

Published as LeCompte, M. D. "Bias in the Biography: Bias and Subjectivity in Ethnographic Research," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 2: 43-52. Copyright © 1987 by the American Anthropological Association.

Authorization to copy this content beyond fair use is granted by the American Anthropological Association for educational and other users, provided that they are registered with and pay the specified fee via Rightslink® on AnthroSource®, <http://www.anthrosource.net>, or directly through the Copyright Clearance Center, <http://www.copyright.com>.

Bias in the Biography: Bias and Subjectivity in Ethnographic Research

MARGARET D. LECOMPTE

This article is concerned with bias and subjectivity in ethnographic research. Since the research in ethnography cannot eliminate biographical determinants,

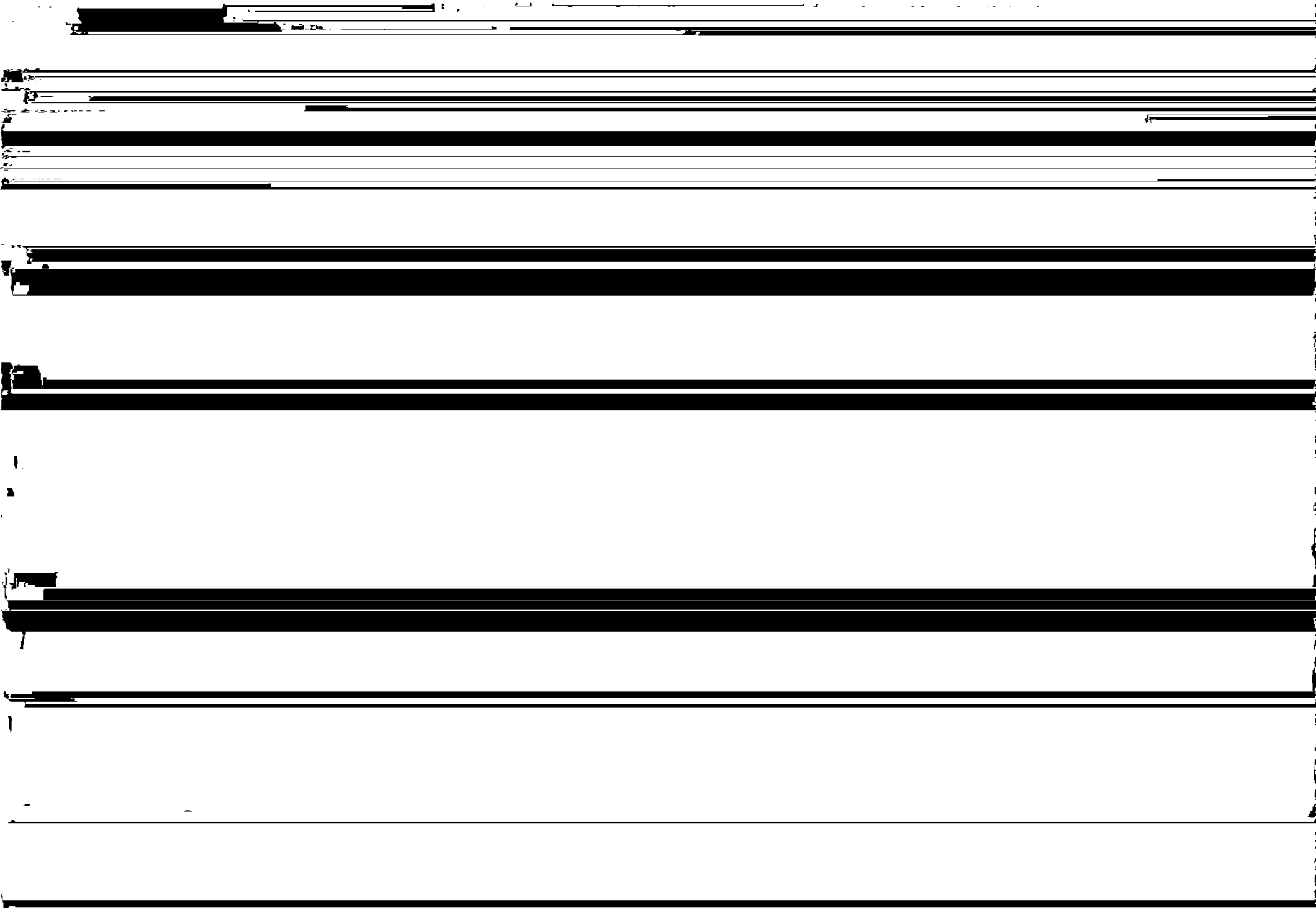
...number of factors that det... the article suggests some ways to man...

bias in my own work. In so doing, I have been guided by the assumption that bias derives from personal human history and experience, and have based my inquiry into my own work and that of others in our field accordingly. I have been helped in this endeavor by a series

pology, and who worked in museums or university departments of anthropology. They were united by an interest in cultural transmission and its impact on personality, and they focused on the *context* of learning, as embodied in descriptions of the characteristics of cultural

sources of influence when examining the impact of particular forms of

The domestic or institutional stage. This period lasted from the mid-1950s



from all of the articles by those who had attempted to define what anthropology and education is. I thought that in that way I could define who belonged to what camp by seeing who cited whom. I didn't do it.

metaphor of an archeological dig to understand the impact of opportunity costs in my own intellectual career. My dig was occasioned by a thorough housecleaning of my existing files. necessitated in part by

estant family in the neighborhood. As such, I was the only public

In Conclusion

definitions in cultural transmission and learning, and the many of the

