts which seem to the author to support these hypotheses, and irritation that this ingenuity is not used in testing smaller but more specific hypotheses which are beyond the border of the known but within the realm of the possible in the present state of our knowledge of man's life on the earth.

The "three main principles set forth in this book" (p. 607) are: (a) "that civilization is the unfinished and perhaps never-to-be-finished, product of some great evolutionary force which permeates all nature"; (b) "the action of this force is swayed by three great factors, namely, biological inheritance, physical environment and cultural endowment"; (c) "these three constantly react upon one another, and a knowledge

of their combined influence is a prerequisite to a full understanding of history." The reviewer would not hesitate to accept these hypotheses, indeed he can not see how one can do other unless (a) is a reference to some transcendent mystical force which shapes man's destiny willy-nilly, but he feels that what we need in social science is to pin ourselves down to a more specific measurement of the role of each factor in a definite human situation.

There can not be much doubt that in the long course of human development the physical conditions of life have had a selective influence on man's physical and mental make-up. But one finds great difficulty in believing that the qualities Dr. Huntington attributes to Puritans, Parsees, Jews, Armenians, Chinese, Junkers and other "kiths" are biological (hereditary) to the degree he holds. It is true that he makes much of the adaptability of the human race to environmental conditions, but at the same time he seems to believe that the adaptability of the individual within a given cultural group is relatively small, hence, that individual achievement as well as that of the groups

¹ SCIENCE, n.s., 101: 406.

² Robert H. Lowie, "The History of Ethnological Theory." New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1937.