

File 20-h

In The Evolution of Man's Capacity for Culture,
ed. J. N. Spuhler, Robert Jay and John White, 1959
Leslie A. White: Summary review

L22

75. "Symbolizing is traffic in meanings that cannot be comprehended by the senses."

"We would, therefore, define human behavior or culture in terms of the ability to symbolize."

76. Large brain (absolutely or relatively) has been overestimated.

77. According to Washburn, use of tools decisive for human development. "Selective pressures (coming in with the use of tools," brought about a tripling of the size of the brain... after man... [became] a tool user... it is culture that affects the human brain."

78. "Perhaps the most profound change in the behavior of primates in the transition from prehuman to human society was affected in the roles of sex and economics."

In a prehuman social organization the sexual factor was predominant; the economic factor subordinate, almost incidental. In the transition to human society the human factor became subordinate to the economic material factor. This radical change was made possible as a result of anti-white speech (the ability to symbolize)... Cooperation and mutual aid had a biological survival value as consequences they were developed or expanded."

78/9. Food sharing little among primates. "But in primitive society, the sharing of food often goes beyond the rational requirements of economics and instruction and becomes a social ritual whose function is to promote social solidarity - i.e., of course, its biological survival value."