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Education : Sociology of Education

Maguire, Kate

Margaret Mead

Contributions to Contemporary Education

- Explains and contextualises Margaret Mead's contribution to educational discourses
- Demonstrates how knowledge of human kind garnered from social anthropology illuminates contemporary problems in the education of young adults
- Discusses the controversy around Mead's work on young people and her transdisciplinary approach to research

This book makes a case for Margaret Mead's contributions to education discourses, which in retrospect appear visionary and profoundly democratic, non judgemental and transdisciplinary, and for their relevance for education today at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Mead combined her substantial skills and knowledge as a linguist, anthropologist and psychologist to draw attention to the primary role of culture and society in identity formation, privileging against sterner perspectives, the idea that the conditions that support the emergence of balanced personalities, able to contribute to society and to progress themselves as individuals, starts with observation of self before that of others. This observation of and reflection on self was for her a necessary demonstration of transparency while close observation of others was 'an act of love', much as the artist contemplates his/her subject, that dissolved negative differences of culture, belief and status.

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