

Imitate babies, Montagu says

By STEVE KNIGHT
Of the Emerald

In order to be happy and well adjusted, people need to emulate the inborn traits of babies, a noted anthropologist and author of over 50 books told about 400 people Friday at the Valley River Inn.

Ashley Montagu, 76, addressed a conference on the socialization of the child, and said babies are born with a high degree of imagination, curiosity, sensitivity and a great capacity to give and receive love. But, he added, as a child matures, these characteristics are suppressed by parents, resulting in the inability of a child to mature in a mentally healthy way.

"The family is an institution in America for the systematic production of mental illness in each of its members," he said.

Montagu also criticized the educational system for stifling the natural development of children.

"Teachers in this country are only concerned about rote memory, they don't teach children to question," he said.

Montagu explained that the innate traits of babies were developed and refined six or seven million years ago when homo sapiens first began to stand erect on the spreading African savannas. The erect position reduced the gestation period in pregnant females, causing the babies to be born in a "highly premature state" of dependence, he said.

As a result, love evolved — through tactile contact — to ensure the survival of the infant, Montagu maintained. He termed love as "the highest form of intelligence" that all people must have to lead a healthy and productive life.

Unloved children are "biologically different" from loved ones, he said, explaining that many unloved juveniles develop hypopituitary dwarfism — a disorder where a child stops growing.

"The only cure for the disorder is to love (the afflicted child)."

The juvenile traits of imagination, creativity and inquisitiveness also evolved millions of years ago to help humans survive in a hostile and challenging environment, he said.

Montagu said that the early humans who used their juvenile traits the best were much more "likely to leave a progeny."

Man was designed to retain these juvenile traits, but today's society perceives these traits

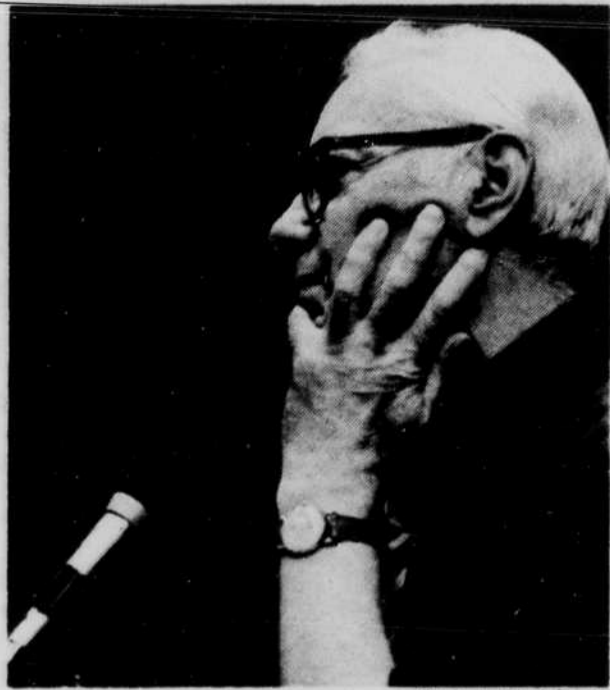


Photo by Mark Pynes

Noted anthropologist and author Ashley Montagu addressed a crowd of 400 on the socialization of the child at a Valley River Inn conference.

as "childish," he said.

Montagu said that juvenile traits play an important role in the aging process of adults.

"If you die young as late as possible you have it made and will have fulfilled your evolutionary destiny," he said.

Aside from the "humanizing needs," Montagu also spoke on the physical need a baby has for its mother's milk. Stating that bottle-fed babies are less healthy and have lower IQs than breast-fed infants, Montagu called for a ban on bottle feeding.

"Cows milk is fine — for little cows," he said, "but human babies haven't got the enzymes to digest it."

Montagu said people must change society's values concerning love, creativity, sensitivity and other juvenile traits if adults are to lead healthy and productive lives. He said women possess these traits by nature and stated that all men should strive to be unmasculine and more like women.

"The feminine qualities are human qualities," he said.

Photos display Islamic world

"Inside the Islamic World," an exhibit of photographs taken by Springfield resident Mamade Kadreebux opens today at 2 p.m. in Room 167 of the EMU.

Kadreebux, who spends most of his time travelling around the world taking pictures, will be showing a collection of prints he shot while in Iran and other Islamic countries.

He has shown his photographs in galleries from Springfield to France and his travel stories catch the attention of the media wherever he goes.

"I sacrifice everything for travelling," Kadreebux said in a recent interview, and his tales back him up.

His adventures are the stuff of novels or Hollywood scripts. In South America, a gang of pickpockets left him penniless, but he talked bus drivers into giving him rides and finally talked an airline director into a ticket to Miami.

He has explored pyramids in Egypt, photographed ruins in Iran and lived with Eskimos in Alaska. Yet one of his favorite places was Venice, California, which he calls, "the rollerskating capital of the world."

Kadreebux says he sells his photos at prices ranging from \$10 to \$50 to help offset travel expenses.

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