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PACIFIC STUDIES

REFLECTIONS ON PACIFIC ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE MARGARET MEAD CENTENNIAL, 2001

Guest Editor
Sharon W. Tiffany

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Special Issue

REFELECTIONS ON PACIFIC ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE MARGARET MEAD CENTENNIAL, 2001

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PACIFIC STUDIES

SPECIAL ISSUE
REFLECTIONS ON PACIFIC ETHNOGRAPHY
IN THE MARGARET MEAD CENTENNIAL, 2001

Vol. 28, Nos. 3/4 Sept./Dec. 2005

Dedicated to the Memory of Mary Wolfskill

GUEST EDITOR'S NOTE

Sharon W. Tiffany

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE began as a symposium, *Reflections on Pacific Ethnography in the Margaret Mead Centennial, 2001*, which convened during the annual meetings of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) in February 2001 in Miami, Florida. The ASAO conference was one of many held during 2001 and 2002 to mark the Centenary of Margaret Mead. The Library of Congress Exhibition, *Margaret Mead: Human Nature and the Power of Culture*, opened in November 2001 in conjunction with the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association held in Washington D.C. (Francis and Wolfskill 2001). At that time, other, previously closed, documents archived in the Margaret Mead Papers at the Library of Congress were made available to scholars at the behest of Dr. Mary Catherine Bateson, President of the Intercultural Studies Institute, to commemorate her mother's centenary. Several authors of essays in this volume subsequently contributed to the Library of Congress-sponsored symposium, *Archival Gold: Treasures from the Margaret Mead Collection,* held in Washington, D.C. on 22 March 2002.

The scholars represented in this special issue have sought to understand the complex and multi-faceted legacy of Margaret Mead's contributions to Pacific ethnography. As this collection of essays and other publications attest, academic interest in her work continues to flourish. For example, three biographies of Mead and Ruth Benedict have been published in recent years (Banner 2003; Lapsley 1999; Young 2005), as well as an important anthology of essays on the work and lives of these two important foremothers of anthro-

pology (Janiewski and Banner 2004). These texts have contributed insights into the social-historical contexts in which Mead lived and worked. The essays presented here are also part of a process that will continue for some time to come, as scholarship on the history of anthropological ideas, including the contributions that Margaret Mead, along with Ruth Benedict, Reo Fortune, and Gregory Bateson, have made to that intellectual legacy. Indeed, it seems appropriate that this collection celebrating Mead's legacy was completed in 2004, the centennial year of Gregory Bateson.

Many participants contributed their time and comments to the ASAO 2001 discussions. I am deeply grateful to the following persons: Mary Catherine Bateson, for her continued interest and support of our endeavors, and who attended the symposium and presented her essay in this collection as the ASAO 2001 Distinguished Lecture; the late Mary Wolfskill for her participation at the symposium; Ali (Alice) Pomponio for her incisive questions and commentary during the symposium's proceedings; Chiefs Unasa L. F. Va'a and Isaia Malopa'upo for their participation and comments—a special *fa'afetai*; Naomi MacPherson and Martin Orans for their extended comments on earlier versions of some of the essays presented here; Gerald Sullivan for assistance with editorial and organizational issues, including technical equipment; James E. Côté for his editorial advice; and Dale B. Robertson, former editor of *Pacific Studies*, for his commitment to this project. The ASAO 2001 symposium drew many interested participants, some of whom were unable to contribute essays to this volume; their presence and comments are also gratefully acknowledged.

Many of the contributors to this special issue, who have published and/or have works in progress, researched the Margaret Mead Papers and South Pacific Ethnographic Archives housed at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Thus, we dedicate this special issue to the late Mary Wolfskill, former Head, Reference and Reader Service Section of the Manuscript Division, at the Library of Congress. We will always remember Mary's expertise, enthusiasm, and generous assistance with our archival research.

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INTRODUCTION: THE ESSENTIALIZATION OF MARGARET MEAD

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Margaret Mead and her contributions to Pacific anthropology play a large role in the discipline, and anthropologists need to consider her work carefully and in context. Evaluators of Mead are often guilty of simplifying her work rather than assessing its full complexity. The reasons for this phenomenon are examined here: several commentators have not read the work carefully, while others select only some aspects of it to support their analyses. Many misrepresentations are the result of a failure to consider her work in its appropriate historical context, and a few employ Mead as a symbol or trope for broader phenomena, such as cultural determinism or colonial oppression. Each of the papers in this volume is considered as an example of what can be learned when Mead's work is looked at without essentializing it: contributions such as these are beginning to appear, contributions that not only place the debate in its appropriate framework but also use it to further our understanding of anthropology, its assumptions, methods, and history in a wider intellectual, social and political context.

Although always characterized by more self-consciousness than the other social sciences, during the 1980s and 1990s the discipline of anthropology engaged in a heightened process of self-examination and reflexivity. It was a time of postmodern uncertainty; challenges from political economy and history; deepened questioning of ethics and epistemologies; and a reexamination of the social and political contexts in which anthropologists engage in research, as well as the nature of that research itself. Parts of the discipline turned to its own history in order to understand what it does and has done, and what anthropology can tell us about ourselves and our cultures, both disciplinarily and globally. Practitioners not only looked at anthropology's development (e.g., Stocking 1968), but also at themselves as cultural critics (Mar-

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cus and Fischer 1986), as writers (Clifford and Marcus 1986), and as active participants in the perpetuation of American modernity (di Leonardo 1998). I suspect that one of the reasons the so-called "Freeman-Mead controversy" generated the attention that it did among anthropologists was not only that it became a national if not international media event, but also that it came during this time of heightened self-awareness.[1] Much like those Ndembu boys confronted with monsters during the liminal period of their initiation (Turner 1967), reactions from both "sides" were exaggerated and out of tune with routine and ordinary disciplinary activity. Whatever else it has done and will do, the controversy is providing rich material for anthropologists to mine in order to understand disciplinary assumptions and practices, and hopefully it may do so for some time to come.

In examining the work of Margaret Mead and the reactions it has generally elicited from the anthropological community, one thing strikes me as particularly interesting, and that is the way in which most reactions fall into two somewhat extreme categories. For one group of vocal critics, she seems to be the devil in a dress, while for the other, she is the charismatic leader of all right-minded people. As Micaela di Leonardo (1998:18) acerbically notes, this bipolar response is not new: ". . . this mixture of adulation of and visceral repugnance against Mead is no recent popular invention." I have certainly not been immune to this kind of Manichean thinking, and at one point I found myself enmeshed in a debate with Derek Freeman (McDowell 1984). I often felt as if I were an Alice waking up in a new and strange wonderland, one in which interactions were paradigmatically apt examples of Gregory Bateson's (1958) process of complementary schizmogenesis: If he had not said what he did, I would never have said what I said, which motivated him to . . . and so on. The rhetoric, especially in the media, continued to escalate as many onlookers wondered just what was going on here, and some potential contributors to a sincere disciplinary evaluation of Mead's place in its history wisely chose not to engage. Happily, however, the dust has begun to settle and contributions such as the ones in this volume are beginning to appear, contributions that not only place the debate in its appropriate framework but also use it to further our understanding of anthropology, its assumptions, methods, and history in a wider intellectual, social, and political context.

I focus here on this dualistic reaction that characterizes the Freeman-Mead controversy. The division into two relative extremes has been facilitated by a kind of essentialism. Both sides (although the detractors of Mead to a much greater degree than her supporters) fail to appreciate the complexity of Mead's contributions and in the process "essentialize" her work in ways that seriously distort what she actually did, wrote, and accomplished. Her work is complex and voluminous, yet commentators have tended to select

certain portions or features and focus on these to the exclusion of others. Perhaps a better word might be "simplification," but I have chosen "essentialization" to describe the process because it reflects the way in which many treat her work—as if it had a single, simple nucleus, analogous to some kind of biological or natural given, or an essential core of meaning. Many fail to acknowledge the complexity present and focus only on one or two selected aspects of her work as if there were no others, as if there were only one or two important points or as if she never changed her mind or increased her understanding. This is the essence of what I mean here by the "essentialization" process.[2] An intriguing issue necessarily emerges: which aspect(s) is highlighted as the essential one? Why does one person select a particular one, while another chooses something else? Answers to these questions may reveal considerable information about the motivation, theoretical persuasion, assumptions, and, perhaps, even political leanings of the "essentializer," as well as underlying disciplinary assumptions and frameworks.

My comments here are restricted to Mead's Oceanic work, as is only appropriate for the papers contained in this volume. [3] I want to elaborate briefly on four interrelated notions: (1) Many who comment on Mead's work have not read it in its entirety, or they do not remember it accurately, or they have not read it very closely; (2) Many who have read it do so with such strong "lenses" that their essentialization distorts the actual work; a few misuse or misquote it in order to justify their own positions; (3) Commentators often neglect to put her work into the appropriate historical context. What stands out when this is done, of course, is the way in which some of Mead's theories, methods, and assumptions clash with contemporary norms and practice, and these become the focus for analysis and critique; (4) Mead's fame and perhaps even notoriety made her an easy-to-appropriate symbol for a variety of purposes; she was somehow emblematic of, or perhaps embodied, particular positions or historical processes and thus became the beacon of light for some or the main target of criticism for others, whether wholly deserved or not. [4]

The first point is simple: most anthropologists of the 1980s and 1990s rarely read Mead after perhaps an initial exposure as undergraduates; they either relied on hazy memories, or they reread the work carelessly or hastily. For example, it is clear that many recent critics of *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead [1928] 1961) never studied the detailed and carefully documented appendices included in the volume, and these contain fascinating information that make her depiction of Samoa in the 1920s far more complex than the ethnographic picture in the main text. Richard Feinberg (1988) argues that a careful reading of *Coming of Age in Samoa* reveals significant complexity and that the popular perception of what Mead wrote is different from what

she actually said. He concludes "... Mead's work emerges as complex and somewhat enigmatic, with facile conclusions standing in contrast to much rich and sensitive ethnography" (Feinberg 1988: 656). She certainly may have stressed a somewhat simplified portrait in this work aimed at a general audience, but a careful reading of what she did present in its entirety belies that picture.

Contributing to this tendency to misread Mead by simplifying her is her proclivity to write for multiple audiences, including the general public. Too many critics have equated her popular volumes with the more technical professional work, yet to do so is unfair and inadequate. As Shankman (this volume) notes, Mead purposely chose to write books accessible to intelligent laypersons as well as more technical monographs for professional anthropologists. One can certainly criticize her for doing so, or for doing it the way she did; she is vulnerable to the charge that she oversimplified to make social or political points, or perhaps that her comparisons between "us" and "them" were facile and distorted in some of these books.[5] But it is critical to note that she did not ignore her specialized, anthropological audience, and to focus only on one part of her entire oeuvre seriously misrepresents her work. Assuming that one knows what she said without reading her disparate and admittedly sometimes widely-scattered work is poor scholarship, and many are guilty of doing it. [6]

Mead's work on Samoa provides an apt illustration. Freeman's (1983) focus was almost exclusively on *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead [1928] 1961), and critical commentary has often been restricted to this text. But as James Côté (this volume, 60–73) notes, Mead *herself* described *Coming of Age in Samoa* as "pulp." It is unfortunately common to equate Mead's "Samoan work" with *Coming of Age in Samoa* without even acknowledging the existence of *Social Organization of Manu'a* (1930a), her more technical ethnography on Samoa. Shankman's perceptive and careful consideration (this volume) of both reveals a more accurate picture of what Mead did and did not say about Samoa, what she understood and what she did not. Although he acknowledges Mead's shortcomings, Shankman is able to provide a more balanced evaluation of her Samoan research because he considers all of it.[7] *Social Organization of Manu'a* (Mead 1930a) is an essential element that cannot be ignored.

Careful scholarship today requires that a critic not only read Mead's published works but go beyond and examine *all* of the material available that might be relevant. Luckily there is a vast amount of unpublished material available to scholars in the Margaret Mead Archives in the Library of Congress.[8] Several contributors to this volume extensively used the material in these Archives to research questions about Mead's work, and their rich anal-

yses yield a complex and fascinating picture. Côté's careful scholarship (this volume, 60–73) focuses on Mead's unpublished letters from two periods. In the late 1920s, Mead's correspondence, particularly with Franz Boas, reveals a great deal about the milieu in which the publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa* occurred and how the volume was produced, while letters from the 1960s disclose much about the relationship between, and motivations of, both Freeman and Mead. The result is a much richer understanding of Mead and the nature of the dispute Freeman had about the quality of her work. The extensive photograph collection in the Archives provides ample data for Sharon Tiffany's analysis (this volume, 19–45), in which she demonstrates that Mead's visual images of Samoan women vary in significant ways from the American cultural images of the Polynesian *femme fatale*, not only at the time Mead wrote but also in contemporary imagery. Mead's women are persons with varied emotions as well as agency; they do not slip neatly into enduring Western images of Polynesian beauties but contest the representation of these women as passive sexual objects in tropical paradise. Gerald Sullivan's focus (this volume, 91–105) also includes a detailed examination of unpublished materials from the Archives in an attempt to grasp Mead's understanding of the relationships among individual, personality, and culture. Through his work, we are able to see Mead as a young scholar in a young discipline grappling with already extant psychological concepts and theories (as well as those of biology). Sullivan's analysis reveals a nuanced portrayal of her evolving understanding of human variability that is far removed from the cultural determinist portrayed by Freeman.

A careful reading of the materials in both *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead [1928] 1961) and *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (Mead [1935] 1968) demonstrates that Freeman's claim that Mead was a strict cultural determinist is simply incorrect. Phillip Guddemi's close reading (this volume, 106–127) of Mead suggests, as does Sullivan's, that *contra* Freeman, she was far from being a cultural determinist who denied the importance of biological factors in human behavior. Guddemi argues that both Mead and Ruth Benedict were not philosophical or epistemological relativists, and that even though they both stressed human potential and its variability, neither advocated that the mind was a "blank slate" that absorbed whatever information the surrounding culture inscribed on it.

Freeman's insistence on Mead's deterministic stance pertains directly to the second factor in her essentialization: It is not that some have failed to read what she actually wrote, but that many who have read it choose to ignore its complexity or focus on singular aspects of it. Freeman is the most infamous example in this category. Most are familiar with his assertion that she and her mentor, Franz Boas, represent cultural determinism in its most

egregious form, and that Freeman attributes to them a radical cultural relativist position neither, in fact, ever really espoused.[9] But even if Mead had been a cultural determinist (which more than ample evidence has by now demonstrated she was not), by focusing exclusively on this issue Freeman ignored all of the other facets of her work, thus "essentializing" her. She became a symbol, a trope, for cultural determinism.

Freeman claims to have read all of Mead's Samoan work but chooses not to acknowledge its subtleties; he ignores *Social Organization of Manu'a* almost entirely, whereas the authors in this volume (especially Shankman, 46–59) demonstrate why it is a critical document in understanding Mead's Samoan materials. Let me provide just one egregious example of Freeman's "misreading," my personal favorite (see also McDowell 1984). One of Freeman's main points about Mead is that when she characterized Samoans as gentle and relatively unassertive, she ignored the fact that in reality Samoans are competitive, violent, and assertive. He writes:

> . . . just as Samoan culture has eliminated strong emotion, so also it has eliminated any interest in competition. Samoan social organization, claims Mead, places 'each individual, each household, each village, even (in Western Samoa) each district, in a hierarchy, wherein each is dignified only by its relationship to the whole,' each performing tasks that 'contribute to the honor and well-being of the whole,' so that 'competition is completely impossible' (Freeman 1983: 88).

Freeman's depiction of Mead's portrayal is perfectly clear, and he leaves the reader no choice but to ponder Mead's narrow and erroneous vision.

How many readers wondered about the veracity of these quotes and checked the original source? Here's what Mead ([1937] 1976:301–302) actually wrote:

> these illustrations will show the *two tendencies* in Samoan social organizations, the tendency to place each individual, each household, each village, even (in Western Samoa) each district in a hierarchy, wherein each is dignified only by its relationship to the whole, each performs tasks which contribute to the honor and well-being of the whole, and competition is completely impossible. *The opposite tendency, the rebellion of individuals within the units against this subordination to a plan and their use of a place in a component unit to foment trouble and rivalry with other units, while not so strong, is always present* (emphasis added).

Careful reading of Freeman's argument reveals that this is not an isolated example; this kind of deception, which surely must be conscious and in some ways intentional, runs throughout his work. How and why would Freeman, whom even Mead described as "brilliant" (Côté, this volume, 60–73), make such misrepresentations? Côté looks at the correspondence between Freeman and Mead, and about Freeman by Mead, and suggests that, for a variety of reasons, Freeman was obsessed with Mead and attacked her research for personal and psychological, rather than intellectual reasons. It may be so.

One need not be an extreme postmodernist to note that anthropologists and other academics exhibit selective perception just as other human beings do. We, too, see what we expect to see, and we are not necessarily conscious of doing so. This tendency clearly affects how we read Mead's work. It is also true that Mead's corpus of material is sometimes complex and not always consistent. What one person reads in one publication is different from what someone else reads in another publication. Di Leonardo (1998), for example, examines the relationship between Mead and twentieth-century feminism and explains how someone who made clearly antifeminist comments could so readily be taken up as a significant "foremother" and seminal role model. Feminists essentializing *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* ([1935] 1968) might be surprised at what Mead says in *Male and Female* (1949a).

A factor that contributes to the ease with which different readers find different things in Mead is highlighted by Mary Catherine Bateson (this volume, 162–175): icons are not static, even though they may be perceived to be. Mead's intellectual ideas and contributions did not spring full-blown in the 1920s and remain the same until her death: her ideas changed and evolved over time. She even, on occasion, changed her mind or admitted errors. Mead herself was singularly cognizant of the importance of history in and for anthropology. To understand her work, one must realize that she believed that the discipline would, and should, proceed in an evolutionary and "scientific" way, progressing and building on the work of those who had gone before, and she was especially conscious of her own central role in this history. Time and context were so important to Mead that she insisted that every piece of paper in her office be dated (Bateson, this volume, 162–175).

Mead has often been criticized for not "up-dating" her books or modernizing the language, but she chose to let the originals stand as examples of how anthropologists thought and wrote at the time (see also Bateson, this volume, 162–175). For example, some of the language contained in Mead's (1977) *Letters from the Field* was inappropriate and perhaps even unacceptably racist in the 1970s. But she refused to change what she had written earlier and explicitly let these letters stand as they were, without revision,

so that they could serve as historical documents about how anthropologists operated during the period. She believed that to have changed the letters for publication would have been to tamper with history in some sense. She wrote: "Nevertheless, in these letters, except when an individual might somehow be harmed, I have let stand the statements made in a way I would not make them today" (Mead 1977:14). She described how she hoped these letters, unchanged from when they were written, would contribute to an understanding of what she believed was the evolution of theory and method in anthropology. One can justly question Mead's wisdom in publishing these letters at all, but one cannot do so without addressing the issue of the historical context in which they were produced and her recognition that the nature of anthropology at the time would be better understood as a result. [10]

The third way in which commentators have essentialized Mead relates directly to the realities of historical context and intellectual history: We fail to properly appreciate not only Mead, but also the development of anthropology in general, because we do not assess her work in its historical context. We are guilty of what historians call "presentism" (see also Bateson and Guddemi [this volume, 162–175 and 106–127]). Rather than examining her work in the context of other work produced at the time, we compare it with later work, and in doing so what stands out is, quite naturally, the way in which much of it clashes with more contemporary norms, theory, and practice. These are the elements that become the focus because they jump out in memorable ways and grab our attention. We do not sufficiently appreciate that different questions were of interest when she wrote, different concepts were used, and theoretical frameworks were just being developed. To chide Mead for not asking questions of interest to contemporary anthropologists is foolish; a study of the questions then central to the discipline might be productive.

Contributing to this phenomenon is the trajectory of Mead's professional life. Most of her fieldwork and her technical publications came early in her career, and little new work of this type was done after World War II (Manus is probably the only exception). She continued to be central and visible in the discipline until her death in 1978, but she chose other directions for her public and intellectual life. Her pervasive influence on American life and anthropology during the 50s, 60s, and 70s erroneously led many to evaluate her earlier ethnographic work on then-contemporary standards rather than in the context of earlier paradigms. We need to contrast her ethnographic work with that of other first-generation students of Boas, not with Marshall Sahlins or Clifford Geertz, or Marvin Harris. Even those who pessimistically believe that the discipline has not *progressed* much during the century of its existence must admit that it has *changed* considerably in the course of the twentieth century.

Several contributors to this volume illustrate the kinds of rich analysis that can result when Mead's work is examined in historical context, and many illustrate that Mead was creative, innovative, and "ahead of her time." As noted earlier, Sullivan (this volume, 91–105) explores the emerging meaning of central terms such as temperament, personality, and individual. Patricia Francis' meticulous scholarship (this volume, 74–90) reveals the close connections Mead was drawing between psychology and anthropology, even as a student, and thus deepens our understanding of the development of the so-called "culture and personality school." Francis also uses the Library of Congress Archives to reveal Mead's psychological background; her careful and detailed analysis reminds us that Mead's focus, often on the person and her/his relationship with culture, was of central interest to a variety of scholars in the first half of the century. If we are able to question the relevance of this individual-culture dichotomy or juxtaposition today, it is surely partly as a result of the work, especially Mead's, that has gone before.

In another paper (McDowell 2001) I argue that Mead's theoretical paradigm was too simple for her observational skills and that she was hampered by the paucity of anthropological theory during its early years. She observed and recorded things without a theoretical framework for them, and so her work almost always includes more sophisticated ethnography than theory (also see Feinberg 1988). This was certainly the case for the Mundugumor. Mead saw and recorded more than her conceptual framework accommodated: recognizing that furthers understanding of both her work and early disciplinary paradigms.

Methodology in the early part of the twentieth century was as rudimentary as theory. Especially interesting, though, are the ways in which Mead was consciously experimenting with methodology in this relatively new discipline. Eric Silverman (this volume, 128–141) documents the innovative ways that Mead and Bateson were using photography in their studies of the Iatmul. But he goes further and analyzes the creative and innovative ways in which the ethnography was conducted and constructed, and he notes that the project was not only ahead of its time but in some ways it "prefigured later twentieth-century developments in social thought..." (Silverman, this volume, 128–141). Thus, when viewed in historical context, the work was imaginative and ingenious as well as thorough and insightful. Mead's work on Bali (with Gregory Bateson) is innovative and probably unequalled, and no one who has looked at *all* of Mead's work on the Arapesh (with Reo Fortune) can fail to be impressed by the creativity and innovation in techniques.[11] Although published materials on the Tchambuli (Chambri) and Mundugumor are scarce, the Arapesh material is literally voluminous and methodologically highly experimental.[12] Tiffany (this volume, 19–45) shows how even Mead's

initial effort to take fieldwork "illustrations" in the early 1920s were counter to the cultural norms then prevalent in photography.

The same appreciation of history led Mead to arrange for the placement of her papers, published and unpublished, in an archive at the Library of Congress for the use of future scholars: anthropology's history was important. Mead's understanding of a larger cultural and historical context, however, was not as sharp and developed as her understanding of the discipline. Although she did not see the peoples she studied as suspended in time and unchanging, she did attribute to them less historical change than they warranted (see Gewertz [1981] for an example of Mead's misinterpretation of, or failure to recognize, historical events). More important, however, is the context in which she herself worked. Mead was clearly a positivist, and she was not aware of the extent to which she was a product of a particular history, society, and culture.[13] In fact, it is only relatively recently that anthropologists have begun to understand the extent to which disciplinary theories and methods are essentially folk ones that are circumscribed, if not bound, by the culture(s) which produced them. The fact that Mead did not realize she was wearing glasses does not relieve those of us who look at her work from examining her prescription and understanding what factors influenced her vision; it is that kind of reexamination that will yield important results for the discipline and beyond (see also Herzfeld 2001). What cultural baggage did Mead have, for example, about Samoa? What did she know of photography, how were photographs used, how were they posed or constructed at the time? How was she influenced by the broader cultural milieu in which she lived?

A second example of the kind of broader cultural and historical analysis that we need comes from di Leonardo (1998): Although often critical of Mead, she examines not only the things and people that influenced Mead herself but the cultural and historical world in which Mead worked. The result leads to an exceptionally deeper and richer understanding of Mead, her work, and her influence. More importantly, however, it leads di Leonardo to go beyond the individual, Margaret Mead, and ask critical questions that might not arise if only the work of an isolated individual were explored.

The last aspect of the essentialization of Mead is the way in which her fame and even notoriety made her an easy-to-appropriate symbol for a variety of referents. Freeman used her as a symbol of his dreaded cultural determinist. Other anthropologists, feminists, politicians, and media opportunists have "used" Mead in a way that she certainly never intended when she told her daughter to "use" her (Bateson, this volume, 162–175).

A prevalent and problematic usage is Mead as a symbol for the evils of colonialism throughout the Pacific and beyond. Do not misunderstand: No one can doubt that she was a part of the process, that she was relatively un-

aware of the effects she herself had, that she was perhaps an anthropological "modernist" of the most unattractive sort. Indeed, few anthropologists at the time were otherwise. Her legacy in the Pacific has been a strong one, and its effects not insignificant. Anthropology is beginning to face this reality more explicitly.[14] However, it is a serious error to equate the symbol with the thing symbolized. The editors of a volume entitled, *Confronting the Margaret Mead Legacy: Scholarship, Empire, and the South Pacific* (Foerstel and Gilliam 1992), call for a serious self-examination of the discipline's relationship to colonialism and the continuing oppression of peoples in the Pacific, something desperately needed. But when they focus on the symbol (Mead) rather than the referent (the devastating and continuing effects of colonialism) they not only essentialize Mead, but also distract themselves and their readers from their own goals. The focus on Mead makes it too easy to center critique on her rather than on the broader historical context of colonialism and anthropology's place in the wider forces that impacted populations throughout the world.

Reactions to the Freeman-Mead controversy within the anthropological community have been interesting. Support for Freeman came from the expected quarters: conservatives, simplistic sociobiologists, and his students.[15] What most interests me is the extent to which American sociocultural anthropologists came to her defense. In part their reaction was to a perceived attack on the significance of culture in human behavior, a justifiable reaction by almost any standard. But I think that there may have been more going on. Merrily Stover's paper (this volume, 142–161) directly addresses the importance of Mead as a symbol for *American* values. She argues that Mead is the consummate American hero who embodies core ideals: The pioneer spirit, a desire to improve society, an old-fashioned appreciation of diversity, the individual, and freedom. Mead's effusiveness, her confidence, her concern for "the common man" are quintessentially American. Many of di Leonardo's (1998) criticisms of Mead are really more appropriate comments on aspects of American culture. Mead's excessive reliance on the individual and psychology, for example, led her to disregard the larger system of political economy, and her profound future-orientation fostered her neglect of the forces of history.[16] Stover helps us to understand the meanings embodied by Mead and the reasons she resonated with Americans. And to the extent that American anthropologists were and are members of their own wider culture, she resonates with them as well. Freeman's attack on Mead was not just an attack on Boas and the role of culture in human behavior; it went deeper into the cultural heart of the United States than many of us care to admit.

There is more at issue here than Mead's personal place in the history of anthropology or the discipline's standards of scholarship, although these are

not unimportant. What anthropologists need to do is examine the way the discipline has developed and how it operates so that we can improve it in the future. We need to take that "militant middle-ground" espoused by Herzfeld (2001) and examine our history in order to revitalize the future. We need to understand past examples—especially "mistakes"—in all of their complexity in order to provide richer and deeper analyses and understandings. The papers in this volume are, I think, more than a good beginning.

NOTES

1. Many commentators have noted that it is difficult to characterize the results of the publication of Freeman's work as a "debate" when Mead was not present to respond. To say that Freeman had a "disagreement" with Mead is too gentle, while describing his work as an "attack" on her seems one-sided as well. Thus, I rely on the word "controversy."

2. Di Leonardo (1998) includes an analysis of some of the complexities contained within Mead's work, including internal contradictions, the development of ideas, and how the wider cultural milieu in which she worked affected her vision.

3. Most of these papers were originally presented at the February 2001 Annual Meetings of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania in Miami, Florida. The session, "Reflections on Pacific Ethnography in the Margaret Mead Centennial, 2001," was organized and chaired by Sharon W. Tiffany.

4. Throughout the media coverage of the publication of Freeman's (1983) volume, I was frequently surprised by the ease with which his analysis was accepted without much thought or investigation; a variety of professionals as well as laypeople were eager to disparage Mead without investigation (her supporters were sometimes similarly guilty). She had accrued meaning that seemed more appropriate to something other than a single human being.

5. Some Samoan critics have rightly commented on Mead's simplistic descriptions, especially in the context of comparisons with what she perceived to be American reality (see Malopa'upu [2002]).

6. In this context, she must be given credit, as Marcus and Fischer (1986) do, for being one of the earliest of American anthropologists to engage in what is today called "cultural critique."

7. In a similar vein, those who wish to comment on Mead's work in Manus should study *Kinship in the Admiralty Islands* (1934) as well as *Growing Up in New Guinea* ([1930b] 1968).

8. Derek Freeman availed himself of these archives, if somewhat selectively.

9. Boas did considerable work in biological anthropology himself, and his students continued his interests in physical anthropology. It is due to his influence and his insistence on the relevance of biology that American anthropology continues to maintain a "four-field"

constellation. Boas even had his student, African-American novelist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston, measuring heads on the streets of Harlem (Hemenway 1977:63)!

10. One of the most important points I make in teaching writing to college students is the importance of audience: it provides the structure for whatever gets written. Mead was very sensitive to audience, and wrote differently accordingly (as she should have). In examining *Letters from the Field* (Mead 1977), it is important to recognize that what is contained therein is just what the title states—letters that were written to friends and family. Although it may be legitimate to criticize the publication of letters, they cannot be evaluated and used in the same way as an ethnographic text.

11. For Bali, see Bateson and Mead (1942); for Arapesh, see Mead ([1935] 1968), ([1940] 1970), ([1947a] 1971), ([1947b] 1971), ([1949b] 1968).

12. See McDowell (1991) for an explanation of the differential treatment of the three societies included in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (Mead [1935] 1968).

13. For example, see Gewertz's (1984) analysis of the way in which Mead's American concept of the individual hindered her understanding of the Chambri (Tchambuli).

14. Again, let me refer to one Samoan critic: *Coming of Age in American Anthropology* by Chief Malopa'upo Isaia (2002).

15. A conservative political climate surely had something to do with the reception Freeman's book received. See also Bateson (this volume).

16. Di Leonardo's (1998:363) lively description of Mead is worth quoting in part:

> Mead embodied the mixed vices and virtues that commentators have long identified as particularly American: she was overly self-assured while underinformed, focused on selfhood to the exclusion of larger social and historical processes, imperializing, condescending and prescriptive while certain of her own fairness, and yet also prodigiously hard working, publicly engaged, buoyant, charming, and insightful in many other ways.

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CONTESTING THE EROTIC ZONE: MARGARET MEAD'S FIELDWORK PHOTOGRAPHS OF SAMOA

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Margaret Mead's photographs taken during her first ethnographic fieldwork in the South Pacific have received little scholarly attention. While some of Mead's images borrowed from earlier photographic conventions, her pictures also challenged prevailing representations of Polynesian women. Mead's photos experimented with alternative visual narratives about Samoan women's bodies and their everyday lives, in contrast to signature images of Pacific Islander women as commoditized sex objects, exoticized women of power, or as romanticized primitives. Mead's first effort at using a camera in the field provided a spectrum of representations useful for re-interpreting female embodiment and the gender politics of the photographic gaze.

Mead's Fieldwork Photographs of Samoa

WHEN MARGARET MEAD embarked upon her field trip to American Samoa in 1925, she took "a small Kodak, and a portable typewriter," among other possessions (Mead 1972:145). Decades later, in an introduction to the 1969 reprint edition of her monograph, *Social Organization of Manu'a*, Mead provided the most comprehensive account of her first attempt at ethnographic filmmaking that I have found to date in either her publications or archived papers. She wrote:

> The camera played a minimal role. I had no development equipment and films had to be developed within 24 hours, as there was then no method of keeping them dry. On the rare occasions when a ship was in, it was necessary to snatch a few pictures which serve as little more than illustrations—published in the original edition

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> of *Coming of Age in Samoa*, and in a few scattered comparative publications (Mead 1969:xix).

This passage suggests that Mead considered photography peripheral to her fieldwork enterprise in Samoa. Yet, Mead's camera work would prove to have a profound impact on her visual representations of female alterity in the South Seas.

By the turn of the twentieth-century, the Kodak "instamatic"—lightweight, inexpensive, and portable—was marketed in "Kodak girls" magazine advertisements as a woman's camera (Bernardin et al., 2003:11–12; Maxwell 1999:9–10). In addition to ease of handling, the portable camera "made possible the snapshot and the candid, informal images associated with the domestic and feminine, as well as with spontaneity, leisure, and tourism" (Bernardin et al., 2003:12). In sum, the new technology democratized the photographic process and enabled the amateur, like Mead, to experiment with a wide array of subjects in new contexts. While liberated by the handheld camera for use in the field, Mead was nonetheless restricted by the transport of her day to taking what she referred to as serviceable "illustrations." Indeed, many of her pictures suggest haste, as though the inter-island boat that carried mail and supplies was about to depart Ta'ū for Pago Pago harbor on Tutuila Island. A significant number of Mead's images also suggest little experience with basic rules of photographic composition. For example, subjects' bodies are cut off at the knees or feet; group photos are too tightly cropped; images contain too much foreground or background; and interior scenes are washed out by strong background light. These problems appear to have corrected to some extent, perhaps as Mead became more familiar with the camera and her subjects, although she was unable to see the results of her photographic work while still in the field.

The Archived Photographs

Mead's Samoan fieldwork pictures, archived in her papers at the Library of Congress, number approximately two hundred (LOC: MMP, Box P25). This count excludes duplicates, as well as a small number of photos of Samoa that others sent to Mead in subsequent years; the latter include images of Mead's brief return trip to American Samoa in 1971. In addition to the photographs taken *by* Mead, the archives contain a few pictures taken *of* Mead, either alone or posed with one or more Samoan girls. Some of these images are well known, having been reproduced in Mead's publications and reprint editions (e.g., Mead 1972:149, 152; 1977:33, 46; [1928c] 2001: front cover), in biographies of Mead (e.g., Banner 2003: photo insert); in newspaper or magazine

articles about Mead (Tiffany 2005b), and in the Mead 2001 Centennial Exhibition at the Library of Congress (Francis and Wolfskill 2001).

When I first started working with these images in 1997, they had neither been officially counted nor systematically catalogued. This situation changed when Mead's Samoa photographs, including many duplicates, were sorted and placed in plastic covers in preparation for the Mead 2001 Centennial Exhibition at the Library of Congress. Most of these photographs have never been published, and with the exception of the *taupou* (ceremonial maiden), Fa'amotu, none of Mead's archived photographs of Samoan women and girls were publicly identified and named (see note 6, below).

It appears that Mead initially considered her pictures as a personal record of her fieldwork experience to be shared within her circle of family and friends. Almost all of the original copies were removed from family album pages in order to archive them. Pieces of black velum remain glued to the backs of these original prints, which are 2½ by 4½-inch sepia-toned, half-frame exposures printed on velox paper. Some photos are heat-damaged and contain water spots; most are discolored and faded to varying degrees.[1]

Challenging Dominant Representations

Formerly banished to library and museum basements, early anthropological photographs have emerged as subjects of renewed academic interest (e.g., Pinney 1992; Quanchi 1997; Young 1998). Visual representations of indigenous cultures and peoples—and in particular women's bodies—provide a rich source of social mediations that may be re-read and re-positioned within broader photographic frameworks (Desmond 1999; Edwards 2001, 2003).

In this article, I discuss selected examples of Mead's fieldwork photographs of Samoa as cultural objects that deserve scholarly attention. As many theorists have noted, the open-ended, incomplete nature of photographs allows for alternative histories and meanings that "interrupt dominant narratives" (Edwards 2001:4). My purpose here is to suggest how Mead's photographs taken during her initial ethnographic research challenged dominant visual paradigms of female alterity in the South Pacific. While some of Mead's fieldwork images borrowed from earlier photographic conventions, her pictures also contested prevailing representations of Polynesian women. Mead's photos presented alternative visual texts about Samoan women's bodies and their everyday lives, in contrast to widely-disseminated representations of Polynesian women as commoditized sex objects, exoticized women of power, or as romanticized primitives.

Paradise and the Consumer Culture of Image-Making

The following discussion, exploratory and suggestive, focuses on my contemporary reading of Mead's photographs of Samoan girls and women framed by the dominant visual conventions of her day. "Remembering [Robert Louis] Stevenson's rhapsodies," Mead (1972:147) sailed into Pago Pago harbor, American Samoa on 31 August 1925. There she confronted a South Sea island world that was neither culturally nor visually neutral territory. On the day of her arrival, Mead (1977:23) described her initial impressions of Pago Pago harbor:

> The presence of the fleet today skews the whole picture badly. There are numerous battleships in the harbor and on all sides of the island, mostly not in the harbor because they make the water oily and spoil the governor's bathing. Airplanes scream overhead; the band of some ship is constantly playing ragtime.

Mead checked into the port town's shabby hotel "kept by half castes" (Samoans of inter-ethnic backgrounds), where she would soon become the solitary guest (Mead 1972:147; 1977:25; LOC: MMP, Box I2, Mead to Franz Boas, letter dated 17 September 1925). The hotel's claim to fame was its setting for *Rain*, the short story by W. Somerset Maugham (Mead 1972:147–148; 1977:23).[2] On the day of her arrival, Mead (1977:23, emphasis in original) had the opportunity to observe the tourist art marketplace, consisting of "*kava* bowls, tapa [bark cloth], grass [pandanus] skirts, models of outrigger canoes, bead necklaces and baskets," laid out in the *malae* (village commons) for sale by Samoans to sailors from the fleet and tourists from the cruise ship. Mead (1977:24) also remarked on the mission- and Western-inspired clothing she saw at the festivities:

> . . . the other natives [not participating in the ceremonial dance] were in the nondescript dress which they all wear, the women barefoot and in light shapeless dresses (some wore overblouses fitted in under the breasts in a most ungainly fashion), the men in white cotton shirts and lavalavas—cloth caught at the waist with a belt and falling a little below the knee—of various hideous striped American stuffs. And almost all carried black cotton umbrellas to make the scene finally ludicrous.

In sum, Mead's non-romanticized observations of a territorial port town overrun with naval personnel and tourists, as well as crowds of Samoan ven-

dors and merry-makers, collided with popular constructions of a pristine South Sea island unspoiled by colonial and capitalist influences.

South Seas Sirens

From a contemporary perspective, we may read Mead's commentaries, her ethnography, and her images of Samoa within the context of the South Pacific as a constructed "site of desire" (Jolly and Manderson 1997). The island world of beaches, palm trees, and nubile maidens constitutes an erotic borderland where cultures, images, and multiple meanings about women's bodies interact. The exotic appeal of Polynesian women, and their comparison (implicit or overt) with the physical attributes and gender roles of Western, white women, is essential for contextualizing visual images of the Pacific as an erotic playground and women's bodies as marketable commodities. These dominant conventions, in turn, serve to frame our understanding of Mead's camera work in Samoa.[3]

Studio portraits of Islander subjects posed with contrived backdrops and props were widely disseminated in the United States and Europe in a variety of media, including postcards, photographs, and stereo views. These highly mediated images of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries variously depicted Polynesian women as colonial "Belles," "Venuses," and "Wood Nymphs," or as exoticized women of power (Beets 2000; Maxwell 1999; Nordström 1992; Webb 1995; cf. Quanchi, n.d.). Studio creations of South Seas Sirens reclining in front of painted backdrops depicting "tropical" vegetation—suggesting rusticity and a "natural" landscape—produced a formulaic "marker of place" for consumers (Nordström 1995:25). Images of these "odalisques" were explicit in their eroticized messages of voyeurism and appropriation. "The end result," according to Beets (2000:17), was "a calculated redundancy of the native woman into a commercial object, created under the veil of aesthetic or ethnographic representation."

Most likely, Mead had seen such mass-marketed images prior to her trip to the South Pacific. Collecting stereographs and albums filled with commercial images of exotic places and peoples was a popular form of domestic entertainment for late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century tourists and armchair travelers (Nordström 1991a, 1991b; Webb 1998). According to Nordström's (1995:11–13) conservative estimate, some fifteen thousand photographs *of* Samoa and its peoples (not counting duplicates) were produced in Samoa and widely distributed for popular consumption between 1870 and 1925 (see also Nordström [1991/1992] and Webb [1995:189–190; 1998]).

The size and persistence of the image industry in Samoa seems remarkable for such a small colonial outpost that was not even listed in the 1920

edition of *Pacific Ports Manual*.[4] Yet the port towns of Apia and Pago Pago in the western and eastern regions (respectively) of the archipelago were international travel stopovers for east-west Pacific voyages. By the 1920s, Hawai'i and beyond were growing South Pacific tourist attractions. Samoa was the subject of many articles in American and Australian illustrated media, such as *Asia*, *Travel*, and *Walkabout* (Sydney), among others (Quanchi, n.d.; Tiffany 2005b). Meanwhile, the image of the Hawaiian "*hula* girl" had become a well-established marker of exotic eroticism, representing "a paradisiacal past, unspoiled by modernity yet willing to be its entertaining hostess" (Desmond 1999:88). Indeed, a generic version of the *hula*-girl image influenced the first edition's dust jacket of Mead's (1928a) *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Tiffany 2001, 2004). By the time of Mead's fieldwork in Polynesia, mass-produced images marketing the Pacific as paradise and islander women as exotica had combined with tourism and other rapidly-expanding "industries of culture."[5]

Mead's Images of Samoan Women and Girls

Most of Mead's archived photographs depict girls and women, many of whom were presumably informants.[6] Mead's images lack the artifice of studio creations and concern for the exquisite face and form. Rather, her photographs show women and girls of differing ages, body sizes, and shapes. Some are slim and small-boned; others have solid bodies—broad shoulders and hips suitable for childbearing. In addition, Mead's Polynesian subjects typically wear everyday clothes. Their Western-style skirts and dresses, *lāvalavas* (erroneously referred to as "sarongs" by foreigners), and over-blouses are often soiled, torn, or patched cotton trade cloth—thin from frequent washings. Further, Mead's images of female embodiment offered, as we shall see, an alternate narrative to dominant visual representations of seductive Belles awaiting the male gaze.

South Seas Wood Nymphs

The conventional image of the South Sea Nymph is perhaps best exemplified by *National Geographic* aesthetics of a seductive Islander woman surrounded by lush foliage and palm trees—generic markers of paradise—suggesting the illusion of an exotic woman inhabiting an unspoiled, timeless world. Figure 1 shows Mead with an unnamed companion, probably one of her adolescent informants. Both wear solid-color *lāvalavas* (a wrapped, two-meter width of trade store fabric worn above the breasts or at the waist). Both are adorned with necklaces of banana-leaf strips. Mead wears a bracelet twist of

FIGURE 1. **"Margaret Mead with Samoan Companion." Untitled, anonymous photograph, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

banana-leaf, while her companion's wrist is adorned with a flower tie. The unidentified photographer has used an exotically-angled tree to situate both

subjects as versions of the Wood Nymph motif posed within a frame of lush vegetation.

This image (Figure 1) may be interpreted in several ways. For instance, it may be read as a *National Geographic Magazine* image of colonial relations of gender and race, in which the white woman with the fashionably bobbed hair style of the 1920s, asserts the privilege of bodily contact—in this instance, of having her arm about the shoulders of an indigenous woman. It is unlikely that Mead (who measured five feet, two-and-half inches [Mead 1977:19]), towered over many of her adolescent or adult informants. Yet, the pose of Mead's Samoan companion suggests that she is shorter, thereby bestowing upon the ethnographer greater "social weight" (quoted in Lutz and Collins 1993:204, note 11). One may also read this picture as an example of the adventurous traveler/anthropologist's "I was there" image, which serves "a validating function by proving that the author was *there*, that the account is a first-hand one, brought from the field rather than from library or photographic archives" (Lutz and Collins 1993:203–204, emphasis in original).

This picture, as well as others taken of Mead during her Samoan research, no doubt served the function of authenticating the ethnographer's presence in the field. However, Figure 1 elides efforts to contextualize it solely in terms of colonial relations, or as providing what Nordström (1995:35) refers to as "gratuitous proof" of Mead's ethnographic presence. Figure 1 is itself an ethnographic artifact that legitimizes Mead's status as a participant-observer. It also suggests Mead's social engagement with her adolescent informant, who doubtless enjoyed the novelty of the anthropologist's company and attention. Mead wrote to her advisor and mentor, Franz Boas, that "My porch room is crowded from dawn to midnight with all and sundry maidens" (LOC: MMP, Box I2, Mead to Franz Boas, letter dated 15 November 1925; available online [Côté 2004]). In a subsequent letter, which justified her decision to live on Ta'ū Island with the Holt family in the Naval dispensary, rather than in a Samoan household, Mead further noted:

> Natives of all ages and sexes and ranks drift on and off my porch in a casual fashion. . . . I have to lock the door to keep the adolescents out, and yawn prodigiously to get rid of them at midnight. This fact more than compensates for the slight loss in linguistic practice (LOC: MMP, Box I2, Mead to Franz Boas, letter dated 29 November 1925; available online [Côté 2004]).

In short, Mead's accessibility, and the enthusiasm of Samoan girls for extended visits with her, fostered a rapport evident in the ethnographer's photographs and her text (Tiffany 2005b).

FIGURE 2. **"A Spirit of the Wood." Caption and photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

The viewer senses a social engagement between the two young women in Figure 1 that transcends their posing for a photograph. Indeed, the viewer can well imagine the flurry of preparations necessary for getting dressed and selecting a suitable space for posing. Mead's correspondence, photographs, and published works offer insights into how her Samoan fieldworking experience and research are framed as gendered narratives of family connections and negotiations of public and domestic spaces. Figure 1 is a photo suitable for a family album, "a predominantly feminine cultural form, as a visual medium for family genealogy and storytelling" (Chambers 2003:97). The image of these two modestly-dressed girls evokes youthful confidence and a domestic intimacy, affirming familial ties and a sense of belonging. Figure 1 also suggests a distinctive aspect of Mead's photographic enterprise. Rather than privileging herself as the sole arbiter of the photographic process, Mead engaged in a shared exchange in which Samoans themselves helped shape the visual and expressive frame of the picture, a point that I return to below. By contrast, it would be difficult to imagine a photograph of Bronislaw Malinowski, dressed in indigenous cloth, with an arm casually resting on the shoulders of a Trobriander informant (see Young 1998).

Mead's picture (Figure 2) of a Samoan adolescent uses the same exotic tree (seen in Figure 1) as a prop. This image, published in the first and Blue Ribbon editions of *Coming of Age in Samoa* (William Morrow), bears the caption, "A spirit of the wood" (Mead 1928a: photo facing page 122). Note that the girl's body seems to merge with the tree's thick trunk and forked branches. Indeed, the vegetation nearly overwhelms the subject: her right arm disappears into the foliage, which also obscures much of her lower body, while her left hand clutches a flowering branch. This formulaic tropical landscape, perhaps suggested by the anonymous photographer of Mead and her companion in Figure 1 (above), suggests the signature framing of the Polynesian female body as "Wood Nymph."

However, the girl's body, pose, and clothing do not fit the popular culture paradigm of the South Sea Siren or Nymph, despite Mead's caption. The Samoan girl in Figure 2, probably one of Mead's informants, wears a modestly-draped, dark-colored *lāvalava*, which appears to be the same cloth Mead's Samoan companion wore in Figure 1 (above). The subject of Figure 2 may have also borrowed the banana-leaf necklace that Mead wore in the previous image (Figure 1). A striking aspect of Figure 2 is the girl's long hair that frames her shoulders like a cape—presenting a contrast to Figure 1, with Mead's 1920s bobbed style and her Samoan companion's off-the-shoulder-hair, probably pinned up in back. Figure 2 also presents a different kind of looking relationship. In contrast to conventionalized Wood Nymph images, Mead's picture suggests the possibility of an egalitarian exchange between

the photographer and the subject. The girl's grin and self-confident pose suggest a relaxed intimacy with the photographer. Mead's visual narrative opens a discursive space that does not easily fit the constructed artifact of South Sea alterity framed by the authoritative gaze of the camera's eye.

Negotiating Photographic Spaces

Sharp contrasts of shade and light within open-sided Samoan structures made photography a very difficult enterprise for Mead. Thus, many of her interior images are "washed out" by the intensely bright background. This technical problem encouraged Mead to consider alternative, exterior spaces for taking photos by using architectural backdrops of woven pandanus "blinds" (lowered between house posts), propped backgrounds of bark cloth (*tapa*), and vegetation (cf. Nordström 1995:34–35).

Figure 3 is one of Mead's best-composed images, and it appears to be one of the few framed with the idea of conveying ethnographic information. Reproduced in *Letters from the Field* (Mead 1977:39), this picture is captioned: "Woman scraping mulberry bark to make tapa [bark cloth]." The woman's arms form an aesthetic triangle with the plank board, which she uses to scrape and soften strips of paper mulberry piled in a large, hollowed-out

FIGURE 3. **"Woman Scraping Mulberry Bark to Make *Tapa* [Bark Cloth]." Caption and photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

wood container at her side. The smaller object near her is a tin can, probably filled with water to help soften the bark strips during the tedious process of scraping. Described as the daughter of a chief, this mother wears workaday clothes, consisting of a sleeveless shift worn over a *lāvalava*.[7] We see her engaged in the labor-intensive task of producing cloth for household use or ceremonial redistribution. Mead's picture (Figure 3) further suggests that a woman's work life accommodates childcare. The photograph is remarkable for the child's intense gaze, which is focused on his mother's face, whereas, the woman's attention is directed to the task at hand. The child's expression is one of uncertainty and cranky displeasure; in other words, the child appears to be *musu*, an "attitude," according to Mead ([1928b] 1961:122), "which expresses unwillingness and intractability."[8] Mead's image thus disrupts the conventional visual story of happy children in paradise.

Islanders eager for photographs of themselves and family members most likely suggested suitable outdoor backgrounds to Mead—as they frequently did to me in American and Western Samoa during my own periods of fieldwork. During Mead's time, Samoans would have welcomed an opportunity for taking family portraits that also displayed valued possessions, such as bark cloth and pandanus mats. In other words, ethnographers such as Mead (and myself) had incomplete control over the process of picture-taking in Samoa.

Occasionally, Mead subverted "behind-the-scenes" negotiations that occurred prior to picture-taking by showing others responsible for holding a prop in place. In Figure 4, the viewer is privy to Samoan stagecraft. Fingers hold the bark cloth at the lower left side of the backdrop, while the right side is framed with a partial view of a man's kneeling figure. He is dressed in a long-sleeved white shirt and white *lāvalava*; this is Sunday church-going clothing for men in general, and daily wear for pastors. The children, by contrast, are not dressed in their "Sunday best." Both stand rather awkwardly on a pandanus floor mat laid outside a traditional, thatch-roofed structure; inside, on the left, the viewer glimpses seated figures silhouetted against the light. The girl's expression is a mixture of squinting and scowling as she holds a can of flowers in her right hand and stares stolidly at the camera. Her skirt and top appear soiled and thread-bare; her legs display tell-tale marks of tropical sores. Looking uncertain, the boy glances off-camera, perhaps to a relative who is "directing" the scene. The boy wears a *lāvalava* that he holds at the waist, perhaps to keep the cloth from slipping. In contrast to the girl's lack of adornment, the boy's costume includes a flower necklace that is much too long and hangs loose at the ends. The boy also holds a small-scale "fly-whisk" *(fue)* of braided coconut fiber (a symbol of talking-chief [*tulāfale*] status). The object, slung over the boy's right shoulder in the chiefly manner, appears to be a miniaturized artifact produced for the tourist market.

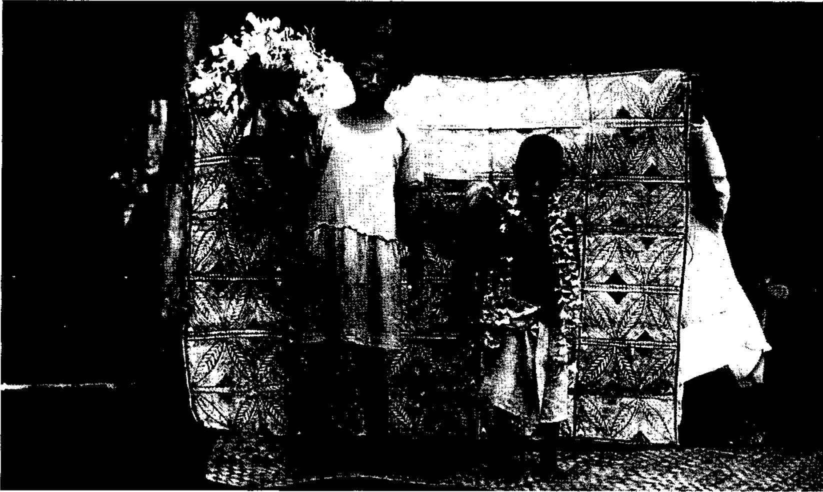

FIGURE 4. **"Children in Front of Bark Cloth." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

The overall effect of this image, probably taken as a request for a family memento, suggests two points. First, like Figure 3 (above), Mead's photograph contradicts the dominant image of carefree, laughing children in the South Seas. Rather, the children in Figure 4 appear confused and annoyed by adult demands to maintain their awkward poses before the camera. Mead's picture captures this discomfort. Secondly, Mead's image shows the viewer how Islanders participate in the crafting of photographic events. In this instance, it is likely that Samoans, rather than Mead herself, initiated the bark cloth backdrop—perhaps to show off a valued item of family wealth—as well as the children's props. In other words, Mead's picture suggests the interactive processes of preparing for this photographic encounter: retrieving for display a fine example of ceremonial cloth, dressing the children, and coaching them in the use of props. Mead's image permits the viewer to go behind the scenes, as it were, to witness the production of this domestic tableau.

Adolescents in Grass Skirts

In the series of images that follow (Figures 5–8), the viewer sees five Samoan girls, probably Mead's informants, "dressed up" in various garments

of bark cloth and pandanus—cloth typically worn by women of rank during a ceremonial event. The girls' preparations for picture-taking included tying pandanus skirts over their trade cloth garments, adjusting Western-style or bark-cloth tops, donning necklaces of shells, beads, or leaves, and tucking a decorative flower by an ear or in the hair. Most of these goods were shared among them. Seizing the novelty and photographic opportunity that Mead offered, these girls were, no doubt, delighted to adorn themselves and to wear cloth associated with Samoan "high culture" of social rank and public ceremonies.

What is notable about this set of images (Figures 5–8) is their lack of sentimentality. The exotic romanticism of a Polynesian girl wearing a "grass" (pandanus) skirt is absent in Mead's pictures. These "dressed-up" adolescents contest generic "*hula* girl" images by showing, for example, the charming naiveté of a trade cloth *lāvalava* showing beyond the hem of a borrowed pandanus skirt (see Figures 5–7). Neither the authoritative gaze of the "studio creation," nor the representational ideals of Hellenic feminine beauty—associated with the photography of Francis Flaherty (1925a, 1925b)—exerted a major influence on Mead's fieldwork images of Samoan girls and women (cf. Jolly 1997a:130; Nordström 1995:31–36).

In Figure 5, we see a young woman posing in an exquisite bark cloth top. She holds a large hibiscus blossom in her hand. Her everyday, trade cloth *lāvalava* shows beneath the bottom of an elaborate, shell-decorated pandanus skirt, which appears ragged at the bottom, suggesting historical value as a family heirloom. She smiles wryly as she looks off camera, perhaps at one of her companions who assisted with preparations for this photograph. We see a poised and confident young woman in Figure 5, sharing an intimacy with a relative or friend on the sidelines.

This younger girl (Figure 6), shown with a hibiscus tucked in her stylish, bobbed hair, is dressed in the same ceremonial garments worn by the subject in Figure 5 (above). Like the other adolescents in this photographic sequence, her pose and relaxed expression convey self-confidence.

This girl's solemn look (Figure 7) is heightened by a squint, perhaps because of the sun. Her Western style blouse and simple pandanus skirt contrast with the intricately woven fan (probably a prized family possession) that she holds out flat in her right hand for the viewer to admire. The girl's pandanus skirt is too short, revealing a great deal of her dark trade-cloth *lāvalava* or skirt beneath.

The last image in this set (Figure 8) shows two girls seated on a pandanus floor mat against a foliage background. Both girls look solemnly at the camera. Their hands (which, unfortunately, Mead cropped) rest lightly on their pandanus skirts, used by the subjects of Figures 5–7 (above). The girls' side-

FIGURE 5. **"Young Woman Wearing Bark Cloth and Pandanus." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

by-side pose invites the viewer to examine their dignified expressions and the variability of Polynesian facial features. The younger girl on the left wears the same dark cotton blouse, in a more risqué, off-the shoulder style, as well as the same pandanus skirt of the girl with the fan in Figure 7. The older girl in Figure 8 wears the same bark cloth top and elaborate skirt of the subjects shown in Figures 5 and 6. Note too that Figure 8 includes a by-stander on the right; she wears a loose-fitting garment, resembling a full-length body sack.

Mead's (1973:ix–x) careful attention to protecting her subjects' identities means that we know virtually nothing about these specific girls, nor how

FIGURE 6. **"Adolescent Girl in Ceremonial Cloth." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

they might be related to one another. The ethnographer's motive for taking this photo sequence may have been twofold: to satisfy Islanders' demands for photo mementos; and to have a visual record of her informants. Furthermore, the candid intimacy of these pictures reflects Mead's dense social interactions with her adolescent informants described in *Coming of Age in Samoa*. She wrote:

> I concentrated upon the girls of the community. I spent the greater part of my time with them. . . . Speaking their language, eating

FIGURE 7. **"Adolescent Girl with Pandanus Skirt and Fan." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

> their food, sitting barefoot and cross-legged upon the pebbly floor, I did my best to minimise the differences between us and to learn to know and understand all the girls of three little villages on the coast of the little island of Tau, in the Manu'a Archipelago (Mead [1928b] 1961:10).

This photographic set (Figures 5–8) is of interest in another context as well. Mead's pictures situate the five subjects within a domestic space. Each image is spatially intimate and contained, as though the girls, in prepara-

FIGURE 8. **"Two Seated Girls in Ceremonial Cloth." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

tion for this unique photo opportunity, have domesticated a public space outdoors. Wearing cloth designed for use in public, ceremonial spaces involves domestic social interactions and the sharing of valued goods with others.

Further, these pictures invite the viewer to re-examine essentialist visual scripts of Polynesian women and girls and to consider their individual and collective social presence. According to Berger (1972:46):

> . . . a woman's presence expresses her own attitude to herself, and defines what can and cannot be done to her. Her presence is manifest in her gestures, voice, opinions, expressions, clothes, chosen surroundings, taste—indeed there is nothing she can do which does not contribute to her presence.

Following Berger, I suggest that Mead provides a visual insight into her informants' respective social presences, which were negotiated (for example, in terms of dress and surroundings) with each other, and with others who assisted with preparations but who were not themselves photographed. The ethnographer was also part of this interactive process, as each adolescent created her public self for purposes of a photographic family record.

FIGURE 9. **"Motherhood." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

Motherhood

Figure 9 is a domestic image of three solemn mothers who stand together on a pandanus floor mat placed outside a traditional style structure. The woman in the middle holds a newborn, its face and body turned toward the sun, perhaps to ensure a better view for the camera. The woman on the right wears workaday clothes, a soiled and tattered *lāvalava*; perhaps she lacked the opportunity for a quick change before the picture was taken. Her loose-fitting top—most likely a hasty slip-on for the appearance of modesty—appears ready to slide down her shoulders as the baby searches for her breast. The woman on the left apparently had time to place a shell band about her head and neck, and perhaps to pull a sleeveless shift over her *lāvalava*. Note too that the three infants are modestly covered—in contrast to the common household and village scene of bare-bottomed babies and small children.

As we have seen, Mead's correspondence and publications noted her dislike of mission-inspired clothing. Perhaps part of Mead's intent was to show the solemn dignity of these women, despite the "nondescript," "shape-

FIGURE 10. **"Laundry at Low Tide." Untitled photograph by Margaret Mead, 1925–26, probably Ta'ū Island.** (Photograph reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

less," and "ungainly" clothing that covered their substantial Polynesian bodies (Mead 1977:24; LOC: MMP, Box I2, Mead to Franz Boas, letter dated 17 September 1925; available online [Côté 2004]). Unlike twentieth- and twenty-first-century images of South Seas Sirens unburdened with demanding babies and stretch marks, Mead's photograph of these Samoan mothers (Figure 9) emphasizes the Gauguin-inspired qualities of their aesthetic bodies framed by various styles of trade-store cloth. The women stand together as a kind of artistic triptych for the veneration of motherhood. They lack the Euro-centric ideal of feminine beauty and dreamy self-absorption found, for example, in Francis Flaherty's (1925a, 1925b) photographs taken during Robert Flaherty's filming of *Moana of the South Seas* in Western Samoa in 1923-1924 (Tiffany 2001:27–29, 41 [note 8]).[9] Mead's photograph, by contrast, rejects such a constructed fantasy of paradise by offering the possibility of visualizing the "lived realities" (Suaalii 2000:106) of Samoan women's domestic responsibilities and the demands of childcare.

Finally, we see three young people seated on the beach at low tide with a large tin full of clothes (Figure 10). This domestic image suggests a hot sun and menial work, as well as an opportunity for relaxed sociability among young people, who are probably relatives. The photograph highlights the unconventional notion that a man living in paradise might actually engage in the mundane labor of doing his own laundry, despite the presence of two capable

women who could (or should) do it for him. Consumers of mass-marketed images of paradise would doubtless have ambivalent feelings about Mead's picture. This is not a conventional palm-tree-studded beach, rich in erotic possibilities; and South Seas Sirens don't do laundry, even their own. As Lutz and Collins (1993:138), note, "the picture contrasting modern and traditional is a fundamental building block of many *National Geographic* articles on the non-Western world," and is especially common in *Geographic* narratives about the Pacific. Yet, one could argue that Mead's photograph in Figure 10 neither celebrates nor deplores the theme of technological "progress" (see also Appendix 3 in Mead [1928b] 1961:266–277). The foreign intrusion of a tin wash tub and a cardboard container (of laundry soap?) lying on the sand precludes the fantasy of a South Sea culture unspoiled by Western goods and litter. Rather, Mead's image suggests that Samoans go about their daily lives, adopting whatever Western objects are deemed useful.

Concluding Reflections: On Contesting the Erotic Zone

Margaret Mead's fieldwork photographs were not intended for use as a research tool. They served as a personal visual record of her ethnographic experiences and, perhaps most importantly, of her Islander informants and friends in the field. Yet, Mead's use of a camera in Samoa is more than mere historical curiosity. Mead's images provided an important point of departure for reinterpreting the photographic conventions of her day. Mead's photographs challenged commercial images of eroticized female bodies and standardized "scenics" of beaches and palm trees that informed representations of the South Seas in Western popular culture. In addition, Mead contextualized the lives of Pacific Islander women by presenting a different kind of "trading gazes" (Bernardin et al., 2003:3–4), in which interactions between photographer and subject moved beyond dichotomous relations of an authoritative gaze and the subordinate object of that gaze.

For Mead, the reality of a South Sea culture was the household—domestic space occupied by women and children, whom she fore-grounded in her ethnographic best-seller, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, published in 1928 and still in print. Mead used her camera to take photographs of Islanders who wanted mementos of themselves or of other family members to frame and hang in their homes. The Samoan girls and women in Mead's images are neither eroticized nor romanticized; they are daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, and friends. Mead interacted with them, observed them, and wrote about them as individuals connected by multi-layered social ties of kinship, status, and community (Tiffany 2005a). Mead also wanted "illustrations" of her fieldwork site—to identify a place, individual people, and a domestic space

where she too belonged during her period of research. Her photographs were glued into albums—itself a domestic endeavor—for her own circle of family and friends to share the ethnographer's experiences of her "first South Sea island" (Mead 1972:147).

Mead's Samoan photographs often appear amateurish, in comparison with the multitude of well-composed pictures associated with Reo Fortune's and Mead's camera work in Manus and New Guinea, which are also archived in the Mead Papers at the Library of Congress and remained little explored by scholars. Furthermore, Mead's images of Samoa do not demonstrate the theoretical sophistication of Mead's later filmmaking work in Bali with Gregory Bateson (Bateson and Mead 1942; Sullivan 1999). Nonetheless, Mead's initial fieldwork photography is historically significant, as it revealed Samoan women and girls in social contexts that challenged orientalist representations of Polynesian women and their bodies. There are, of course, many ways to read a photograph, and the modest interpretations offered here are by no means definitive. Margaret Mead's images of Samoa have many other stories to tell.

NOTES

This article began as a paper presented 16 February 2001 at the symposium, *Reflections on Pacific Ethnography in the Margaret Mead Centennial, 2001*, during the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) annual meetings in Miami, Florida. The article also incorporates portions of another paper, "Narratives of Samoa in the Margaret Mead Archives," presented 22 March 2002, at the Library of Congress symposium, *Archival Gold: Treasures from the Margaret Mead Collection*.

I am indebted to the late Mary Wolfskill, former Head, Reference and Reader Service Section of the Manuscript Division at the Library of Congress, and her helpful staff, for their generous assistance with my research on the Margaret Mead Papers. Patricia Francis, co-curator of the Library of Congress Exhibition, "Margaret Mead: Human Nature and the Power of Culture" (November 2001–May 2002), kindly responded to my numerous questions. I am grateful to Dr. Mary Catherine Bateson and the Institute for Intercultural Studies for permission to reproduce photographs and other material from the Margaret Mead Papers at the Library of Congress. I also wish to thank Kathleen J. Adams and Gerald Sullivan for their comments on earlier drafts of this article. Any deficiencies of interpretation are, of course, my own.

1. Mead's photographs reproduced in this article were retouched, using the computer program, *Adobe Photoshop 7.0*, in order to reduce fading and discolorations and to lighten shadowed faces. The composition and subject matter of Mead's images have not been altered or edited in any way.

2. Mead (1972:147) noted in her highly-edited autobiography, *Blackberry Winter*, that she had seen a theater performance of *Rain* in New York prior to her departure for the South Pacific.

3. The literature on female alterity and social constructions of orientalist "sites of desire" is vast. Works that influenced my thinking about these issues in the context of Mead's Samoan fieldwork images include: Desmond (1999); Graham-Brown (1988); Lutz and Collins (1993); Maxwell (1999); Nordström (1995); Stephen (1993); Sturma (2002); and Willis and Williams (2002).

4. I am grateful to Gerald Sullivan for bringing this reference to my attention.

5. I have borrowed the term "industries of culture" from Buck (1993:173). Issues of popular culture and tourism in the South Pacific are discussed further in Tiffany (2001, 2005b).

6. Mead took several precautions to protect her informants' identities. She discussed this issue on numerous occasions in her publications and correspondence (e.g., Mead 1972:154; 1973:xii–xiv; MMP: LOC, Box I2, Mead to Derek Freeman, letter dated 6 November 1968). Part of Mead's letter to Freeman is available online (Francis and Wolfskill 2001). See also the articles by Côté and Francis (this volume) for further discussion of Mead's Samoan fieldwork and methods.

7. The same woman, dressed in ceremonial cloth, posed with her child for a second photograph reproduced in the first edition of *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead 1928a:photo facing page 52). Mead's fieldwork photographs, which were published in the first edition of *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928 and later in the Blue Ribbon Morrow edition of 1932, were not reproduced in subsequent reprints of the book, including the most recent centennial edition published by HarperCollins in 2001 (Mead [1928] 2001).

8. Milner's (1966:152) Samoan-English dictionary defines *musu* as being "utterly uncooperative, sullen and obdurate."

9. Mead's "picture-naming test," described in Appendices 2 and 5 of *Coming of Age in Samoa* ([1928b] 1961:262–265, 289–292), used three photographs from Frances Flaherty's portfolio published in the May 1925 issue of *Asia Magazine.* Mead received a mailed copy of this issue while in Samoa (cf. Mead 1969:xix; 1972:154; see also Ruby [2000:85, Mead to Jay Ruby, letter dated 20 September 1976]). Francis (this volume) provides further discussion of Mead's picture-naming test. For additional discussion of *Moana* and other early cinematic narratives of the Pacific, see Jolly (1997a, 1997b), Ruby (2000:67–93), Sturma (2002:127–132), and van Trigt (2000).

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MARGARET MEAD'S OTHER SAMOA: REREADING *SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF MANU'A*

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Derek Freeman focused his attention on Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* to such an extent that her ethnography of Samoa, *Social Organization of Manu'a*, has been neglected. This professional monograph demonstrates Mead's credibility as an ethnographer and as a modern student of social organization. While Freeman believed that Mead was young, naïve, and gullible, a closer examination of *Social Organization of Manu'a* indicates that she was energetic, resourceful, perceptive, and theoretically sophisticated. Any evaluation of Mead's Samoan research should include this enduring contribution to our knowledge of the islands.

IN HIS CRITIQUE of Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928; (hereafter, *COA*), Derek Freeman argued that Mead's Samoa was a "myth." For Freeman, this truth was so self-evident that he shifted his focus from Samoa to Mead herself, asking why she got Samoa "wrong," and what led her to create this mythical paradise. His answers, spelled out in *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead: A Historical Analysis of Her Samoan Research* (Freeman 1999), focused on Mead's alleged personal and professional inadequacies. Freeman stated that Mead was hoaxed by young Samoan women who told her innocent lies that she believed as the truth, publishing them in *COA*. She was, in Freeman's (1997:68) words, "grossly hoaxed" and, as a result, "completely misinformed and misled virtually the entire anthropological establishment."

Mead was not only misled by Samoans but also "fatefully hoaxed" by her own inexperience and preconceptions. According to Freeman, she was a novice fieldworker and an ideologically committed cultural determinist who spent too little time in Samoa, did not master the language, and therefore

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could not understand the culture she was attempting to describe. She thus became an unwitting accomplice in her own hoaxing. For Freeman, Mead's failure to accurately describe Samoa was largely the result of these personal and professional inadequacies.

Martin Orans, James Côté, Serge Tcherkézoff, and I have written elsewhere about the lack of evidence for Freeman's hoaxing argument, and the availability of more plausible alternative explanations.[1] We have also written about Samoa itself, and about how Freeman created controversy by misrepresenting Mead and other authorities on the islands. While the specific arguments that Freeman made about hoaxing and Samoa are relatively easy to critique, his more general portrayal of Mead as a young, naive, and gullible fieldworker has been pernicious, tarnishing her reputation. Indeed, in a profession where fieldwork is fundamental to an ethnographer's credibility and identity, Freeman's portrayal of Mead was especially damning.

In this article, I will show that Freeman's argument about Mead's alleged incompetence based on his interpretation of *COA* is not supported by a broader examination of her Samoan research. Mead's ethnography of Samoa, *Social Organization of Manu'a* (hereafter, *SOM*), was first published in 1930 and reprinted in a second edition with a new introduction by the author in 1969. It provides an important and underused source for rethinking Mead's credibility as an ethnographer. This work demonstrates that Mead was a committed fieldworker and sophisticated thinker, conducting her fieldwork under challenging circumstances and building on a limited amount of scholarship about Samoan social organization by other specialists.

Two Books: One Ethnography

Freeman focused his attention on *COA*, treating it as if it was an ethnography and Mead's most important work on Samoa. However, *COA* was not an ethnography in the conventional sense; rather it was a popular work of social commentary written for a mass audience. As Mead herself noted, it was a book that used ethnographic data to discuss how Americans might learn about adolescence from the study of other cultures. Her anticipated audience consisted of teachers, educators, and parents. The book, written and edited with this audience in mind, was published as a trade book. According to Mead (1972a:179; see also Côté [this volume]), the original manuscript, entitled "The Adolescent Girl in Samoa," was submitted to her publisher, William Morrow, as a relatively straightforward descriptive study with a minimum of social commentary. At the request of Morrow, Mead added chapters and deliberately made the manuscript more interesting and provocative for a general audience, sometimes worrying that she had gone too far.

Coming of Age in Samoa became a bestseller, and because it was so visible, it also became a target for criticism in America and, later, in Samoa. When Mead briefly revisited American Samoa in 1971, young Samoans criticized her depiction of them in *COA*. Mead responded that she had written the book in another era, not anticipating that Samoans themselves would later read it; it was a book that she had written about Samoans but not *for* them (Mead 1972:34). Although today anthropologists accept the responsibility of writing with indigenous audiences in mind, this did not become a major concern of the profession until the 1960s.

While writing for a broad American audience, Mead did not neglect her peers in cultural anthropology. Her ethnographic monograph, *SOM*, was written for anthropologists, contained no social commentary, and was published in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin series. It has languished in the shadow of its best-selling counterpart to such an extent that Freeman could treat it almost as a footnote to *COA* instead of acknowledging the importance of *SOM* in evaluating Mead's ethnographic research.

Mead's two books on Samoa stand in stark contrast to each other. *Coming of Age in Samoa* was a popular trade book about adolescence and sex; *Social Organization of Manu'a* was a narrowly professional monograph on social organization. *COA*, boldly comparative, was ultimately about America and how adolescence might be envisioned through the lens of Samoan culture. *SOM* was a sober, more cautious, scholarly ethnography on Samoa—her most important book on Samoa from a professional perspective. *SOM* can be criticized, but it cannot be neglected. Had this been the only book that she published on Samoa, she would have been remembered as a competent and pioneering ethnographer. Had this been the first book that she published on Samoa, *COA* might have been received somewhat differently.

Of course, most scholars who study Samoa take *SOM* for granted. It is a standard reference, and a number of Samoan specialists regard it as her best work on the islands. Even a casual reading of *SOM* reveals that it is a solid contribution, as Nancy McDowell (1980) noted in her assessment of Mead's Oceanic ethnographies. And it is *SOM* that was used by Marshall Sahlins (1957) and Irving Goldman (1970) in their synthetic and comparative works on ancient Polynesian social and political organization. It is therefore unusual that Freeman minimized its significance.

Thoroughly Modern Mead

Mead's analytical framework in *SOM* is remarkably modern. In 1928, when she completed the monograph, Mead was already making the distinction between social structure and social organization that would become familiar

decades later (Firth 1964), the former being the idealized structure while the latter is its concrete manifestation in social groups. Mead was also very interested in the dynamic and changing nature of Samoan social organization, differences between the ideal and the real, and how rules were bent to circumstances. Indeed, she sounds almost Malinowskian in her analysis. For models of how to write this ethnography, she did, in fact, study Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, as well as Rivers' *The Todas*, Roscoe's *The Baganda*, and Grinell's *The Cheyenne Indians* (Mead 1976:3).

Mead had written a Boasian doctoral dissertation in 1925 using Polynesian culture trait distributions but in *SOM*, she minimizes the analysis of culture traits and the emphasis on culture history that were so common among Franz Boas' students during the early decades of the twentieth century. In writing *SOM*, Mead was influenced by her mentor, Ruth Benedict, and Benedict's focus on configurations or "patterns" (Banner 2003:274). Even so, *SOM* itself does not seem particularly American in its conceptual framework. It reads more like well-written British social anthropology from a somewhat later period, more holistic and organismic in perspective than most American works of the period.

Samoan social organization was not easy to understand. Although non-unilineal systems of descent were documented by ethnographers such as Mead, full recognition of their nature and regional distribution did not occur until the 1950s and 1960s. Samoan social organization has been much discussed and debated, with different authors and their ideas about kindreds, cognatic descent groups, and extended kin groups vying for terminological ascendancy. Mead understood non-unilineal descent, as well as the hierarchical nature of Samoan social organization with its complex arrangement of titles at the village, district, and pan-Samoan levels. She described the parallel and interlocking hierarchies of chiefs and talking chiefs (*ali'i* and *tulāfale*), the relationship between male and female sides of the family, and the important brother–sister relationship.

In addition, Mead gathered information on displays of rank at ceremonial occasions and as celebrated in Samoan mythology. There is all this and more for the careful student of Samoa, with Mead building on the work of nineteenth-century observers such as Augustin Krämer and Wilhelm von Bulow. In fact, Mead's bibliography covers the early German and French sources on the islands to a greater extent than most contemporary ethnographies.

How did Mead obtain her ethnographic data on social organization? With whom did she speak and in what contexts? We know that she spent roughly five months of her sojourn on Manu'a during a total of slightly more than eight months that she spent in American Samoa in 1925–26. Some of that

time was also devoted to the study of Samoan adolescence. Mead used conventional interviews as well as both formal and informal interactions. In her introduction to *SOM*, Mead states that:

> In connection with my psychological research I became acquainted with every household group in these three villages [Luma, Siufaga, and Faleasao]. My material comes not from half a dozen informants but from scores of individuals. With the exception of two informants, all work was done in the native language. I found it particularly useful to utilize the Samoan love for pedantic controversy and to propound a question to the group and listen to the ensuing argument. As my fellowship did not provide field funds I had to rely upon the friendliness and the good will of Samoans for my material. Very little of it was gathered in formal interviews but was rather deviously extracted from the directed conversations of social groups, or at the formal receptions which the chiefs of a village accorded me on account of my rank in the native social organization (Mead [1930] 1969:5).

Mead not only interacted with Samoans informally, on three occasions she was appointed an honorary village "ceremonial maiden" (or *taupou*) by local chiefs. She thus became a genuine participant–observer in formal ceremonial events.

True Lies

Although Mead provided a brief description of her fieldwork in which she acquits herself nicely ([1930] 1969:5), Freeman (1999:161) contended that she spent too little time in the field, did not live with a Samoan family, and had too little competence in the language to understand the complexities and subtleties of the culture that she encountered. She was thus all too vulnerable to the potentially misleading stories that Samoans often tell. This problem, though, was hardly unique to Mead. It is a problem that all fieldworkers in Samoa face, even those with great expertise. As Bradd Shore (1982:128) notes, citing Mead ([1930] 1969) and Milner (1966):

> Writers on Samoa have frequently commented on the Samoan passion for diversity and the graceful manipulation of social forms (Mead 1930). Milner, in the introduction to his *Samoan Dictionary*, notes the difficulty that the fieldworker in Samoa encounters in eliciting consistent explanations of even noncontroversial

> matters. He refers to the 'dialectical nature' of Samoan culture where 'it is rare for information to be given, even from a reputedly sound and authentic source, without soon being contradicted from another reputable and equally reliable source' [Milner 1966: xii–xiii].

Samoan historian Malama Meleiseā (1987:vii–viii) makes the same point in a somewhat different manner, stating that even common historical knowledge can be controversial and that different versions of the truth are told to enhance the dignity of the teller's ancestors, family, or village.

Given the common difficulty of obtaining the "truth" and the ever-present danger of "multiple truths," was Margaret Mead aware of the possibility that she might be taken in? Of course she was. In her fieldnotes, Mead mentioned that Samoans lie to each other. And in *SOM*, she remarked that the problematic discourse of Samoan life was something that she sought to understand, stating that:

> [Samoan] [i]nconsistencies and fabrications were not promoted by any desire for remuneration but by the forces which make for variation in the native life: family pride; love for constructing fanciful ceremonial edifices; and a desire to rearrange the social structure for personal preferment (Mead [1930] 1969:5).

Because Mead recognized the social nature of Samoan narratives, the idea that she could be somehow duped by the innocent lies of Samoans seems implausible (see also Orans 1996:90–100).

Does this mean that *SOM* is a flawless piece of scholarship? No. Samoan social organization is extremely complex, and many errors could have been made. Freeman himself, in his initial description of Samoan descent, believed that it was "purely" or "primarily" patrilineal (1948:72–73), only to realize much later that it was "optative with an emphasis on agnation" (1983:121; see also Appell and Madan 1988:9). If Freeman could make this kind of misjudgment, it is not suprising that there are some errors of fact, some omissions, and some questionable interpretations in *SOM*. For example:

- Freeman noted that Mead stated that there were no gods of war in Samoa. There were.
- Freeman also questioned Mead's account of the counterfeiting of the virginity of the *taupou*, although there is no definitive evidence on this point on either side of the argument (see Shankman 1996).

- Shore (1982:187) found that, contrary to Mead's emphasis on Samoan conflict management and suppression of public expressions of emotion, there was open expression of frustration and anger.
- Freeman found fault with Mead's use of an ahistorical ethnographic present when describing Manu'a in the 1920s, noting that Mead did not discuss the tense political situation in the islands involving the U.S. Navy at the time of her fieldwork.
- Mead occasionally used a rhetorical overstatement to emphasize her points. Thus, in describing Samoan organization, she refers to its "extreme mobility" ([1930] 1969:7), and she comments that "the traditions of Samoa are almost unprecedentedly fluid and variable" ([1930] 1969:7).

This list could be lengthened, but taken as a whole, *SOM* remains a solid ethnography and durable contribution to Samoan scholarship. Lowell Holmes and Melvin Ember, both of whom worked in the Manu'a group, independently verified most of Mead's findings on social organization. And, while *SOM* would be written differently today, at the time it was published it was well received (Linton 1932).

Could Margaret Mead Speak Samoan?

Mead was only twenty-three when she began her work in Samoa, and this was her first fieldwork. She was determined to make the most of her time in the islands. But could she have done so, having never studied the language until she arrived there and having spent only a few weeks learning Samoan on Tutuila before beginning her work in Manu'a? Freeman (1983:286) raised this issue as a way of discrediting Mead, claiming that she had "a far from perfect command" of vernacular Samoan, not to mention chiefly Samoan, thus putting her at a disadvantage in her studies.

But what exactly does "far from perfect command" of Samoan mean? Perhaps Freeman is implicitly comparing his own experience learning Samoan to Mead's. Freeman went to Samoa as a young school teacher in 1940. He spent over two years learning the language and passed an exam certifying his proficiency in 1943. But he was not an anthropologist at this time and did not return to Samoa for extended fieldwork as a professional anthropologist until 1965. Most ethnographers, including Mead, have not had this kind of experience in learning a field language.

Mead had limited funds and therefore limited time when she arrived to do her research in the islands. Should she have postponed her work in Manu'a

until she had a "perfect command" of the language? Moreover, Mead's frame of reference concerning length of fieldwork and degree of language competency in the 1920s was her peer group of American anthropologists, who often visited Native American reservations very briefly and conducted salvage ethnography with short vocabulary lists (although this was not always the case [see Lowie 1940]). At that time, Malinowskian immersion in the field and indigenous language competence were not yet integral parts of the American approach. Mead pressed ahead with her research, learning Samoan as she did fieldwork.

Her linguistic competence as displayed in *SOM* might initially lead us to believe that Mead had only a minimum understanding of Samoan. The apparent misspelling of many Samoan words is striking. In the first edition title of *SOM*, Manu'a is spelled Manua! Faleasao, a village where Mead worked, also appears to be misspelled. When a new edition of *SOM* appeared in 1969, Freeman published an *errata* in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (1972) listing 214 spelling errors. Yet in her glossary to *SOM*, Mead explained her spelling choices very clearly, stating that:

> In my spelling of Samoan words I have adhered to the usage of former students of the language. I did not make any formal study of the language but simply used it as a means of communication. The fact that many Samoans are letter-perfect in writing their language as the missionaries first translated it, made any departure on my part a matter for violent controversy. . . . In the body of the text Samoan geographic terms and proper names are spelled in accordance with Bishop Museum practice (Mead [1930] 1969:213).

Thus many apparent "errors" are explained. Moreover, in his analysis of Mead's language competency, Martin Orans (1996:20–21) notes that many of Mead's "errors" involve the use of the macron or are "vowel-errors typically difficult for English speakers." Other errors remain. Tcherkézoff (2001:69) has argued that Mead's misunderstanding of the gendered nature of Samoan discourse about sex may have misled her on the nature of sexual conduct in *COA*. Yet these problems do not seem to have seriously compromised Mead's overall description of Samoan social organization in *SOM*.

Nevertheless, the question must be asked: Was Mead competent in Samoan? The best evidence comes from Freeman himself. Working in the Mead Archive in the Library of Congress, Freeman reconstructed Mead's fieldwork in Manu'a for his second book on the controversy. He describes how the U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander William Edell, a chaplain, used Mead to do most of his interpreting of Samoan, even though Mead

acknowledged that there were three people on Ta'u who spoke much better English than she spoke Samoan (Freeman 1999:115). Freeman continued:

> This included such tasks as translating into Samoan offical letters to the high chief of the off-lying island of Olosega. When this happened, Mead would have Fatuola, the official Samoan interpreter at the naval dispensary, go over her translation. When Fatuola found 'only three mistakes' in one of her translations, she felt 'quite puffed up.' Mead was also called on to act as an interpreter when Lieutenant Commander Edell 'held court over a land case.' She was she remarked 'properly nervous.' But that she was able to act as an interpreter in a case involving chiefs is evidence that by the end of January 1926, she had become reasonably competent in Samoan (quoted in Freeman 1999:115–116).

In other words, within five months of arriving in Samoa, and well before her alleged hoaxing in March of 1926, Mead was "reasonably competent" in Samoan, to use Freeman's (1999:116) own words.

There was also a fair amount of English spoken in Manu'a. Orans has argued that had Samoans spoken as little English as Mead stated, she might well have had trouble understanding the culture. But Orans found that Mead's repeated claim that she spoke only Samoan with all but a few informants was improbable. Having read Mead's field notes and letters, Orans believes that a number of Samoans in Manu'a spoke English with varying degrees of proficiency and that Mead spoke English with them, thus mitigating her self-admitted limitations in Samoan during the early months of her fieldwork (Orans 1996:20–23). By February of 1926, she felt herself proficient enough to go to the village of Fitiuta, where almost no English was spoken (Freeman 1999:123). Thus, given the combination of Mead's developing competence in Samoan and the English spoken by Samoans on Manu'a, there is reason to believe that Mead understood Samoan well enough to do credible fieldwork, although she did not speak it perfectly.

Freeman's Use of *Social Organization of Manu'a* in His Critique of Mead

Freeman, in recounting his own intellectual history, stated that it was in Samoa, where he first worked as a school teacher, that he gradually realized that Margaret Mead was wrong. He commented that, "By the time I left Samoa in November 1943 I knew that I would one day face the responsibil-

ity of writing a refutation of Mead's Samoan findings" (Freeman 1983:xiv). When did that day come? And to which findings is he referring? The findings to which Freeman has attended are largely those in *Coming of Age in Samoa* rather those in *Social Organization of Manu'a*, and his critique of *COA* did not appear in manuscript form until the mid-1960s. This was not due to lack of opportunity, since Freeman had been writing about Samoa since the late 1940s. Yet he did not criticize Mead in print until much later, and even then he did not criticize her on the subject of social organization.

In 1948, Freeman completed his Postgraduate Diploma in Anthropology at the London School of Economics under the direction of Raymond Firth. Freeman's thesis topic was the social organization of a Samoan village, and his thesis is the most substantial ethnographic work that Freeman produced on Samoa during his entire career. Given their shared interest in social organization in the same culture and given Freeman's stated interest in refuting Mead at that time, *SOM* would seem an obvious place to commence a discussion of Mead's findings. *SOM* was the most important ethnographic work on Samoan social organization in English at that time. At the very least, Freeman should have cited it.

In a thesis that is over 300 typewritten pages in length, *none* of Mead's published work on the islands is cited, let alone discussed. There is no reference to *SOM*, nor to its empirical findings and conceptual approach. In *SOM*, Mead accurately described non-unilineal descent in Samoa; in his thesis, Freeman emphasized patrilineal descent. In *SOM*, Mead discussed the concept of social structure—whether it is an ideal construct or a concrete phenomenon; yet in the conclusion to his thesis two decades later, Freeman wrestled with the same problem with no mention of Mead. Had Mead's work on Samoan social organization been flawed, Freeman could have addressed and refuted it in his thesis. The omission of *SOM* in Freeman's thesis is all the more puzzling because his advisor, Raymond Firth, had cited *SOM* favorably in his own ethnography, *We, The Tikopia* (1936).

Freeman had additional opportunities to criticize Mead on the subject of Samoan social organization. He was not reluctant to criticize other scholars' work on Samoan social organization. In 1964, Freeman published an article on Samoan social and political organization in the *American Anthropologist*, criticizing the work of Melvin Ember and Marshall Sahlins for their alleged misunderstanding of Samoan kin groups. Yet, in this article, Mead's *SOM* is cited by Freeman (1964) as an authoritative source in *support* of his critique of Ember and Sahlins.

After 1983, Freeman published two books on Mead and numerous articles on the Mead-Freeman controversy, but these are primarily about *COA*; *SOM* is rarely mentioned. The third section of *Margaret Mead and Samoa*,

entitled "A Refutation of Mead's Conclusions," covers eleven different topics in 165 pages (Freeman 1983). Yet there is little discussion of social organization and little recognition of *SOM*. Although Freeman did publish a linguistic *errata* to *SOM* in 1972, he has very little to say about the ethnographic substance of *SOM* in the context of the Mead–Freeman controversy, possibly because *SOM* undermines Freeman's argument about Mead's competence as an ethnographer.

Conclusion

Freeman employed a caricature of Mead to explain why she got Samoa "wrong" in *COA*. This negative portrayal has been especially damaging to her reputation because it cast doubt on her professional credibility as an ethnographer. *Social Organization of Manu'a* demonstrates that Mead was a competent ethnographer who spoke Samoan reasonably well and produced an ethnographic monograph of enduring value. Any review of Mead's Samoan research should acknowledge *SOM*, a point that would be even more obvious had Mead published only this work. Of course, *SOM* is not a surrogate for *Coming of Age in Samoa*, and is not flawless, but it is a monograph that deserves recognition in its own right.

For these reasons, my reading of Mead's Samoan research is very different than Freeman's. Mead was young and without previous field experience, but she was energetic, resourceful, perceptive, and a very quick study. She accomplished an enormous amount in a very short period of time. Freeman (1999:157) himself acknowledged Mead's "phenomenal energy" in the field (see also Silverman, this volume).

Samoa was Mead's first field site, but not her last. Within two years of her return, she completed two books on her Samoan research and was off to new field sites. If Mead had not been a committed ethnographer, it is difficult to imagine why she would assume these new and often more difficult challenges. Mead learned how to become a better ethnographer as the result of her Samoan fieldwork (Bateson 1984). As if to underscore her commitment to ethnography, she did what no other American anthropologist has done before or since. Between 1925 and 1939, Mead studied the Samoans, Manus, Omaha, Arapesh, Tchambuli, Mundugumor, Iatmul, and Balinese, and wrote professional and popular works on almost all these cultures. No American ethnographer has done as much work in as many different cultures in so short a period of time and produced as much as professional and popular work as Mead did.

Mead's ethnographic work is not as well remembered as her popular work, perhaps because she wrote for different audiences. Mead was both a popularizer and an ethnographer. Her popular work was subject to close scrutiny

precisely because it was popular. But she was also a dedicated ethnographer. Although her ethnographies were eclipsed by the work of later scholars, Mead is recognized as a pioneer in conducting fieldwork on childhood, adolescence, and gender on which other anthropologists built. Mead was also an innovator in ethnographic method, including the use of team research, psychological testing, still photography, and motion pictures. While Mead should be remembered as the great popularizer of anthropology in the twentieth century, she should also be remembered for her commitment to ethnography, including her first ethnography—*Social Organization of Manu'a.*

NOTES

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1. For responses to Freeman's hoaxing argument see Côté (2000, this volume), Orans (1996, 1999), Shankman (1996, 2000, 2001), and Tcherkézoff (2001). Although all agree on the weaknesses in Freeman's hoaxing argument, Orans and Tcherkézoff are very critical of *COA* as well.

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THE CORRESPONDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH MARGARET MEAD'S SAMOA RESEARCH: WHAT DOES IT REALLY TELL US?

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Derek Freeman based much of his critique of Margaret Mead's Samoa research on the letters she exchanged with Franz Boas and others. However, as I have indicated elsewhere (Côté 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c), Freeman seriously misrepresented the content and intention of these letters. The present article extends the examination of archival material by reviewing letters from the late 1920s associated with the publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa*, which reveal that Mead originally wrote it as a commercial book, and that she was heavily influenced by her publisher to further sensationalize her account of life in Samoa. Additional archived letters from the 1960s reveal that Mead found herself bedeviled by Freeman after she declined to sponsor him in American psychoanalytic circles. This little-known correspondence provides an alternate explanation to Freeman's hoaxing theory, and for Freeman's persistence in attempting to discredit Mead's Samoa research.

Introduction: The Complexities of the Controversy

LITTLE INTRODUCTION IS NEEDED to Derek Freeman's decades-long campaign to convince the world that Margaret Mead was "wrong" about Samoa in her classic *Coming of Age in Samoa* (hereafter, *COA*), and that she was hoaxed into believing it was a "free love" society. Although he found some supporters for his claims (e.g., Henrie 2000), an extensive examination of the evidence has convinced me (and others) that various aspects of Freeman's case against Mead's Samoa research are problematic in many ways. For example, she does not appear to have been wrong about the prevalence of adolescent turmoil (Côté 1992, 1994), and it is improbable that she was hoaxed with any demonstrable consequences (Côté 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c). At

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the same time, I have argued that in *COA* Mead capitalized on Western stereotypes about "free and easy life" in Polynesia to increase the popular appeal of the book (Côté 1992, 1994; cf. Tiffany 2001). Still, there is much in *COA* that is supported by independent evidence (e.g., Shankman 1996, 1998, 2000).

Others have examined Freeman's arguments in relation to Mead's book, and drawn similar conclusions, although a full consensus has not been forthcoming. For example, Orans (1996, 2000) also found the hoaxing claim to be improbable, but has more serious reservations than I concerning Mead's overall portrayal of Samoan society (he argues that her book is a polemic portraying Samoan society as being too halcyon, playing down its agonistic aspects), and he questions her honesty in reporting some of the details of research (e.g., she wrote that none of her informants spoke English, yet he believes that some did). In addition, Tcherkézoff (2001) doubts the hoaxing theory, but questions Mead's accuracy in depicting Samoan sexual mores, arguing that she was consumed with myths about Polynesian sexuality.

Yet other observers—especially those peripheral to the controversy who have not examined the primary evidence for themselves—have seen the controversy as a matter of differences of interpretation of evidence (e.g., Hellman 1998), or as a result of ideologically motivated fabrications on one "side" or the other (e.g., Henrie [2000] who sees Freeman as a champion of truth pitted against ideological "Meadophiles").

One way to approach this impasse is to examine *all* of the surviving archival material. While Freeman (1999) claims to have done so, my examination of his use of this material has uncovered systematic omissions on his part. Indeed, although much of the evidence upon which Freeman bases his theory is drawn from the archived letters exchanged between Mead and Franz Boas, and from Mead's reports about her research to the National Research Council (NRC; her funding source for the Samoa study), he provided only nine of the twenty-six relevant letters exchanged between Mead and Boas (in the Appendix of Freeman [1999]). Accordingly, until recently, those interested in verifying the accuracy of Freeman's use of these documents had to acquire these letters from the Library of Congress at their own time and expense (so obviously few people have done so). Thus, as promised (Côté 1999), in order to give all interested parties ready access to the evidence, I made available in the Appendix of a special issue of the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* several crucial letters missing from Freeman's book (Côté 2000b), and *all* letters in full on a Web site, along with excerpts from Mead's reports to the NRC (Côté 2004).

Freeman's Claims in Brief

Key to Freeman's theory are the charges that Mead was sidetracked by overly ambitious ethnographic research, causing her to put off investigating her research problem regarding the prevalence of adolescent storm and stress; as a result, she was supposedly desperate to find something to both confirm her preconceptions and please Franz Boas, and was therefore vulnerable to being hoaxed because of her state of mind. Freeman claims that *COA* is actually based on this hoaxing, whereby she was suddenly convinced that she had been living in a free-love society.

Although my evaluation of these claims shows that Freeman's theory is severely flawed, several questions remain before the controversy can be put to rest. For example, if Freeman's work is so flawed, why has Mead's work been the object of so much controversy? And why was Freeman so unrelenting in trying to convince the world to dismiss it? I believe that light can be shed on these two questions with an examination of the correspondence concerning the publication of *COA* in the late 1920s and Freeman's eventual contacts with Mead in the 1960s. These letters yield insights into (1) Mead's motivations for playing up stereotypes about Polynesian society, leaving her work open to criticism, and (2) Freeman's motivations for undertaking an uncompromising critique of her work.

Letters Concerning the Publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa*

If Mead was not hoaxed, how do we explain the problems in her book that have been the object of controversy? Once we get past the fabrications that Freeman has constructed regarding both the sexual content of *COA* and Mead's approach to her research, we can consider the problems with Mead's simplification of Samoan culture and mores, as well as her exaggerations of certain forms of behavior. In my view, part of the answer is relatively straightforward and is supported by evidence archived with the Library of Congress.

In order to fulfill the conditions of her NRC fellowship, Mead was required to submit a report of the research she carried out in 1925–26. However, the letters show that she took her time in doing so. In her letter of 13 January 1927 to the Secretary of the NRC Board of Fellowships she wrote that she was "planning to make a commercial book of the report as it seems to be a topic of sufficient general interest," and asked if it would "be acceptable to the Board [to] submit the manuscript as prepared for book form, rather than in the form of a report" (LOC: MMP, Box N4). The Secretary, Edith Elliott, responded on January 14 that it would "not only be acceptable to the Board to see the manuscript prepared for book form," but

the Board would prefer it (LOC: MMP, Box N4). On April 24 of that year, she submitted the manuscript, and in the cover letter to Frank Lillie, the Chairman of the Board, she pointed out that she wrote it "in a form which is sufficiently untechnical to appeal to a commercial publisher. In this way [her] results may reach a much larger number of readers than if they were published in a scientific journal" (LOC: MMP, Box N4). On May 10, Mead was notified by Elliott that the manuscript was approved for publication by the Board.

With this NRC approval, Mead set out in 1927 to find a commercial publisher. She changed the title of the book to *Coming of Age in Samoa* because she thought the original title ("The Adolescent Girl in Samoa") was "too clumsy for a commercial publisher" (LOC: MMP, Box N4: Mead to Elliott, letter dated 25 April 1927), but she left the remainder of the text as it was in her report to the NRC. Her first attempt to land a publisher with this draft failed, with Harper and Brothers rejecting it (Howard 1984:101). She next tried William Morrow, with a personal introduction made for her by George Dorsey (Howard 1984:101). Morrow was new to the publishing business, so he was obviously anxious to adopt books that would sell well. When Morrow read "The Adolescent Girl in Samoa" (submitted with the new title), he apparently saw its potential to appeal to the American public and encouraged Mead to write introductory and concluding sections that would "have a real show with the general public" (LOC: MMP, Box I2: Morrow to Mead, letter dated 10 February 1928).

In her letter of 25 January 1928, Mead wrote to Morrow about the way she proposed to frame the concluding chapters:

> I have been thinking over the possibilities of the concluding chapters of my book very carefully. I finally decided that I would be willing to incorporate . . . a discussion of education which I had been working on from a different angle. This is a speculation about the education of the future and can be tied up very definitely with the problems of conflicts of adolescence. *It is definitely a speculation*, but one in line with what seems to be our present development. I am enclosing an abstract of this chapter as I would write it. I am couching it in as simple terms as possible and using concrete illustrations. I believe it would save both your time and mine if you were able to tell from this abstract whether such a chapter would satisfy you. In all events, I am most grateful to you for your criticism and encouragement for this conclusion now seems to me to be a great improvement upon my former short summary and the instigation to make the improvement I owe to you (LOC: MMP, Box I2: emphasis added).

In a later letter accompanying these chapters, Mead wrote to Morrow that she would not be able to conjecture any further:

> Any improvement which I would be able to make in these last chapters *could not lie along the lines of further speculation, which I have pushed to what seems to me to be the limit of permissibility*, but would have to be in terms of more concrete illustrative material, or condensation or expansion of the points which I have discussed (LOC: MMP, Box I2: Mead to Morrow, letter dated 11 February 1928, emphasis added).

These speculative chapters were to Morrow's satisfaction and shortly thereafter he approved the new introductory chapters as well, including "A day in Samoa," which Mead later described as "too literary" (1969:xvii) for the academic book, *Social Organization of Manu'a* (a byproduct of her Samoa research), which was published by the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. Hence, two people eager to make money seized an opportunity and the book was rushed into print in July of that year without any further review, academic or otherwise.

It is important to note that Mead's book-length report to the NRC is virtually identical to *COA* except that the original introduction was dropped (and portions of it kept as Appendix II of *COA*), the conclusion became Appendix III of *COA*, pseudonyms were substituted for the real names of her informants, and minor copy editing polished the text (LOC: MMP, Box I2). My reading of Mead's report found a very detailed, descriptive account that was more academic than popular, and was unlikely to have been any more of a best-seller than other similar books published at that time, like Malinowski's (1927) *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*. Thus, in spite of Mead's initial attempt to write a commercial book, it was with Morrow's direction that Mead crafted two new introductory chapters and two concluding chapters that enhanced the readability of the book for the general public. Most importantly, however, when one compares *COA* with "The Adolescent Girl in Samoa," as I have done, much of the controversial material playing on stereotypes about Polynesia is in the opening and concluding chapters, which were written to satisfy Morrow's desire to create something that would make a "real show with the general public" (LOC: MMP, Box I2: Morrow to Mead, letter dated 10 February 1928). These chapters play up the more halcyon, as opposed to agonistic, aspects of life in Samoa in the 1920s (cf. Orans 1996).

On 11 January 1929, Morrow wrote Mead a two-page, single-spaced letter telling her about the "campaigns" and "stunts" he had used to promote her book and that he had "been giving special attention to the book and do-

ing all [he could] to promote its sales" (LOC: MMP, Box I2). He also noted in the letter that he had spent on "advertising and promotion ... a substantial sum for a book of its kind." The various provocative paperback covers that Morrow used to play up the notion of carefree sexuality are now a matter of public record (see Tiffany 2001).

With this correspondence we get a glimpse of the relationship between the eager young researcher/writer and the ambitious publisher trying to build a business, and can see how *COA* was launched with the goal of making it a best-seller. Had someone published it in its original form, without its sexy cover page and speculative chapters appealing to the public's stereotypes of Polynesia as a paradise, it is unlikely that it would have sold any better than most other dry academic books. In this light, Freeman's claim that a hoaxing was responsible for embellishments in *COA* is exposed as a fancy, against the reality of commercial publishing.

Records of Freeman's Early Contact with Mead

Two sets of letters give us insight into Freeman's attempt to first befriend Mead to use her as a sponsor in American psychoanalytic circles, and then his later escalating harassment of her after she declined to do so. The first set of letters is from the early 1960s and the second is from the late 1960s. From this chain of events we can speculate that Mead's unwillingness to oblige his request and sponsor him turned him against her and led to his increasing obsession with her and her work.[1]

Freeman's Attempt to Befriend Mead

From the first set of letters, we find that Freeman wrote to the psychiatrist Morris Carstairs on 14 June 1962, asking Carstairs if he could introduce him into psychoanalytic circles in the U.S. or Europe (LOC: MMP, Box C5). In turn, Carstairs wrote Mead, forwarding a copy of Freeman's letter, asking her what to do about Freeman's request.

Carstairs had spent time with Freeman twelve years earlier at Cambridge and found him to be "an extremely congenial and not at all an over-assertive fellow student" (LOC: MMP, Box C5: Carstairs to Mead, letter dated 6 September 1962). In his letter of 14 June 1962 to Carstairs, Freeman described the new direction his work was taking after having recently experienced an "abreaction" in Sarawak that he says demonstrated to him "the fundamental significance of psychological forces in the social life of men," both personally and ideologically. This was associated with a mental breakdown for which he received psychiatric treatment (Heimann 1997; Williamson 1996).

In 1962, Freeman was in the early stages of planning a study leave and wanted to spend it with a noted psychoanalyst, such as Erik Fromm, Julian Huxley, or Erik Erikson. He thought the project he had in mind would take some ten years and would result in "a unified view of man, and so point the way to a genuine anthropology" (LOC: MMP, Box C5: Freeman to Carstairs, letter dated 14 June 1962).

Mead responded in a long (three-paged, single spaced) letter, warning Carstairs of Freeman. She noted Freeman's "absolute failure to recognize that any anthropologists have ever thought along these lines before" (LOC: MMP, Box C5: Mead to Carstairs, letter dated 4 July 1962). Although Mead had not yet met Freeman, she had heard many negative reports from others, including a student of hers who had spent time with Freeman in Australia. It was her feeling that Freeman was "a brilliant man with definite dangers towards a messianic and over-systematized point of view." She added that "the experience of everyone I have talked to, unfortunately without exception, in the last five years has been very negative."

Mead also informed Carstairs that Freeman had previously sent her a series of long letters complaining about Tom Harrisson (see Heimann [1997], for an account of his dealings with Harrisson, leading to Freeman's mental breakdown), as well as one in 1961 requesting Mead's sponsorship of him in the psycho-analytic community. She told Carstairs that she had put Freeman off regarding his request with a vague response, in part because she was concerned that Freeman did not think he would need "a full [psycho-] analysis," which flew in the face of thinking at the time. As such, Mead did not think he would fit in anywhere she could think of, and was concerned about "what he is likely to do as a person, in closely knit, highly self conscious settings." However, she goes to great lengths to suggest alternative scenarios for Carstairs to present back to Freeman, and ends the letter exactly as follows, including the ellipsis: "No one questions his brilliance but . . . ."

In his reply letter of 6 September 1962, Carstairs stated that he appreciated Mead's reservations about Freeman, and although he was surprised that Freeman had become difficult to get along with, concluded that the "grandiosity of his intentions . . . makes one fear that he may be passing through a period of emotional instability" (LOC: MMP, Box C5). Freeman did eventually take a study leave—without their help—at the London Institute of Psychoanalysis ending in July of 1964 (Appell and Madan 1988; Fox 2001).

Freeman's Escalating Harassment of Mead

The second set of letters allows us to jump to 1968, when several were exchanged between Freeman and Mead (LOC: MMP, Box I2). On 10 May 1968,

Freeman asked her to clarify eight "apparent anomalies in the Appendices" of *COA*, and three other points of information, prompting Mead to ask her assistant to "make up a file called Derek Freeman's queries about Samoa." She asked her assistant to tell Freeman she was in Europe all summer and would respond in the fall. On October 3, he wrote again with two further queries.

It is obvious from the archives that Mead took great care in responding to Freeman, first making a note to herself on October 15, working through (and saving) three drafts of a letter on October 28, and sending him a fourth draft on 6 November 1968. The note to herself of October 15 read as follows:

> I have read the two stories he discusses. My guess is, although I would have to verify this that I have further disguised this story and given two names, Mutu and Fuativa, to the same man, who was the government medical assistant. This would be consistent with my method of disguise. He has probably collected both incidents or something wildly resembling them and wants to say something about my inaccuracy. I will still write him saying the disguise meant that verification is impossible, and further detailed work on these materials is impossible. Talked to Lowell Holmes on the telephone, he was ready to write an angry letter but I suggested to keep it flat to reduce Derek's paranoia (LOC: MMP, Box I2)

The anomalies in the Appendices were explained to Freeman in her letter of 6 November 1968, as follows:

> Items which conceal identity—including sometimes the use of two names for the same person, slight changes in the composition of the household, duplication, repetition or deletion from a table—all alter the data just enough to make further analysis from the cases as published, impossible. . . . [W]hen I was writing about the personal lives of living, identified subjects, I made certain arbitrary and deliberately unsystematic alterations of details, which protected the subjects and those around them but did not affect the circumstances crucial to the analysis. . . . I believed it was necessary to collect information in conversation, without taking immediate notes. So actual questions used and verbatim answers do not occur in the records (LOC: MMP, Box I2).

Freeman wrote back on 20 March 1969, stating that he was not satisfied with her explanation and insisted that he had identified "instances of obvious internal inconsistencies or errors in [her] coding of cases and tabulation of

them," and he asked that these be corrected in subsequent printings of *COA*. He ended the letter by stating that he had recently "been making detailed analysis of the early writings of [Franz] Boas and [Alfred] Kroeber," revealing to him "that these men were not really interested in dispassionate scientific enquiry, but rather in the dissemination and support of certain doctrines," so he planned "to devote a series of papers and perhaps even a book" reexamining these doctrines (LOC: MMP, Box I2).

Mead's note to herself of 7 April 1969, in her "Freeman file" indicated that she was not going to answer the letter then. "At present," she wrote, "he seems to be diverting his hostility to Boas and Kroeber, and he may lay off me." She noted that she did "not intend to correct the statements which he calls errors but which are byproducts of my having to do some tricky double defining of people—like our medical *fitafita*—who was too identifiable if I told all the stories about him the same way." She ends the note: "I am going to write Roland Force and ask him to hurry the publication of *Manuan Social Organization*" (LOC: MMP, Box I2, emphasis added).

Freeman (1999:207) noted that Mead never responded to his letter, and it appears that there was no further correspondence between them until 1978, when Freeman sent her a draft of *Margaret Mead and Samoa* while she was dying of cancer, although he says he did not know she was ill.

The Archives Compared to Freeman's Reconstruction of Events

Freeman's (1983, 1999) published recollection of events differs significantly from what the archival records show. Freeman claims that he began his attempted refutation while in Samoa as a schoolteacher in the 1940s, during which he collected "extensive and detailed historical research" (Freeman 1983:116). In a letter to me (Derek Freeman, personal communication, 10 September 1994), he claimed that this included "a mass of empirical evidence" regarding the "sexual mores of the Samoans." If so, the evidence shows that he did not share this concern with Mead until 1964, during his one and only meeting with her. Instead, he appears to have been friendly, and even ingratiating to Mead, before turning on her in 1964. According to an obituary (Fox 2001; see also Appell and Madan 1988:15), it was:

> . . . on his return voyage to Australia in 1964 that Freeman reread, after many years, Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* and was perturbed by what he regarded as the book's culturalist and relativist premises and its lack of any biological understanding of adolescent behavior. He resolved to return to Samoa and resume his own researches from his newfound behavioural and philosophical perspectives.

It is possible, then, that Freeman's scorn for Mead is rooted, not in the 1940s experiences in Samoa as he claims, but in her rebuffing him in the early 1960s and refusal to sponsor him in psychoanalytic circles. This is conjecture on my part, but it does explain why he waited twenty years to begin what he came to call his "worldly task" (Freeman 1999:204).

A play about Freeman's life speculates about the source of his obsession with Mead (Williamson 1996), suggesting that he saw Mead as a controlling mother figure toward whom he had sexual feelings. Freeman openly endorsed the play, saying that he could see himself "more clearly" in it (Barrowclough 1996:34). In an interview following the debut of the play in Australia, Freeman was unusually candid with a reporter (Barrowclough 1996). In this interview, Freeman recounts his one and only meeting with Mead, which took place in Canberra in 1964:

> 'I kept very detailed notes,' he says. 'I had arranged all my evidence on my desk, and she came in with this great staff, and she wore a cape, and said something like, "You're the one who thinks he knows better than the rest of us"'
>
> '. . . . I made notes on little sheets of paper immediately after the interview. They were mostly psychoanalytic, about how she stuck out her tongue when she talked . . . . She said she wanted to see [his 1948 thesis]. I said, "I'll, I'll, fish it out for you." I had never stuttered in my life. And she said, "You're trembling like jelly." I was a bit scared of her. I took these two volumes of my thesis and put them on my table and said, "You can take them overnight."'
>
> 'At the end of our interview, which lasted two hours and 40 minutes, I escorted her back to University House where she was staying. The next day, during a seminar, there was an argument between her and me. She wheeled around and said, "Why didn't you bring me your thesis?" I replied I had left it for her to take.'
>
> Mead repeated her question.
>
> Freeman said, 'I was afraid you might ask me to stay the night.' 'I don't know why I said that,' he comments now. 'I was mortified after I said it. There was a great deal of tension [at the seminar] and Mead was known as a castrator: she went for men and put them down. She also had this sexual reputation . . . I was not going to be bullied by her' (quoted in Barrowclough 1996:36).

Readers can take from this interview what they want. Although I am not a psychiatrist, it suggests to me that Freeman had a range of confused and repressed feelings towards Mead, which help explain his dogged "pursuit" of her,

zeroing in on her portrayal of sexual behavior in Samoa. It is possible that in his mind he saw her both as a "wanton" woman to be punished and as a mother figure to be forgiven. One way to resolve this cognitive dissonance would be to have her "forgiven," and claiming to the world that she was hoaxed would accomplish this. The Williamson play has Mead's character offering several such theories for Freeman's behavior (Williamson 1996:95), which apparently raised no objections from Freeman, given his endorsement of the play.

Conclusion: Who Hoaxed Whom?

In the introduction, I noted that two of the remaining questions from the Mead-Freeman controversy involve the issues of (1) why Mead's work in Samoa has been the object of so much controversy, and (2) why Freeman was so unrelenting in trying to convince the world to dismiss her work.

With respect to the first question, the correspondence associated with Mead's research reveals that a good part of the answer lies in the fact that Mead's book was neither reviewed as an academic text, nor intended to be one. Mead wrote her "report" for the NRC in such a way that she could submit it immediately to a commercial publisher. With the exception of the opening and closing chapters and minor copy-editing, it was printed as she submitted it to William Morrow. In this respect, some of the book's faults can be traced to her desire to make it commercially appealing and to inducements by her publisher to make "a real show for the general public," not to a hoaxing as Freeman would have it. In my view, the resolution to the hoaxing aspect of the controversy is that simple. Had Freeman undertaken a true scholarly critique of her book, he would have acknowledged this.

In reference to the second question, in conjunction with other evidence, the correspondence suggests that Freeman became personally obsessed with Mead and wove this obsession with a set of intellectual concerns, with the result that Mead's Samoa research was used as a foil. He did not need to go to the lengths he did to point out the faults in her research (other correspondence in the archives shows that Mead immediately encountered academic criticism upon publication of *COA*). Instead, he undertook a public campaign that seemed designed to enhance his prestige in inverse proportion to Mead's (cf. Hellman 1998), while at the same time satisfying his obsession with her. In this respect, his unrelenting campaign tells us more about him than about Mead's book.

Margaret Mead did not get everything right in her first field study fresh from graduate school, but Derek Freeman got a lot wrong in his portrayal of that study, in spite of being an Emeritus Professor at the time. Mead was early in her career and eager to please her publisher; but Freeman was late

in his career and had no publish-or-perish pressures. Mead was not here to account for herself, but Freeman was hardly the person to speak for her; indeed, his claims about her work became more immoderate overtime, with his last offering (1999) constituting a caricature of her Samoa research.

Indeed, as Caton (2000) notes, now that the dust is settling after Freeman's death in 2001, Freeman's academic case has no progeny: no academic has stepped forward to continue his mission against Mead. Unfortunately, stimulated by Freeman's persistent claim that Mead was hoaxed, some people among the general public have continued to parrot him. For example, an Internet search with the key words "fateful hoaxing" finds all sorts of Freeman-inspired analyses of her work. It is my hope that by making the primary sources available to everyone on a Web site (Côté 2004), these analyses will be reconsidered and a more reasoned consensus will emerge. Regrettably, when something is said enough times, people will tend to take it as the truth. The claim that Mead was hoaxed is one of those "academic myths" that will likely persist until enough people say otherwise. We can only hope that Internet technology can be used to correct myths as well as perpetuate them.

NOTES

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I am grateful to Catherine Bateson for permission to reproduce her mother's archived correspondence, as well as to Mary Wolfskill of the Library of Congress Manuscript Division for her help and diligence in tracking down archival material.

1. Unfortunately, Freeman does not include this early correspondence in the archives he set up with the University of California in San Diego (Paul Shankman, personal correspondence, 29 June 2001).

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MARGARET MEAD AND PSYCHOLOGY: THE EDUCATION OF AN ANTHROPOLOGIST

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Margaret Mead's brand of anthropology was deeply rooted in the psychological. Mead began her career in psychology, taking a master's degree in that field but switching to anthropology at the urging of Ruth Benedict. Mead's background in psychology equipped her particularly well to embark on her field trip to American Samoa in 1925. While the anthropological training of her day did not emphasize practical aspects of conducting fieldwork, Mead's training in psychology taught her how to conduct case studies, design experiments, and measure results quantitatively and qualitatively. Mead's family background also contributed to her training as a social scientist, particularly through the influence of her mother, sociologist Emily Fogg Mead.

ALTHOUGH SHE IS BEST KNOWN as an anthropologist, Margaret Mead's master's degree was in psychology, and her first two scholarly publications came from her master's research (see Mead [1926], [1927]).[1] Her training in that field—particularly in the techniques of the experimental psychology in vogue in the 1920s—provided a critical base from which she approached her early anthropological field studies. This article will review her training in psychology, examine samples of her course work, and discuss briefly the two earliest intensive applications of her psychological training: her administration of intelligence tests to children in New Jersey in 1923 for her master's thesis on race and intelligence testing; and, her use of various psychological tests as a field work tool in her study of adolescent girls in American Samoa in 1925–26.

Reviewing Mead's background in psychology allows a better understanding of the tools she took with her to the field as an anthropologist, where,

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from the beginning, she conducted psychological studies of various sorts. Derek Freeman ([1983] 1984:75) claimed that Mead was too inexperienced to conduct the Samoan research, despite her study with the eminent anthropologist Franz Boas. According to Freeman:

> . . . Mead lacked any systematic training in biology, and was thus by no means scientifically equipped to investigate the subtle and complex interaction, in Samoan behavior, of biological and cultural variables.

This review of her psychological training, however, illustrates that Mead was far better prepared to conduct a systematic study of human behavior than Freeman indicates. As Shankman (this volume) argues, re-evaluating Mead's early work reveals a resourceful and theoretically savvy ethnologist.

In her memoir, *Blackberry Winter*, Mead (1972:140) recalled that anthropology trained her in what to look for in the field but not how to do it. Two major factors outside anthropology supplied the "how": (1) formal education in psychology at Barnard College and Columbia University (including the Teachers College); and, (2) informal training in social science and observation, particularly of children, acquired through her family background.

Mead (1972:122; 1974:295) recalled in her later years that her formal connection to psychology ended when she completed her master's degree in 1924. By this time, she had, with the encouragement of Ruth Benedict, made the decision to move to anthropology. "But," she wrote, "I left psychology to live, in many ways, always within its precincts, working with psychologists and concerning myself with psychological problems" (Mead 1974:295). Throughout her career, Mead worked with psychologists, psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, social workers, and educators, selecting from other thinkers and fields the techniques and ideas that interested her. Writing to her former sociology professor, William Fielding Ogburn, in 1927, Mead reflected on her career choice:

> All th[e] others have a bug, and get an emotional kick out of Anthropological material. . . . But anthropology doesn't do that for me. It's just something to think with. I'd be as happy in psychology or any other social sciences, or anything that was good to think with (letter from Mead to Ogburn, 27 April 1927, LOC: MMP, Box Q11, file 20).

In their article, "Margaret Mead and Paradigm Shifts Within Anthropology During the 1920s," Stephen Murray and Regna Darnell (2000) discuss the historical context for Mead's early anthropological work, illustrating the

extent to which Mead was affected in her intellectual development and disciplinary orientation by people other than Franz Boas and the so-called "Boasians." They cite such significant influences as the sociologists Ogburn and W. I. Thomas, as well as ethnologist E. S. C. Handy.

In Mead's master's thesis, "Intelligence Tests of Italian and American Children," she thanked her professors Franz Boas, Robert Sessions Woodworth, Harry Levi Hollingworth, and Georgina Stickland Gates, in addition to her mother, sociologist Emily Fogg Mead (Mead 1924:2-3).[2] Of these, her mother's influence on Mead's work was perhaps the most subtle and pervasive. Mead had begun studying anthropology with Boas in the winter term of 1922; he suggested the topic for her master's thesis, which drew on her mother's work on immigrant acculturation (Mead 1972:122). Woodworth, Hollingworth, and Gates all taught Mead psychology at either Barnard or Columbia in the early 1920s. In that period, psychology was "king of the social sciences, the most developed and the most relevant to contemporary social concerns" (Rosenberg 1982:216). Woodworth exerted a profound influence on Mead's later work, though she apparently only took one class with him. An early conversation with Woodworth raised a crucial question of childhood development and acculturation for Mead, which ". . . set my feet on a path from which they have never strayed: 'When does an Indian become an Indian?'" (Mead 1974:311). Hollingworth, who had founded the Barnard psychology department, a major force at that time, was on Mead's Ph.D. committee (Barnard College Psychology Department 1995; Mead 1974:311). When Mead came to psychology in 1921, Gates (then Stickland), only six years her senior, had just completed a dissertation on psychological testing (Gates [1920] 1922), an area of lasting interest to Mead and critical to her career in anthropology.

Finding the "How"

The Classroom

"There was no formal field work training" at the time Mead (Mead 1978:93) entered the field of anthropology. Students were told what to look for in the field but not how to do fieldwork. "There was, in fact, no *how* in our education," she wrote in *Blackberry Winter* (Mead 1972:140). Boas's field methods class was not about being in the field but rather, "about theory–how material could be organized to support or to call in question some theoretical point" (Mead 1972:137). In this class, Boas "used ethnographic materials to discuss and criticize the principal anthropological theories of the day" (Mead 1978:93).

Despite the lack of formal field training, Mead did acquire some practical skills from her anthropological education, such as techniques for categorizing use of natural resources or forms of social organization, and experience in analyzing other field workers' observations (Mead 1972:142). Most of her formal training in how to approach a concrete problem, however, came from psychology, where she had learned, as she phrased it in another context, "to use a stopwatch and to write protocols" (Mead 1972:143). This training helped her to develop and administer tests in the field and to record and interpret information on human behavior systematically.

A review of Mead's academic transcripts indicates that her psychology training consisted of seventeen courses at Barnard, Columbia, and the Teachers College: thirteen psychology classes, two sociology classes (dealing with psychological aspects of culture), and two classes at the Teachers College (dealing with educational psychology). Twelve of these classes were taught in all or in part by Harry Hollingworth or Georgina Stickland Gates.[3] Archival materials related to these courses include such things as papers and lab reports written by Mead, her class notes, her notes on readings, psychological testing materials, and course handouts.[4] For the most part, these classes focused on the experimental aspects of psychology and on mental measurements, though some classes were more philosophically and theoretically oriented. While there was a heavy emphasis on quantitative methods, Mead was also trained in the case study approach.

Some of her class assignments involved using instruments to take physical measurements, and Mead made reference to some of the devices in her notes, including diagrams of the equipment (e.g., reports for Psychology e111 [LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 5] and reports for Psychology 17-18 [LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 2]). In her laboratory report of 9 December 1923 on Physical Measurements for Psychology e111 (Psychological Tests, Methods, and Results), Mead recorded and analyzed data from tests measuring height, weight, and head size. Reviewing the literature on such anthropomorphic tests, she discussed the correlation of physical measurements with intelligence and their role in determining the influence of environment on race. Mead concluded:

> It is in studies which are primarily of an Anthropological or biological natur[e] that psychologists are interested, at least until far more conclusive work in correlating intelligence and physical measur[e]ments have [*sic*] been accomplished (LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 5).

Beyond the quantitative skills required by her psychology classes, Mead also learned qualitative techniques for assessing human behavior. Some of

Mead's laboratory reports included her proposals for future experiments. Two specific experiments from Mead's Psychology 17–18 classes illustrate how Mead's class work in psychology may be seen as foreshadowing her later anthropological work.

Two Experiments

In her later years, Mead (1974:313) described "the very simple experiments in the recognition of emotion in photographs" to which she was exposed as a student as "preparation for the use of photography, still and film, as a research tool." As part of experiment 17, which was designed to measure people's ability to recognize expressions of mood or emotions in photographs, she proposed her own experiment to measure emotion recognition in children (6 December 1921, LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 1). Mead observed that in her experience of children they "recognize emotions at about six months old. Anger, fear, and excessive hilarity affect them first. Haughtiness only make[s] them laugh." In order to find "at what age children [r]ecognize different emotions" and "whether they recognize them quicker on strange or familiar faces," Mead proposed using "thirty children, ten one year old, ten three years old, and ten five years old. Let them be of the sam[e] nationality and as similar environment as possible." Selected emotions, such as fear and anger, are to be presented by "the child's mother...an occasional visitor in the child's home...[and] a total stranger" and then observations made of "the difference in the response of the different ages [and]...the correlation between the responses made to the individuals of different degrees of familiarity" (LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 1).

Mead, not quite twenty years old, seems to have recognized cultural background as a variable affecting her results. She also realized the importance of using children of different ages in order to get comparative results. When Mead took Harry Hollingworth's developmental psychology class (Psychology 19) the next year, her notes indicate that she was taught the necessity of taking a series of longitudinal cross-sections to account for the complexity of human development (notes from 29 September 1922; LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 3). In her 1925–26 Samoan study, she developed her own cross-sectional approach, looking at girls older and younger than her target group in order "to give a dynamic picture of how human beings develop" (Mead 1972:154).

As evidenced by experiment number 17, Mead's interest in individual development and its connection to the cultural stylization of temperament began early in her academic career. In addition, one may see her practical knowledge of children (e. g., they learn to recognize emotions at about the age of six months) coming into play as well.

Another of her proposed original experiments from Psychology 17-18, included as part of experiment number 34 (dated 14 March 1922), dealt with the influence a person's background has on results of a word association test (LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 1).[5] In experiment 34, Mead offered the hypothetical case of an arrested man suspected of Bolshevism or other radicalism and suggested word associations–including "bread," "wage," and "picket"–which might reveal his political bias.

This proposed experiment seems to be based on Mead's own experience with the Kent-Rosanoff word association test. Mead recalled late in her life that when she tested "definitely insane" on the Kent-Rosanoff test, she was intrigued by the fact that the test did not account for a literary orientation (Mead 1974:310). Experiment number 34 appears to be a record of that episode. Results on the Kent-Rosanoff test were evaluated by how one's responses fit with so-called "normal" responses from 1,000 people, as standardized in the Kent-Rosanoff frequency tables, with someone who gave different answers from that norm being classified as insane or otherwise deviant (Kent and Rosanoff 1910). The test, however, "had been standardized on the general population" (Mead 1974:310), a weakness Mead addressed in her comments in experiment number 34.

Students themselves took the tests they were studying in these classes and also administered the tests to their partners and classmates. In experiment number 34, Mead used her own answers to show how religious, literary, and sociological influences could affect someone's responses on a word association test (14 March 1922; LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 1). She indicated that her own responses to stimulus words could be traced to her particular background in specific areas. For instance, her response to the stimulus word "salt" was "earth" (religious training); to "dream"–"stuff" (literary background); and to "woman"–"suffrage" (sociological background).[6] Mead argued that certain technical and cultural training may affect someone's word associations and "remove them [from] the median of community—and yet not convict them of being pathological" (LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 1).[7] This experiment deepened Mead's interest in psychological testing, spurring her to take the Advanced Experimental Problems course (Psychology 24), a special methods class in testing, in the spring of her senior year (Mead 1974:310).[8] This interest in psychological testing persisted throughout her career.

The experiment also demonstrated Mead's willingness to use herself as a subject in her own studies. Her findings in the experiment seem as well to have informed the way she approached her master's thesis, which dealt with the extent to which the language children hear spoken at home affects their scores on intelligence tests (Mead 1924). In an outline of her early the-

sis findings titled "Italian and American Children Compared Using the Otis Group Test," she concluded:

> Only by holding constant the factors of language, social status and education can even an approximation of a quantitative expression of racial differences be arrived at. And were this possible the results would still be vitiated by the influence of habits of thought, etc. which is impossible to evaluate quantitatively (LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 3).

Case Studies

For Education 455, a clinical psychology class for educators, Mead proposed a study which points to another component of her field researches that had its roots in her early training: case studies. Her notes for this class are filled with information on case studies and questions about the best way to manage students with particular problems and backgrounds. Several of her class assignments entail analyses of such case studies. One undated page in Mead's notes, headed "Projected studies," offered this idea for a case study:

> Two sisters, children of a college professor. A complete family history and also a great deal of reliable developmental data is available for these two children.
> a. Aged fourteen. Will include the record of the child's vocabulary for the first three years.
> b. Aged twelve. Will include special emphasi[s] on social difficulties of a precocious child who has mingled very little with other children (LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 4).

Mead took this class in the winter term of 1923. These two children are undoubtedly Mead's younger sisters: Elizabeth (born 1909), whose early vocabulary was recorded by Mead, and the bright but troubled youngest child, Priscilla (born 1911).

Two factors are of special significance here. In *Blackberry Winter*, Mead remembered having spent time one summer as a child poring over case reports while visiting her Aunt Fanny, who worked at Hull House in Chicago. "This had given me an idea of what the social context of individual behavior was—how one had to look at the household and place the household in the setting of the community" (Mead 1972:139). Education 455 gave her more formal training: how to look at such things as school record, home situation, recreation, interests, and conduct in order to determine how best to

approach a particular youth (e.g., the case of Augustino, 7 December 1923, Ed 455; LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 4). Mead was thus trained to look at environmental factors, among others, when considering the psychology of an individual, before she came to study children outside the United States. A second notable feature of the Education 455 proposal, as in experiment 34, was Mead's willingness to use herself, her family, and her friends as the source of data.

As the eldest child in a peripatetic household of social scientists and educators, Mead learned early to observe the world around her and to record detailed information rapidly. These skills, sharpened by her formal training, were invaluable in her subsequent fieldwork. When Mead was a child, her mother and paternal grandmother had observed her development and recorded her early behavior in notebooks (e.g., Emily Fogg Mead's "Notes on Baby (Psychology)"; LOC: MMP, Box Q3, file 4). Mead, in turn, was encouraged to observe her younger sisters. As a child of about nine or ten, for instance, she documented her sister Elizabeth's language development (LOC: MMP, Box Q7, file 5). The kind of observation she experienced, Mead felt, was "an act of love. . . . As a result, I have never felt that to observe others was other than a friendly act, one that enhanced rather than diminished their uniqueness and identity" (Mead 1974:298).

Mead "found very early that it was necessary to write things down, lists of dates and names, and sequences of events" (Mead 1974:297). She also learned about observing and recording human behavior from accompanying her sociologist mother on visits to gather information about Italian immigrants who lived near them in New Jersey. As a graduate student in psychology, Mead conducted her own study on the same community, with the assistance of her mother.

Field Studies

New Jersey

"Racial measurement is not yet a science, it has hardly advanced to the stage of a well conducted experiment," wrote Mead in "Measurement of Racial Characteristics," a paper prepared for Georgina Gates in Psychology 21, dated 20 January 1923 (Mead 1923:41; LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 3). This paper, a prelude to her master's thesis on race and intelligence testing, reviews the literature on racial testing. Portions of this essay appear nearly verbatim in Mead's master's thesis. In "The Measurement of Racial Characteristics," Mead indicated an awareness of the limitations of administering tests designed for Americans to people outside the United States (cf. Mead

1923:31). Mead justified the need for a literature review of racial testing, in part because of the paucity of scientific studies of racial characteristics and differences. She wrote:

> On this account a review of the little which has been done is useful, not in pointing to general conclusions or indexing data from which reliable theories may be built up, but rather in emphasizing with statistical relentlessness the absence of evidence on which to base any theory whatsoever (Mead 1923:1).

Mead stressed the variety of tests used to conduct studies, some used only "once or twice," and the incommensurability of their results. She concluded:

> It will not be until many experimenters, using the same test, have tested much larger groups that we can make any scientific generalization concerning racial differences in mental ability (Mead 1923:41).

The proposal for Mead's master's project and the actual testing were done as part of her Advanced Experimental Problems class, Psychology 24, with Georgina Gates in the spring of 1923. In her master's thesis, "Intelligence Tests of Italian and American Children," Mead compared the results of intelligence tests taken by children of Italian-born parents (or in Italian-speaking households) with those taken by children with American-born, English-speaking parents. She considered the language spoken at home by the parents, the social status of the parents, and the number of years the parents had been in the United States and concluded that these three factors—particularly language—affected the scores the Italian children made on the intelligence test. She argued that the lower scores attained by the Italian children would put them at a clear disadvantage in these public schools "if grading or promotion were to be governed by test results" (Mead 1924:59; LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 4). The thesis is a statistics-laden work, with numerous charts and graphs correlating various factors Mead considered in her study. The matter of social status was calculated, based on Emily Fogg Mead's work, and accounted for such factors as home ownership and whether the family owned a Victrola or subscribed to a newspaper.

Mead drew on the results of four different intelligence tests in working on her master's thesis: the Otis Advanced Group Examination, Forms A and B; the Stanford Revision of the Binet Scale; and the New Jersey Composite Test. The New Jersey test, which included both intelligence and achievement

portions, was administered by teachers to 130 Italian-American fifth-graders. Mead considered these results separately in her thesis from the results of the tests she had administered herself. Mead administered the other tests in April, May, and August of 1923. All of the students in grades six through ten in the Hammonton Public Schools took the Otis tests. She made her final comparisons, based on test results of 276 Italian-American children and 160 American children, who had been given Otis Form A (Mead [1924:45]; LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 4; Mead [1927:465]). The Stanford-Binet was given to forty-three Italian-American children chosen at random from the larger group (Mead [1924:44]; LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 4; Mead [1927:465]). Mead was familiar with both the Otis and Binet tests through her coursework, particularly in Psychology 21 and 24. As Mead analyzed the test results in the summer of 1923, she sought advice not only from Professor Gates, but also from the author of the Otis test, Arthur S. Otis.[9]

Mead was thus well prepared to conduct her study of children and adolescents when she went to Samoa, due both to her early socialization and to her formal training in academic psychology. The New Jersey study may be seen as a bridge from Mead's study of psychology to her career in anthropology. She had learned in doing her master's thesis that culture was a factor in intelligence tests. While she had a substantial background in using psychological testing materials, including both individual and group intelligence tests, she needed to adapt these materials to working in cultures outside the United States.

American Samoa

In Appendix V to *Coming of Age in Samoa,* Mead ([1928] 1961:289–290) wrote of the intelligence testing she did on this first field trip:

> It was impossible to standardise any intelligence tests and consequently my results are quantitatively valueless. But as I had had some experience in the diagnostic use of tests I found them useful in forming a preliminary estimate of the girls' intelligence.

Despite their limitations, then, she felt that the tests could still serve a purpose.

Mead (1972:125) later recalled that she "had been exposed to a type of psychology in which the practitioners were emulating the 'scientific' standards of physics, so that measurement was important." Consequently, she had considered taking what was then a state-of-the-art galvanometer with her on the Samoan trip. She decided against taking the instrument—designed to

measure emotional reactions through galvanic skin response—because of its imprecision.

Mead, however, took intellectual equipment with her to Samoa: knowledge of how to design and administer psychological tests to children and adolescents and how to make sense of the results. Her training in psychology had given her "ideas about the use of samples, tests, and systematic inventories of behavior" (Mead 1972:139). In Samoa, Mead administered types of tests with which she was familiar from her psychology classes and readings: a color-naming test, rote memory for digits, digit symbol substitution, opposites, picture interpretation, and the ball and field test (Mead [1928] 1961:290–291; cf., LOC: MMP, Box A15, files 1 and 2 and Box I1, file 5). She administered many of the same tests to her sample of sixty-eight Samoan girls as to the American and Italian-American children, yet they were adapted to the special circumstances, including but not limited to language factors. Mead developed her own tests for the Samoan study based on what she had learned in psychology. She painted a hundred different colored squares for the color naming test, for instance, and using three pictures someone had sent her from an *Asia* magazine article on the film, *Moana of the South Seas,* for the picture naming test (Mead [1928] 1961:290–291; Mead 1972: 154).[10] The Terman testing materials in her notes have cards with scenes on them that are for a similar picture interpretation test. She created her own opposites test—similar to that in the Otis Group Intelligence Test—in Samoa as well (Mead 1974:312). And she administered the Binet ball-and-field test.

Mead ([1928] 1961:291–292) found her test results illustrative of Samoan culture in a number of ways. She deemed the results of the ball and field test "the least satisfactory" in that many of the subjects were more concerned with aesthetic considerations—for instance, the design they drew—than with solving the problem as it was set out for them (Mead [1928] 1961:291). Moreover, in a culture that did not stress rote memorization, few Samoan girls had good rote memory for digits (Mead [1928] 1961:291). On the other hand, Mead found that "the opposites test was the one which they did most easily, a natural consequence of a vivid interest in words. . ." (Mead [1928] 1961:292). The Samoan emphasis on elaborate formal speech patterns was further reflected in the picture identification test, as "almost all of the children adopted some highly stylized form of comment and then pursued it through one balanced sentence after another. . . ." Mead considered the results of this test "the most subject to vitiation through a cultural factor" (Mead [1928] 1961:291).

Given the short duration of her fieldwork, Mead knew from her training in psychology to use a cross-sectional approach to her subject, studying not just adolescents, but those just younger and just older as well. She also compiled case studies of her Samoan subjects, much as she had, with the assistance of

her mother, gathered family information for the subjects of her master's thesis. Checklists of types of information obtained on the Samoan girls, their cultural achievements, and their families are reminiscent of Mead's cataloguing of qualities determining social status used in Mead's master's thesis (cf. Mead 1924, [1928] 1961:292–294; Mead 1924 [LOC: MMP, Box I1, files 4 and 5]).

Mead gave test directions in Samoan. For the tests that required the careful following of instructions, such as the ball and field test, the Knox Cube, color naming, digit memory, opposites, and design memory, she apparently had someone translate her English instructions into Samoan.[11] These were all tests used to measure intelligence in the United States at this time. With the exception of the Knox Cube, they were all part of the Stanford-Binet test, an intelligence test she had given to some of her Italian subjects. It is not clear from Mead's record sheets if she actually used in Samoa the Knox Cube, which measures memory for a physical task. Directions for the test were translated into Samoan, and her record sheets have a space for the results, but she did not include the Knox Cube in the list of tests she published in the appendices to *Coming of Age in Samoa* (LOC: MMP, Box TR3; Mead [1928] 1961:290–291).

In addition to these measures of intelligence, Mead kept records of achievement for her Samoan subjects, recording their levels of experience with tasks related to such things as food preparation and knowledge of courtesy language (Mead [1928] 1961:292–294; LOC: MMP, Box TR3). She also asked her informants questions designed to elicit moral judgments. In a 1933 article on field methods, she recalled:

> In Samoa[,] where moral attitudes were inexplicit, I had to resort to the device of getting every girl to name a series of individuals—the best man, the wisest woman, the worst boy, the best girl, etc. in the village. Only by collecting a large number of such judgments could the implicit moral standards of the children be discovered (Mead 1933:13).

With this approach, Mead (1933:13) utilized her ". . . own particular methods, devised to meet definite situations, many of them suitable for only one culture." Her training in psychology helped prepare her to devise and implement these methods in the field.

Conclusion

Margaret Mead and Derek Freeman exchanged correspondence as he worked on his reassessment of her work in the 1960s and 1970s (see also Côté [this volume]). In a letter dated 6 November 1968, Mead responded

to two previous letters from Freeman in which he questioned, among other things, seeming anomalies in the appendices to *Coming of Age in Samoa*. In her answer, Mead wrote:

> The material in *Coming of Age in Samoa* is disguised in a variety of ways. My concern was to protect the identity of my subjects in every possible respect. Lowell Holmes wrote me, when he was working in Tau[,] that he had not been able to identify my informants. This was my intention. The book was done within the framework of psychological and social work research where protection of subjects was already an issue in the 1920s. It did not become an issue in anthropology until two decades later (LOC: MMP, Box I2, file 1).[12]

The subtitle of *Coming of Age in Samoa* is "*A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization*," and review of archival materials reaffirms just how truly this was a "psychological" study. Mead's grounding in psychology, including the educational psychology she studied at the Teachers College, was inextricably bound up with her approach to anthropological fieldwork, as she devised and executed her own methods. This psychological training furnished Mead with knowledge and tools she used in various ways to study human behavior in different cultures; it taught her the "how" in a way the formal anthropological training of her day did not. Her educational background in psychology guided Mead as she conceptualized and conducted anthropological field studies, affecting issues such as the means by which she elicited and analyzed data from her informants and the ways in which she considered and safeguarded their privacy.

Margaret Mead's career as an anthropologist was firmly grounded in her life experience and in her education as a psychologist. Looking back near the end of that career, she wrote: "My early exposure to academic psychology provided a background for the continuing resort to psychological methods and psychological findings, and the later invitations from psychologists evoked responses that would not otherwise have been made" (Mead 1974:295).

Mead continued the use of psychological testing in the field after Samoa. She added new tests and means of psychological testing in subsequent field trips—such as having children draw pictures—beginning with her Admiralty Islands trip in 1928-29. Subsequently, she also collected art from children on her field trips among the Arapesh, Mundugumor, Balinese, and Iatmul people, and on further trips to Manus. She also, herself or through proxies, collected art from American children (Francis n.d.). Mead acknowledged the influence of Goodenough's 1926 "Draw-a-Man" test (Mead 1974:312; 1978:92) in making her own collection of drawings in the field.

Sometimes she applied other people's psychological tests in the field to get them cross-cultural data, as when she administered Theodora Abel's Limited Free Design Test in Bali (LOC: MMP, Box N23, file 5; for a listing of psychological tests Mead found useful cross-culturally, see Mead [1978:91–93]).

Perhaps the most ambitious of Mead's psychological testing schemes was related to the theory of the squares she developed from her own experiences, along with Reo Fortune and Gregory Bateson, in New Guinea in 1931-33 (Mead 1972:216–220; Banner 2003, chapter 11; Sullivan 2004). She had found the available tests for measuring temperament, including the Downey Will-Temperament Test, inadequate when she conducted classroom experiments using these materials in the early 1920s (Experiment number 4, Psychology 21, 8 December 1922 [LOC: MMP, Box A15, file 2]). Mead's squares test, first developed in the 1930s, was her own attempt to systematize the study and analysis of temperament (e.g., LOC: MMP, Box Q35, file 11 and Box S11, files 7 and 8). The theory was never published formally.

Psychological testing remained a prominent feature of Mead's anthropological work throughout her career. Mead continued as well to work with others interested in psychology. She returned, for instance, year after year to the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, and to the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cincinnati Medical School to consult and collaborate with the practitioners there. She was particularly interested in working with those interested in children's thought. Archival materials belonging to three of those individuals (Margaret Lowenfeld, Martha Wolfenstein, and Edith Cobb) can be found in the Papers of Colleagues series in the Mead Papers at the Library of Congress (LOC: MMP, Series O).

NOTES

This article began as a paper presented at the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) Meetings in Miami, Florida, 16 February 2001. It draws both on that work, titled "'Something to Think With': Mead, Psychology, and the Road to Samoa," and on the paper, "Developing Methods: Margaret Mead's Use of Psychological Tests in New Jersey and American Samoa in the 1920s," presented 22 March 2002 at the Library of Congress symposium, *Archival Gold: Treasures from the Margaret Mead Collection.*

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Teachers College. Finally, I am very grateful to Mary Catherine Bateson for her interest in and support of this project. Quotations from the Mead papers are courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies.

Mead's papers at the Library of Congress (LOC: MMP) are cited throughout this article with a prefix designating the series, followed by the box and file numbers. The file number is used to give an approximate idea of location within a container and may not always be reliable.

1. These were Mead's third and fourth publications. She had published two poems in 1925 (see Gordan 1976:67). In addition to her own research, in 1923 Mead worked with Melville J. Herskovits in his effort to validate the Downey Will-Temperament Test (Herskovits 1924). In the resulting article, Herskovits expressed his gratitude to Mead "for assistance in giving the test to group I, and for arranging the meeting of group III" (Herskovits 1924:75). Group III appears, from the description Herskovits (1924:82) gives of the participants, to be Mead and her apartment-mates, the so-called "Ash Can Cats." For a brief discussion of the significance of this project, see Mead (1978:94).

2. The version of the thesis referred to here is a close-to-final draft dated May 1924, which is available in Mead's papers at the Library of Congress, along with a letter detailing corrections to be made for the final version (LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 4). I am using the term "thesis" here, though Mead herself referred to the document as a master's essay.

3. Some of these classes were actually two-semester courses numbered sequentially (e.g., Psychology 17-18). They appear as discrete classes on the undergraduate transcript; the graduate transcript lists the two-part classes together (LOC: MMP, Box Q14, file 8). I have counted the classes separately.

4. Grading schemes differed for various classes, especially between undergraduate and graduate courses. Transcripts in her papers indicate that she got "A's" in ten of these classes and a "B" in one (Psychology A, her first Psychology class). In five others she received a "P" for passing, and for one course (Education 458A), which she appears not to have taken for credit, she received no grade (LOC: MMP, Box Q14, file 8 and Box A15, file 2).

5. There are two experiments numbered 34; the other seems to have been intended as number 33. There appears to be no record of an experiment number 33.

6. These stimulus words are all used in the Kent-Rosanoff test, but it is not clear from the laboratory report if that test was the only one utilized in Experiment 34.

7. The term "median of community" appears to be one used in the psychology class rather than in the Kent-Rosanoff test itself. See Kent and Rosanoff (1910) for further discussion of the Kent-Rosanoff test and tables.

8. She refers to the testing class as "special methods." It seems more likely that by this she is referring to the Advanced Problems class (Psychology 24), rather than to the Mental Measurement class (Psychology 21).

9. LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 4: Georgina S. Gates to Margaret Mead, letter dated 30 July 1923; LOC: MMP, Box I1, file 2: Arthur S. Otis to Margaret Mead, letters dated 19 July and 30 July 1923, regarding Mead's letters to Otis of 17 July and 25 July 1923.

10. Mead identified the specific publication in a letter to Beryl Epstein, dated 20 October 1977, which also refers to creating tests from the Asia magazine photographs (LOC: MMP, Box I308, file 6; see also Tiffany [this volume]).

11. Evidence in Mead's notes points to someone other than Mead as the translator. While some instructions are typed in both English and Samoan, handwritten Samoan directions are not in Mead's handwriting (LOC: MMP, Box TR3).

12. This is Mead's spelling of Ta'u. Mead's letter of 6 November 1968 may be viewed on the Library of Congress Web site [online]. <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/mead/images/mm0064p1s.jpg>, retrieved 14 May 2004.

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MARGARET MEAD'S INDIVIDUAL IN CULTURE, OR CULTURES AND PERSONALITIES WITHOUT EMBARRASSMENT

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Margaret Mead is associated with the rubric "culture and personality." Mead herself preferred the formula "individual in culture." This essay traces Mead's uses of her preferred formula from 1928 through 1946. Over the course of this period, Mead developed her idea from its initial concerns with the "role" of the individual in Samoan culture in ways which came to focus on the person as the conjunction of biological, developmental (or "genetic"), and cultural processes. The essay examines both published, if now little known, materials and Ruth Benedict's notes taken during a course on "The Study of the Individual in Culture" that Mead taught in 1935. Mead emerges as a researcher well aware of cultural and individual differences, but not as a cultural determinist, much less a biological determinist. Cultures and the personalities which emerge within those cultures were related, according to Mead, but not mirror images of each other.

IT IS SOMETHING OF A COMMONPLACE among anthropologists that both Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict thought of culture as personality writ large and of personality as culture writ small. Though I shall have reason to mention Benedict from time to time, in what follows my primary interest remains focused on Mead. Such a view, assuming Mead held it, appears to conflate two orders of phenomena, which more properly are of different logical types.[1] McDowell (1991:18ff) notes that Mead first used the phrase "personality writ large" in 1959 to describe Benedict's work. Still, some scholars (e.g., Gewertz [1984:621]; Roscoe [2003:6ff]) have criticized Mead on these grounds while being largely respectful of Mead's place as an honored ancestor. Others have been more dismissive.

Edward Sapir (1994:181, brackets original), in the later versions of his

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seminar, "The Psychology of Culture", given at Yale before his death in 1939, could hold:

> The psychology of culture only arises in the relations of individuals. . . . [T]he implication of much of the social-psychological literature now being produced is a bit mischievous. . . .
> Benedict and Mead . . . confuse the individual psychology of all members of a society with the 'as-if' psychology of a few.

By "as-if psychology," Sapir (1994:181) intended to "describe the process of projection of personal values by the individual to evaluate cultural patterns." Projections were "[metaphorical identification[s],] not to be interpreted literally" (Sapir 1994:181). Hence, Mead and Benedict had not only relied on too few persons in their accounts, but also, according to Sapir's account, conflated subjective, even idiosyncratic, views with broader accounts of social processes and relations.

More recently, Robert LeVine (1982:53), contenting himself with a single broad set of citations, wrote:

> Benedict and Mead rejected the conceptual distinction between culture and personality. For them, separating the two would be equivalent of saying that personality could exist without being culturally patterned.

Levine (1982:55) continued:

> [Their] culture-is-personality view takes culture as its organizing concept while reducing personality to mere individual reflection of culture, and personality development to the intergenerational transmission of culture.

For Marcus and Fischer (1986:46; 1999:46, italics original), Sigmund Freud and Marcel Mauss produced "[i]mportant earlier work that has influenced anthropological thought" concerning persons. But "[w]hat *is* new in the current experiments" in conveying other experiences "is a much firmer grasp of how all these forms of understanding," conscious or otherwise, of being a person "are culturally variable, rather than being a part of some pan-human evolutionary sequence." For Marcus and Fischer (1986:114), Mead's ethnographic work, concerned with the variety of cultural circumstances and processes of emotional development, merits mention as a critique of American culture.

Excursus Concerning Primarily Ruth Benedict, Briefly

Similarly, in the introduction written for the Centennial editions of both *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* and *Male and Female*, Helen Fisher (2001a:xxii; 2001b:xxii) states that Mead and Benedict:

> . . . developed a new anthropological subfield, the school of 'culture and personality.' Central to its philosophy was Mead's belief that culture was like a language. It had a grammar, an underlying structure, a personality based on a few major psychological traits. As Benedict put it, 'Cultures from this point of view are individual psychology thrown large upon a screen.'

Fisher relies heavily on Marvin Harris' discussion of Benedict and Mead in his *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (1968:407–421). She does not take the quote above directly from Benedict's (1932) "Configurations of Culture in North America," but rather from Harris. Further, she quotes only a part of the pertinent sentence that Harris (1968:398) himself provided whole from Benedict's original. Fisher, thereby, obscures both the terms of Benedict's analogy between cultures and personalities and her metaphor; "cultures . . . are individual psychology thrown large upon a screen, given gigantic proportions and a long time span" (Benedict 1932:24).

In addition to the implicit matters of scale, both geometric and temporal, and of shadows, cinemas and perhaps caves, Fisher's selection "ignores" what Benedict (1932:24) considered to be "the crucial point." What separated Benedict's (1932:24) "reading of cultural from individual psychology" from "[Sir James] Frazer's and [Lucien] Levy-Bruhl's" was the "selective choice of the society which is the crux of the process." Benedict indicated here how what Robert Lowie (1920[1961]:441) had termed "that thing of shreds and patches called civilization" becomes, in her view, the more or less integrated cultural configurations to which persons, given their dispositions, adjust more or less successfully.

Fisher merely implies rather than shows that Mead held the position Fisher saw in the quote from Benedict. Nonetheless, it is phrases like the one Fisher quoted which underlie the commonplace notion that Mead and Benedict thought of culture as personality writ large and of personality as culture writ small.

Mead, Benedict's friend, sometime lover, and probably closest reader, could and did distinguish her own work from Benedict's in a number of ways.[2] According to Mead (1946:481), Benedict treated a "culture over time as analogous to a personality over time" with the proviso, as noted above, that

a culture may attain greater consistency and integration than is feasible "in the life history of a single individual." Benedict's cultural "pattern [however] . . . is delineated not so much in the interpersonal relations of individuals as in the formal elements in the culture, religion, myths, formal speeches, magic" brought together through "a combination of historical accident and the selection and reinforcement of certain potentialities at the expense of others" (Mead 1946:481).

Lamenting that Benedict was not explicit about such matters in her text, Clyde Kluckhohn's (1941:117, italics original) "close study" of *Patterns of Culture* made:

> . . . it fairly plain that she [Benedict] is not so much interested in an inductive analysis of how the Zuñi, for example, do in fact behave as in suggesting a relationship between accepted standards of behavior in Zuñi ("*ideal patterns*") and cultural *configurations* of which the Zuñi are largely unconscious.

Thus, those criticisms of Benedict which were "based upon the premise that she is talking about behavioral patterns" were inapt as Benedict presented "'selected detail[s] of behavior' . . . as a behavioral counterpart of an ideal pattern or as an exemplification of the influence of configuration," rather than as "some inductive demonstration of behavioral pattern" (Kluckhohn 1941:117).[3]

Initial Objections

One should not presume without further evidence that such descriptions apply equally to Mead. Mead's so-called popular books portray a plethora of named persons living in differing societies and social circumstances: Samoans such as Lita, who "lived for years in the pastor's house" and wanted "to find a place" in the "alien culture" of English and educational advantages enjoyed by an elder cousin (Mead [1928a] 1939:164–165); Pele Pele, "the precocious little sister of the loosest woman in the village" (Mead [1928a] 1939:139); and Lalala, whose "marital life . . . had begun with a cruel public defloration ceremony," yet who "adored her husband" and "made her choices in life with full recognition of the facts of her existence" (Mead [1928a] 1939:142); Arapesh such as Aden, who "had no relatives at all except two mother's brothers, one who was a half-wit, and one who, out of loneliness, had moved away and joined his wife's people in the next locality" (Mead [1935] 1939:85); or Ombomb, who though married to Me'elue, took up with the plains woman, Sauwedjo, causing much trouble thereby (Mead [1935]

1939:111ff); and Temos who, "twice uprooted . . . by other women" married Wabe who was also married to Welima (Mead [1935] 1939:124ff); Mundugumor such as Ombléan ". . . gentle, cooperative, easily enlisted in the causes of others" (Mead [1935] 1939:228–229), and hence deviant enough to discuss how Mundugumor society did and ought to work.

Just as Mead's so-called popular books had attended to particular people living in specific social circumstances, so too Gregory Bateson and Mead (1942:xii) contended that *Balinese Character*, published in 1942, was:

> . . . about the Balinese–about the way in which they, as living persons, moving, standing, eating, sleeping, dancing and going into trance, embody that abstraction which . . . we technically call culture.

Even this highly technical collaboration continued Mead's focus on particular people as it concerned "living persons . . . embody[ing]" customs and was "not a book about Balinese custom" per se.

Yet, it may now surprise some that on 1 April 1935 Mead wrote John Dollard, a sociologist affiliated with the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University:

> At present the whole phasing of "Personality and Culture" seems ridiculous to me. I can't see that there is anything except biological basis, the genetic process and the culture and each individual is a temporary phenomenon of these three contributory forces? (LOC: MMP, Box C2, file 6, underlining and final question mark original).[4]

In his reply to Mead, Dollard (LOC: MMP, Box S7, file 12, letter of 2 April 1935) also underlined the "and," noting further that he had "perspired under this title for a whole year . . . with all [his] friends going round using these words as though they were epithets." He agreed not only about the phrase, itself "one of Larry [Frank]'s tautologies", but also that "we will have to get back on track on the lines you [i.e., Mead] suggest, for the provisional usefulness of the linked terms" . . . "drum[ming] some ideas into otherwise impervious heads". . . "is over." Dollard referred here to Lawrence Kelso Frank, the man charged with funding social science research at the Rockefeller Foundation.

It may further surprise some that in 1946, Mead contended:

> During the last twenty-five years there has been a strong emphasis in anthropological study and in the related fields of social psychol-

> ogy, sociology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis, upon the importance of what has been called, not very happily, the culture *and* personality approach. The *and* originally introduced to link fields, has proven to be a methodological embarrassment (Mead 1946:480, italics original).

Concerning Methodological Embarrassments

Mead had several specific forms of methodological embarrassment in mind: First, the confusion of "uniformities in behavior of those who share a common culture" with the regularities of culturally specific understandings of behavior (Mead 1946:478). Second, a too common reduction of the culturally pertinent ranges and contrasts, "even sharp contradictions," of behavior to so-called "individual differences" (Mead 1946:478–479). Third, an attributions of false concreteness, which failed to recognize that terms like "cultural", "psychological," "individual" and the like "are categories of observations" or "orders of data which [some] have found it most convenient to analyze" (Mead 1946:479). Fourth, confusions about "what types of cultural study [yield] which types of material" (Mead 1946:480). Fifth, insufficiently detailed ethnographic description of circumstances pertinent to supposed psychological forms such as the Oedipus complex. And, sixth, the failure to elicit patterns intrinsic to gathered materials due to the use of methods, notably psychological tests other than projective tests, which force a pattern onto those materials.

Mead (1946:480) preferred the "more systematic phrasing of the essential unity of the individual *in* a culture . . . while his [i.e., the individual's] behavior is studied from a variety of points of view."

In reading Mead's corpus, published and unpublished, I have found very few places where she uses the formula "culture and personality."[5] But she does so generally as a shorthand to facilitate communication and, with one prominent possible exception where the terms are reversed (see below), not methodologically.

Prefigurings

Mead had used her preferred phrasing not only as a title of a section on the "Individual in the social pattern" of her *Social Organization of Manua* (1930a:31–44), but also even earlier in her 1928 essay, "The Rôle of the Individual in Samoan Culture."

For Mead ([1928b]1931:545), the important point which "must . . . be borne in mind throughout [her] discussion" was "that social organization is the principal occupation in Samoa; industry, art and religion all are dwarfed beside it." Hawaiian, Tahitian, New Zealand Maori and Marquesan societies

may have exceeded the Samoan in other matters. But among the historically and culturally related societies of Polynesia, "Samoan culture is particularly conspicuous" "for its intricacy and complexity of social organization" (Mead [1928b] 1931:559). Thus, Mead ([1928b] 1931:545) contended "the importance of the individual as innovator and stylist" depended largely on "the particular culture into which he is born," each culture presenting persons with differing possibilities for innovation and recognition.

Mead's (1930a:83) point, further developed in *Social Organization of Manua*, was somewhat larger:

> By this emphasis upon conformity to the all important social structure, I do not mean here the attempt of a society to make all those within it conform to all its ways of thought and behavior . . . I mean to stress rather the particular implication in the lives of individuals of a particular kind of social pattern.

Samoans' characteristic preoccupation with their this-worldly social structure and their respective, changing, individual placement therein had consequences for Samoans and their lives:

> Personal relationships if allowed scope would rival the social relationships, and undermine their sanctions. . . . The weight of social scorn and disapproval is never upon those who have been unwilling to pay higher prices, but always upon those who care greatly. Their conduct is branded as *mataga* (awkward) (Mead 1930a:84, emphasis original).

By "personal" Mead indicated felt emotion of whatever sort; by "social" she meant relative position within the wider Samoan hierarchical system. For Mead, Samoan preoccupations were pertinent to other anthropological issues of the day:

> Chiefly concerned with their social pattern, the Samoans have time for little else. Pondering the exigencies of ordered society, they take small interest in the world of the supernatural. . . . [t]heir all inclusive social formula gives them no acceptable basis of interest in the mysterious properties of material things or natural phenomena (Mead 1930a:85).

Mead captured a consequence of this Samoan situation in the title of another work, "A Lapse of Animism in a Primitive People," published in 1928.

Much later, Mead (1972:166) wrote that in this latter essay she "discussed the fact that the kind of prelogical thinking that Lévy-Bruhl and Freud were talking about did not occur among the Samoans [she] had studied." Many anthropologists and psychologists, Freud and Lévy-Bruhl prominently among them, considered that the thought of so-called primitive people displayed a characteristic animism; that is, such thought was concerned with those forces which inhere within important features of the natural world or inhabit some powerful yet invisible realm from which these forces or spirits could affect significant changes in the lives of human beings.

Additionally, many of these theorists held that the thought of women, children and neurotics was similar to that of primitives and, thereby, was different in varying degrees from the rationality characteristic of modern men toward which human mentality generally tended. By insisting that Samoan concerns with their this-worldly social system effectively kept Samoan thought from developing an animist cast, Mead differentiated herself, no matter how respectfully, from Freud, Lévy-Bruhl and other theorists who argued for what Marcus and Fischer (1986:46, 1999:46) refer to as "some panhuman evolutionary sequence."[6]

In "The Ethnological Approach to Social Psychology," the first appendix to *Growing Up in New Guinea* of 1930, Mead ([1930b] 1939:279) envisioned a role for the anthropologist as someone who "never seeks to invalidate the observations of the psychologist" but rather "submits the findings of the psychologist who works in our society to the test of observation within other societies." She assumed not only that "[t]he repetition of such observations will in time give us a far better basis of generalization than can be obtained by the observation of individuals within the confining walls of one type of social environment" but also that studying "original nature . . . as modified by different environmental conditions" is "the only way to arrive at any conception of . . . it" (Mead [1930b] 1939:279)

By "original nature," Mead referred in part to what she called temperament, or those innate, constitutional dispositions inherited from one's immediate forebears, as well as to "the potentialities of man" (Mead [1930b] 1939:283).[7] Through social interaction and the accidents of life, given what she would later refer to as "an adaptive body chemistry" in her unpublished "Summary Statement of the Problem of Personality and Culture" of 1933 (LOC: MMP, Box N102, file 2; see also Sullivan [2004]), a person becomes more or less molded to those generally collective purposes we identify as cultural. Put differently, persons are temporary phenomena arising through the conjunction of biology, developmental processes, and cultural environs.

Mead (LOC: MMP, Box S11, file 8) contended that the "basic temperamental orientations with which people are born . . . react to cultural condi-

tions in different ways." Concomitantly, in Mead's view deviance came to refer not just to behavior at odds with wider cultural preference, as Benedict had it, but arises when a person's temperament is either significantly at odds with the temperament which most influenced a given society's ethos (LOC: MMP, Box S11, file 8). Mead was still developing this view in the spring semester of 1935 when she both published *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* and taught an extension course at Columbia University on the "Study of the Individual in Culture" (LOC: MMP, Box J8, file 11; cf. Box O40, file 7).

The Study of the Individual in Culture

Mead, a long time employee of the American Museum of Natural History, had not taught a course before, nor would she again until the mid- to late 1950s. Unlike Sapir, Mead did not have the opportunity to develop her course over more than a decade. Neither did she then have the chance, as Sapir did, to groom a substantial number of her own students who would go on as a group to become leading teachers of the subject. Nonetheless, Mead's course drew nearly thirty students. They were a mix of graduates and undergraduates. They included eight psychologists, three of whom had studied with Otto Klineberg; seven sociologists, including one who had studied with Robert Lynd; and, by Mead's count, ten anthropologists, several of whom would be among Mead's co-authors of the 1937 volume, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples*.[8] By far the most prominent attendee was Benedict.

Mead's lecture notes are incomplete and schematic. To my knowledge, Benedict's handwritten notes, replete with abbreviations, are the fullest record of the course. I know of no body of student notes comparable to those which has allowed patient scholars to recreate a text for the series as has been done with Sapir's (1994) *The Psychology of Culture*.

Even a cursory examination of the extant materials reveals that compared with Mead's course, Sapir's was ethnographically thin at best, David Mandelbaum's (1941:219) praise for Sapir's course notwithstanding. For all Sapir's emphasis upon the individual, as well as his opposition to Alfred Kroeber's idea of the superorganic (see Sapir 1917), Sapir's lectures contain no persons living real lives and no cultures. Put another way, as Anthony Wallace (quoted in Darnell 1986:179) apparently said of Sapir's essays, the course contains no "'data, or testable hypotheses, or examples of method'."

Mead began her course with what she termed an eclectic statement on the individual in culture. By this time, she did not mean the "play of ind[ividual] in culture" but rather wished to attend to the "cultural data carried by each

ind[ividual]" allowing for the facts of individual lives. Then, utilizing the first of many comparisons, Mead turned to Samoa and America to contrast relevant "concepts of self, [the] social, [the] physical, thinking etc. . . ." (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 7 February 1935). She would return to this comparison three lectures hence, adding a discussion of Manus, to take up questions of the individual's variable relations to societies which presented an already extant "*structure* of titles, not of p[eople]" (Samoa), societies where the individual "makes the pattern" of relations for him or herself (America), as well as societies whose inhabitants lacked a vision of a "structure of [the societal] whole" (Manus) (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 28 February 1935, emphasis original).

Mead turned to several relevant approaches to her broader problem, notably what Benedict's notes call the "*Growth of the Child in his society*" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 7 February 1935, emphasis and capitalization original). Mead indicated that for her then present purposes what was important was not so much "the sequence in the life of a given individual" as the larger cultural setting. "[E]verything in the life of 50 [or] 40 year olds impinges on the life of the child" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 7 February 1935).

She used a detailed lecture on the Arapesh, with asides concerning the Mundugumor and the Samoans, to talk about: (1) a nexus of social relationships, both kin locally conceived and trade partnerships; (2) the remembrance of trauma; and (3) ideas of growing life along with differential responsibilities attending thereto, to initiate a discussion of various bodily bases of symbolism. Over the course of this lecture, Mead advanced towards the first of many methodological points; a fieldworker needs to "know everything about" the "group [the ethnographer] will control" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 21 February 1935).

Mead extended her various ethnographic analyses, mentioning as well Dobuan, Dakota, Ontong Javanese, Cheyenne, Ojibwa, Pima, Tchambuli, Bathonga, Eskimo, Plains Arapesh, and Trobriand practices. She attended to patterns for reckoning kinship and understanding marriage, hence to families and affinity. She took up age and age grades or the lack thereof. She discussed the sexes, their roles and local expectations concerning the tenor of their behavior (this being the subject of two lectures under her original plan), as well as matters of social status. Mead then concluded over the last several lectures by examining the socially integrative and dissonant nexus the aforementioned matters provide a developing personality.

On 26 March 1935, Benedict's course notes show Mead emphasized "the importance of the social structure as contributory to the child weltanschauung."[9] A society's "categories may match . . . emotion [and] in certain degrees

creates them [i.e., emotions]" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, emphasis original). But, as Mead put it in a discussion of four differing sorts of "Abnormals," "some societies are more consistent than others" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, undated lecture). Further, one "[c]an't predict that . . . bathing etc. [i.e., local techniques of child rearing] will have adult repercussions" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 19 March 1935). Thus, one cannot conclude from Mead's phrase "in certain degrees" that she thought of culture as determining emotion.

Nor do emotions have solely bodily bases. Anthropological studies should look to the child in his or her cultural framework, and not merely as a body which develops in accord with a single biological norm with which the culture interferes. Rather, such studies should treat the "Body [as] a potential which is unfolded in the particular climate of each culture" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 19 March 1935). Any newborn may be a perfect example of a newborn member of its culture, but a "child of 6 no longer has all of the potentialities" of an infant (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 7 February 1935). The "[p]lan of research" she suggested during the course was intended "[t]o find out what need[ed] to [be] know[n] about [the] individual" (LOC: MMP, Box O40, file 7, lecture of 28 February 1935).

Not Quite a Conclusion

While still engaged in teaching this course, on 21 March 1935 Mead wrote Herbert Shenton, of the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, proposing "a detailed case study project [to] establish the range of individual differences against a cultural pattern" (LOC: MMP, Box N5, file 1). She continued:

> The result which I should expect to obtain would fall into two main categories: (1) material upon the relation between individual differences and the impact of the culture pattern in infancy upon the formation of adult character, and (2) research leads for the further study of the problem of old age, its character manifestations and adjustments.

Mead's letter to Shenton is the earliest proposal pertaining to the field trip she and Bateson took to Bali between March 1936 and March 1938 and again in January and February of 1939. Mead wrote the most significant of the proposals written in anticipation of the first trip for Nolan Lewis of the Committee for Research in Dementia Praecox, contending that "The total personality of an individual is the result of his original constitution, the conditioning which he has received as a member of a given culture, and the

accidents of his own particular upbringing." She wished to take ". . . the next step in the understanding of the individual's relationship to his culture . . ." (LOC: MMP, Box N5, file 1). This Balinese field study would culminate in Bateson and Mead's (1942:xii) study of how "living [Balinese] persons . . . embody that abstraction which (after we have abstracted it) we technically call [Balinese] culture."

It should, therefore, not have been surprising then or be surprising now that Mead would prefer the phrasing "the individual in a culture" to the more conventional "culture and personality." The particular individual in his or her particular culture, had, after all been at the center of Mead's professional life and writing for at least eighteen years. It should not be surprising, either, that Mead thought that a cultural approach to the study of personality could proceed in either of two directions. First:

> We may emphasize those aspects of personality which can be systematically referred to the regularities of behavior in the society in which an individual is born and reared, or to which he or she is exposed for appreciable periods of time . . . (Mead 1946:477).

Second, one can attend to "the types and varieties of personality within a culture when emphasis is laid . . . upon the way in which the institutions and formulations of the culture provide for such varieties" rather than focusing upon "innate individual gift[s]" or "upon individual histor[ies]" per se (Mead 1946:477). In either case, a detailed ethnographic account, of the sort Mead had advocated repeatedly in her course of 1935, would be a prerequisite for meaningful commentary.

Similarly, a reassessment of Mead as a person in culture, especially in the culture of anthropology, has as its prerequisite a detailed, careful examination and account of her work, published and unpublished. The Sapirian critique of Mead was scurrilous, Sapir's work having about itself none of the qualities Sapir supposedly advocated when Mead's work so obviously returned again and again to real people interacting with one another. More recent critiques have often not returned to the sources or have taken later interpretations uncritically as authoritative. Such critiques have too often proved ways to dismiss Mead as understood, rather than to understand her, her work, and her legacy.

We can not know what is new if we do not have a firmer sense of what has been. Without a useable past, we can not tell the differences between the important and the merely novel. For an anthropology which still looks to understand real persons living real lives in real worlds, Mead's ethnographies may or may not be in various ways erroneous, but her theoretical concern with the individual in culture and the processes of embodiment which shaped

those ethnographies ought to remain a potent source for the discipline and its progress.

NOTES

All quotations from the Mead Papers archived at the Library of Congress appear courtesy of Mary Catherine Bateson and the Institute for Intercultural Studies. Mead never prepared these documents for publication. I follow the practices of a prudent editor, making minor corrections as long as these corrections do not change the plain meaning of Mead's text.

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1. On logical typing, see Bateson (1979:114–28).

2. On their rhetorical similarities, see Guddemi (this volume, 106–127); on their differences, see Sullivan (2004:200–202).

3. Kluckhohn (1941) takes the phrase "selected detail of behavior" from Benedict (1934:49).

4. For an extended analysis of Mead's thinking on these matters, see Sullivan (2004). I am indebted to Patricia A. Francis for this piece of Mead's correspondence with Dollard and Dollard's reply.

5. In 1936, Mead published a three-page article entitled "Culture and Personality" in the American Journal of Sociology. I learned of this publication too late to include discussion of it here.

6. On Mead's psychological education, see Francis (this volume, 74–90).

7. On the sources of Mead's notions of temperament and character, see Sullivan (2004).

8. Mead's co-authors were Irving Goldman, Jeannette Mirsky, Ruth Landes, and May Mandelbaum Edel. Others in attendance included Jules Henry, Ashley Montagu, and Ruth Bunzel.

9. World view or philosophy of life.

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THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE INVERTED: RHETORICAL STRATEGIES IN THE PORTRAYAL OF CULTURES IN RUTH BENEDICT'S *PATTERNS OF CULTURE* AND MARGARET MEAD'S *SEX AND TEMPERAMENT IN THREE PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES*

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Patterns of Culture and *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, published a year apart, have a startlingly parallel structure. Discussions of anthropological method open both; the question of the individual and deviance closes both. The triad of cultures in each book is arranged in the order of "the good, the bad, and the inverted." The first culture emphasizes cooperation and nurturance, the second competition and discord. The third culture in each inverts some feature of Western society, either in the economic realm (Kwakiutl) or in that of gendered personality (Tchambuli). Cultural inversion places Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead in a rhetorical tradition of social critique. Nevertheless, the cultural relativism shown by these contrasts is not philosophically "strong" relativism and does not rely on a "blank slate" view of human nature. Specifically, the concept of temperament includes, not excludes, biology; culture selects the expression of temperament. While not all in the books may be universally accepted today, their approach repays a second look.

Two Books in Parallel

PATTERNS OF CULTURE by Ruth Benedict and *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* by Margaret Mead were published within a year of each other. Both are written in a literary style, which in both cases attracted a wide readership outside anthropological circles. Both texts open with an elucidation of the anthropological subject matter and of anthropological investigation. In Mead, this discussion occupies a short introduction; in Benedict, three chapters. The purpose of these extended discussions is partly to familiarize outsiders with the purposes of anthropology; they are also manifestos aimed at contemporary anthropological ideas and practice. The main body

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of both works consists of an examination in detail of a triad of cultures, each considered as an integrated whole. The penultimate chapter of each book contains a discussion of how cultures are and become patterned. In Benedict this question is considered in its general significance, whereas in Mead it is considered only as it bears on the specific question of, as she termed it, "sex-difference" (Mead [1935] 1950: xii; in today's terms, gender). The last chapter in each book deals with the question of the relation of the individual to society; both books discuss deviance as central to this issue. And both books conclude with an exhortation to our own society to widen its perspectives.

The two works show a remarkable parallelism as structural wholes. But they further resemble each other in their examination of specific cultures. There is a provocative parallel between the sequence of Arapesh, Mundugumor, and Tchambuli as discussed by Mead and that of Pueblo, Dobu, and Kwakiutl described by Benedict. When I first noticed this parallel, having read these books as a student, my mental phrasing of it was that in each triad the first culture was a nice one, the second a nasty one, and the third an artistic one by a body of water. Upon further reflection, what I found interesting about the third cultures in each triad was how these invert American culture in a significant way. I shall argue that this seeming coincidence between the two books not only argues for influence, but, more significantly, it follows from the common rhetorical purpose of both authors—to expose their readers to cultural relativism in both an intellectually and emotionally convincing manner, and by doing so to give them insight into the culturally relative nature of their own ways of life.

This cultural relativism begins with a sense of the wide range of possible cultural difference. The books further demonstrate, by comparison, that cultures differ widely, not only in their institutions, but also in other, harder to define, ways. Each culture possesses a characteristic complex of feeling associated with the way its participants experience and perpetuate their cultural institutions. A number of anthropologists have used the term ethos for this, Mead (probably following Gregory Bateson) among them (Mead [1935] 1950:236).[1] Ethos of this kind also seems to be a component of what Benedict refers to as a culture's pattern or configuration (Benedict [1934] 1959:55), which includes cognitive aspects of the culture's structure as well. I discuss these terms in more depth in a later section of this paper, one which shows how Gregory Bateson, in his 1936 book *Naven*, dissected the differences between these concepts. These ethoses, patterns, or configurations can be sharply different even among closely related cultures, and they seem to be able to vary with few inherent limits.

I will also return below to the question of how relativistic Benedict and Mead actually were, and what their relativisms portended. I will argue, for example, that Mead and Benedict were not philosophical or epistemological

relativists. Their use of concepts such as temperament actually involved a subtle sense of the interrelationships between the innate and the individual (which are not, of course, totally identical) and the wider cultural patterns that participate in shaping these. In spite of current critiques, they were far from "blank slate" theorists.[2] However, they were relativists in the sense that they wished to generate, for their American audience, a rich sense of human potential, for good and ill, and to illustrate this range of human potential they used a strategy of contrasts in cultural patterns.

As I examine the ways cultures are portrayed in Mead's and Benedict's books, my descriptions of their descriptions will seem oversimplified and schematic. This is due in part to the authors' own tendencies to use light and shadow in their portrayals of the various cultures they studied. They were further constrained in presenting complex cultural material in an abbreviated fashion, in which contrasts had to be strongly stated in order for the ideas embedded in those contrasts to make an impact on a wider public.

But in spite of their clear rhetorical purpose, and their tendency to encapsulate cultures in order to contrast them, Benedict and Mead attempted to ground their examples on what they saw as sound and accurate ethnographic work. Although the ethnographic underpinnings of the two books have faced criticism, it is noteworthy that they are not without their defenders. For Benedict's triad of cultures, the portrait of the Pueblo peoples, particularly Zuni, was the one most dependent on her own fieldwork. The fundamental soundness of much of Benedict's Zuni data was allowed by a number of researchers, including some unsympathetic to her larger approach, including Robert Lowie (1938) and Elsie Clews Parsons (1939). This, along with some of the criticisms of her interpretations, is discussed in detail in Caffrey's biography (1989: 217–240). For Mead's Sepik work, Lipset (2003) has made the strongest case that her portraits of the societies she studied retain a significant measure of validity—even after a half century of restudy and critical reassessment. Lipset's article comprehensively reviews both the contemporary and subsequent ethnographic work on what he calls Mead's "triptych" of cultures. Nevertheless, I will reiterate that it is not in any way the purpose of this article to argue for the ethnographic accuracy of any specific portrayal of a culture by Benedict or Mead. Nor do I argue for the revival of their particular style of broad-brush cultural comparison—even if I do make the case that the view of culture they underwrite with such comparison is one that deserves another look.

The Two Triads: The Good, the Bad ...

The first culture of each triad, or triptych, Zuni/ Dobu/ Kwakiutl and Arapesh/ Mundugumor/ Tchambuli, is described as one in which the virtues

of social solidarity and cooperation are emphasized at the expense of individual self-assertion. The Pueblo Zuni and Mountain Arapesh share, in their respective portrayals, a de-emphasis of assertive leadership as a trait of the ideal individual. Rather, social energies are directed toward the cooperative maintenance of life, the bringing of rain or the "growing" of yams and children (Mead [1935] 1950:24–25). Both sexes participate in the care of children. Even the initiation rites of these peoples are not phrased as "unloading upon the children the adult's ... will to power" (Benedict [1934] 1959:103). Rather, these rites are described as a way of establishing novices as properly dutiful and cooperative members of society. War and conflict are rare among both the Zuni and the Mountain Arapesh. Ruth Benedict describes the pursuit of warfare among the Zuni as part of the promotion of fertility and social harmony, in contrast with the "Dionysian" way it is celebrated among Plains Indians. Margaret Mead describes war as rare to nonexistent among the Mountain Arapesh, in contrast to Fortune's documentation of Arapesh warfare (see also Roscoe 2003). Arguably, Mead could have more defensibly stated her point that the Arapesh were less warlike than their neighbors in the regional context. Zuni and Arapesh "deviants" would be those with violent or even passionate temperaments, or those who desire to maximize their personal property or status.

Some of the deviants of Arapesh or Zuni, as they are portrayed, would find Dobu or Mundugumor quite congenial.[3] These latter cultures are described by Benedict and Mead in ways which would seem to ensure that few American readers would find either culture sympathetic. Both societies pit individuals against each other, although Mundugumor hostility is portrayed as perhaps more open than Dobu treachery. Both emphasize individual self-assertion in a world conceived as a life-and-death, cutthroat, competitive struggle in which gains for one are inevitably losses for another. Leadership is charismatic and informal, respected because leaders get goods for themselves. In the Dobu case overt display is feared, but "sharp practice," for example, in *kula* trading is admired, as is the use of witchcraft to augment one's own goods at the expense of others. Sex is passionately and violently erotic, but not tender; tension between sex partners is strong, while bonds between parents and children are weak. The deviants in Mundugumor and Dobu societies, according to their portrayals in Mead's and Benedict's respective books, would be those who did not fight or scheme for their own advantage, but rather those who cared about others and were kind to them.

The contrast between the first and second cultures in each triad is presented as one between extremes. Such a contrast is appropriate if the purpose of both books is to expose readers to the wide range of cultural variability. Not only American anthropologists, but Americans in general, have

long been interested in the individual. What better contrast, then, than one between cultures in which the individual is subordinate to society, as opposed to cultures in which the individual is paramount, even at the expense of social harmony. Mead and Benedict alike emphasize that these contrasting emphases of culture produce contrasting types of person. Mead's specific interest in similarities and differences in temperament between the sexes (or genders) of particular cultures does not prevent her from echoing Benedict's more general cultural comparison. Both are facilitated by making the contrast between the first two cultures in each triad stark and vivid.

...And the Inverted

The third cultures of Mead's and Benedict's respective triads, Tchambuli and Kwakiutl, do not resemble each other as much as do Arapesh and Pueblo, or Dobu and Mundugumor. Both third cultures, it is true, were non-farming peoples who did not have to concern themselves much with a struggle for survival. The Tchambuli are portrayed as largely living off the proceeds of the mosquito nets the women made, while the Kwakiutl famously built a complex culture on the nonagricultural foundation of bountiful salmon runs. Both peoples are thus portrayed as having had ample opportunity to develop and emphasize aspects of life not directly connected to subsistence, namely richly developed artistic and ritual traditions. However, in terms of Mead's and Benedict's rhetorical purpose, these two cultures appear to invert our own in some respect, and it is this inversion or mirror image that warrants their inclusion in the authors' respective triads. While theoretically, Tchambuli men rule over women, the latter exhibit qualities Western society considers manlike; whereas Tchambuli men exhibit so-called "feminine" characteristics, according to 1930's American stereotypes.[4] Similarly, Kwakiutl economic competition—although much like our own in giving prestige to wealth—does not lend prestige, as ours does, to the acquisition and use of goods, the consumerist competition to "keep up with the Joneses" in conspicuous consumption. Instead, through the institution of the potlatch, the Kwakiutl give their competitive accolade to those who are able to distribute wealth generously as gifts, and even, sometimes, to destroy it ostentatiously, in both cases shaming their rivals into having to do the same. (Perhaps this could be called conspicuous distribution and conspicuous destruction.)

The rhetorical purpose of inversion in these portrayals has not been as widely discussed as the earlier contrast seen between "nice" and "nasty" cultures. For example, while Banner (2003a, 2003b) has clearly identified the portrayals of Zuni and Arapesh as being sympathetic, she places the last two members of both triads in the category of those who are portrayed as unsym-

pathetic. Indeed, Benedict's representation of rather boastful, vainglorious, and sometimes ritually cannibalistic Kwakiutl male claimants to greatness may be arguably closer to a negative portrayal than is Mead's ambiguous contrasting of touchy and insecure male Tchambuli artists with solid, economically productive, grounded and empowered Tchambuli females. But this should not obscure the fact that what we are dealing with here is a second set of contrasts. While the first set of contrasts (between the first and second members of each triad) opposes sympathetic, socially integrative cultures to unsympathetic, individualistic, and (if such a thing can exist) antisocial societies, the second pair of contrasts (between the third cultures of each triad and our own) foregrounds the features of the other culture which can best serve as an inversionary looking-glass vis-a-vis the intended reader's.

Inversion is a time-tested method of challenging a prevailing culture's unreflective sense of itself, and it has been used in philosophy and literature to examine what would later be considered as contrasts among cultures–often with a view to satirizing one's own. Indeed, inversion resulting from cultural displacement that produces a new view of taken-for-granted social realities has numerous literary precursors, and I will mention a few in the Western tradition. Such inversion is sometimes called "Swiftian" because Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* ([1726] 1956) famously uses it as a motif in a number of ways. The Houyhnhnms are horses with the power of reason, while the Yahoos are humans without reason. The civil wars of Lilliput are based on the religious difference between cracking an egg at the big end or the smaller end. Swift's 18th-century contemporary, Montesquieu, used fictional Persian observers to lampoon European culture in his *Persian Letters* ([1721] 1899). Contrast and difference were again used to satirical and theoretical purpose and to animate cultural reflection. Samuel Butler, one of Gregory Bateson's favorite authors, perfected the use of inversion as cultural critique in his utopian, or dystopian, novel *Erewhon* (1923).[5] In that novel, a protagonist not unlike Samuel Butler himself, who at one time was a New Zealand sheep farmer, decided to travel to the forbidden inland country located beyond the frontiers of a placid land much like New Zealand. He discovered in the interior land of Erewhon, an anagram of Nowhere, that illness is treated as a criminal offense with sick people thrown into jail, while robbery or murder is treated in the hospital. Universities specialize in unreason, considering its deployment to be more useful than that of reason. A survey of the world's literature would find many more examples of the use of inversion as a rhetorical device, which makes either a satirical or utopian point of provoking a challenge to the reader's presumed ideas about the natural order of things.

Such a challenge is perhaps one of the most salient pedagogical uses of the anthropological concept of culture, and by provoking the minds of read-

ers this use of contrast may have helped them grasp the intended relativist framework of the anti-establishmentarian Boasian school. The use of inversion in this sense is perhaps an under-appreciated rhetoric of anthropology. One could argue that inversion is even at the root of theoretical positions such as Lévi-Strauss' structuralism ([1964] 1975). In the case of Mead's and Benedict's works, inversion is intended to make us aware that our customs are only customs and are not inherent in the nature of things. The authors' rhetorical purpose is facilitated in both *Patterns of Culture* and in *Sex and Temperament* by making the third culture in each triad one that inverts a key American cultural pattern. Thus, Kwakiutl potlatches in Benedict's description invert the American capitalist "game" of accumulation and possession, in that display and prestige on the Northwest Coast are linked to giving away wealth rather than keeping it. Similarly, for Mead, the Tchambuli are found to invert, not so much Western sex roles as such, but rather the personality patterns that accompany them. Men pursuing culturally masculine Tchambuli goals are seen by Mead as nevertheless feminine in their style of doing so; while confident women go about their possibly less prestigious (but more materially important) tasks in what Mead sees as a masculine manner, dominating the males in so doing.

The use of a concept of rhetoric to analyze these two books is not meant as a way of diminishing their seriousness as works that Benedict and Mead clearly intended as contributions to scientific scholarship as they conceived of it.[6] Indeed, their deployment of cultural contrasts in terms of the double opposition I propose here is not incompatible with a serious or scientific purpose, since these books demonstrated the variability of cultures to anthropologists as well as to the public. All human language is in some sense potentially rhetoric; that is, rhetoric is one valid method of looking at all human utterances—which is not to say that it is the only method of looking at any of them. Thus, by using a concept of rhetoric, I do not mean to undermine the theoretical significance of Mead's and Benedict's analyses in terms of the anthropology of their time.

Keeping in mind these rhetorical and analytic purposes, it is reasonable to ask to what extent the cultures in either book were consciously chosen to exemplify the contrasts they do. For Ruth Benedict, such a conscious choice of cultures is implied rather than stated overtly in *Patterns of Culture*. Her idea of the cultural diversity of "primitives" as a laboratory (Benedict [1934] 1959:17–18), combined with her view of the particular cultures discussed in the book as being better exemplars of cultural integration than others (Benedict [1934] 1959:223), together support the idea that she selected these cultures to facilitate contrast. But this selection would pose no special problem for her method, since Benedict did not limit herself to cultures she herself had studied.

On the other hand, Margaret Mead chose all the cultures in *Sex and Temperament* from her own fieldwork, based on one extended field visit to the East Sepik region of New Guinea. In her preface to the 1950 edition, Mead ([1935] 1950:vii–viii) notes that skeptical readers might find it "too much" and "too pretty" that cultures which maintain such a neat set of contrasts should be found so close together within one cultural region. She suspects such skeptics of assuming that she visited New Guinea with her thesis in mind and then shaped the facts to fit it. In fact this does not appear to have been the case. Her choice of particular Sepik cultures to study was the result of a number of remarkably improbable circumstances, and she does not seem to have come up with the thesis of *Sex and Temperament* until late in her New Guinea field visit, and afterwards (under the influence of both *Patterns of Culture* and conversations with Fortune and, especially, Bateson).[7] Furthermore, by the time she wrote *Sex and Temperament*, Mead had field notes not only for the Arapesh, Mudugumor, and Tchambuli, but also for Manus and Samoa. Thus, the three cultures used in *Sex and Temperament* were chosen from at least five Mead could have used. However, once selected, they were placed in an order identical to Benedict's: the good, the bad, and the inverted, so to speak. This order certainly was not coincidental, but patterned.

The sequence of cultures in *Sex and Temperament* is much like that in *Patterns of Culture*, thus reflecting a rhetorical strategy common to both Mead and Benedict. Targeting both their colleagues and a wider public, both authors used devices of contrast and inversion to convey concepts of the variability and relativity of cultures. The phenomenal popularity of their books attests to the possibility that this rhetorical strategy was, indeed, successful in its time.

Relativism, but Not as We Know It Today

If, indeed, *Sex and Temperament* and *Patterns of Culture* used this style of contrast as a rhetorical strategy to demonstrate the existence and importance of culture, as well as its wide variability, this does not mean that Mead and Benedict were thoroughgoing cultural relativists in the modern, consistent philosophical sense characteristic of some recent schools of thought in anthropology. Methodologically, Benedict and Mead unashamedly used Western concepts, often very idiosyncratic ones, in their analyses. They did not go out of their way to give sympathetic portrayals of customs, individuals, or cultural patterns they found unsympathetic. In other words, they did not shrink from "value judgments." In a popular teaching text, anthropologist Richard J. Perry (2003:167) has characterized the Boasian approach to cultural rela-

tivism as requiring the separation of value judgments from observation. I would argue, *contra* Perry, that throughout both *Patterns of Culture* and *Sex and Temperament*, observations about specific cultures are not systematically separated from implicit (and sometimes explicit) judgments about cultural practices, and even about the wider cultural patterns in which they are embedded. Both judgment and observation are interwoven into a configurational approach, just as both are interwoven into contemporary ideas of artistic style that served as part of the model for Benedict's version of configuration, if not perhaps as much for Mead's. This is consistent with the prerogative both authors used to place their cultural findings in the service of a critical analysis of their own culture. Such a critical analysis is pursued vigorously by both authors in the last several chapters of their respective books.

Much of Benedict's and Mead's appeal to a wider audience outside of anthropology came from the freedom both authors took to engage in subjective but lively descriptions of societies and the individuals within them. Benedict was given to the generalization and, as it were, the personalization of cultures by means of the purported modal individuals within them (and mitigating this by an analysis of deviance). Mead did this as well. She interwove, into her theoretical and ethnographic descriptions, evocative portraitures of individuals with a few charged brushstrokes. While the goal of both Benedict and Mead may have been to outline something of the observed range of human diversity, to this end they presumed that the insights into human personalities their readers brought with them would be adequate, with guidance, for an understanding of the predicaments of individuals in exotic and contrasting cultures.

The use of concepts familiar to educated readers of the day (e.g., Dionysianism and Aristotelianism, and even paranoia) in *Patterns of Culture* was intended to make the sophisticated audience of that time feel that Kwakiutl, Zuni, and even Dobu were understandable places. Similarly, for the Sepik cultures in *Sex and Temperament*, the range of variability among gender conceptions in those cultures was modeled for American readers in terms of their own. This may seem self-evident as a strategy for readership and wide public acceptance, but I think it has an interesting consequence in terms of Benedict's and Mead's goals for that readership. Their audience was meant to widen the application of their own social knowledge, and not to overturn it at the roots, as would be implied by a thoroughgoing or postmodern version of relativism.

Some of the descriptive techniques used in these books, for instance, some of the psychoanalytically-inflected descriptions of behaviors and cultural patterns, occasionally grate on our sensitivities today, as well as the sensitivities of some of the descendants of those they studied. Yet some of the

discomfort today's readers may have with these books may arise from their comparative lack of a tone of "objective" detachment—a tone that in today's academic culture is often synonymous with the bracketing of value judgment. This was intentional in both books, and should not be considered a flaw in terms of their purposes. Cultural configuration, like artistic style, if it is to be perceived at all must be perceived as a *gestalt*, using all the faculties of the investigator, including "intuitions" which incorporate her own value system, although they are not limited by it.

Mead's and Benedict's books were meant as challenges to American ethnocentrism, and in their time their challenge to ethnocentrism may have been what gave them their enduring reputation as cultural relativists. The prevailing social and anthropological perspective of the late 19th- and early 20th-centuries can be considered as both evolutionist and ethnocentric. Educated Euro-Americans considered themselves to stand at the pinnacle of an evolutionary ladder of human achievement, and even of racial fitness.[8] Terms such as "primitive" implied a less developed and worthwhile culture among those to whom it was applied. By contrast, the anthropological endeavor to treat "primitive" cultures as holistically worthy of analysis in their own right implied giving an aesthetic and ethical value to societies that had been largely dismissed as unworthy precursors to our own. Mead's and Benedict's crowning insult to this hierarchical "evolutionary" value system was their explicit use of the behaviors and ideas of "primitives" as critical lessons against the practices of their own more "advanced" culture. This indeed was a relativization of the ethnocentric values of the home culture, one whose impact was made precisely because it challenged and sometimes inverted the common values of the "advanced" society. It was not that Benedict and Mead were trying to get their readers to eschew value judgments in general, or even to eschew all value judgments about so-called "primitives." Their goal was more subversive than the promotion of simple relativism. At the end of the day, or rather, at the end of each of the books, their intention was to use anthropological studies—including their evaluative portraits of other cultures—as leverage to change value judgments within their own culture.[9]

Yet their concern for promoting cultural change at home illustrated precisely their lack of what can be thought of as philosophical or epistemological relativism. Such a view, which is sometimes called historicism when it is applied to the past, claims that the symbols and meanings of other places and other times have to be understood on their own terms. Radical relativism implies that cultures are incommensurable because the very grounds of thought change from culture to culture, or indeed from historical period to historical period. Leaving aside postmodern thinkers, an example of this point of view within anthropology can be found in the works of David Schneider, who,

according to Richard Feinberg (2001:10), was concerned to "put aside one's preconceptions and allow one's ethnographic analysis to proceed exclusively from indigenous cultural categories." This idea that one tries to put aside the ideas of one's own culture and proceed from local or indigenous categories alone is key to a modern relativism that is totally alien to the practice of Benedict and, even more, to Mead.[10] Ethnography of this kind would in principle eschew any application of concepts such as Dionysianism and Apollonialism, and perhaps even (at the extreme) of analytic ideas such as personality or deviance. These are analytic metaconcepts, clearly of Western social scientific origin, which are used to illuminate observed cultural practices in a number of cultures. However, the cultural concepts that indigenously explain these practices remain largely unexplicated in both *Patterns of Culture* and *Sex and Temperament*.[11]

The strong philosophical relativism characteristic of some strains of postwar anthropology, particularly since the 1960s, has in fact been subjected to some powerful criticisms. For example, it can create static idealist systems that do not adequately address variations in practice, and it can neglect the role of individuals in cultural practice and change. It is therefore interesting to see that Benedict and Mead themselves attempt, in the manner of their day, to transcend static views of culture that neglect the individual. By looking at childhood socialization, Mead in particular addressed the dynamics of culture formation and culture change. By examining what might be called (though not by them) the dialectic between cultural norm and deviance, both Benedict and Mead hoped to bring individuals into the social picture.

Not Really a Blank Slate Either

Another issue important in both their day and (resurgently) in our own is that of the role of biology and inheritance in human behavior. For example, evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker (2002:25) characterizes Benedict and Mead—citing isolated statements and using little, if any, context—as examples of what he terms a "blank slate" view of human nature, in which inheritance counts for nothing and environmental influences shape the developing organism totally (Pinker 2002:25). However, Benedict and Mead were actually "interactionists" rather than pure environmentalists regarding this issue. This will be clear if we look at how they used the concept of temperament.

A "blank slate" view, to the extent that such a thing exists, entails that human individuals are totally malleable and acted upon by their "environments," which include their cultures. Mead and Benedict did not view individuals in this way at all. Cultural determinism, to the extent that it is present

in their work, is tempered by the existence in each individual, regardless of culture, of a unique "temperament," composed partly from the accidents of early life, and partly, Mead acknowledges as a possibility, from inborn genetic makeup:

> Let us assume that there are definite temperamental differences between human beings which, if not entirely hereditary, at least are established on a hereditary base very soon after birth. Further than this we cannot at present narrow the matter (Mead [1935]1950:208).

This temperament, according to Mead, can be in accord, or conflict, with the dominant themes of the culture in which the person lives. If the individual's temperament is in conflict with the dominant themes of a culture, this poses the problem of "deviance." Deviance of this sort would not arise if culture inscribed the individual's personality on a so-called "blank slate."

Both *Patterns of Culture* and *Sex and Temperament* are substantially organized around this concept of deviance. This concept was not subsequently taken up by mainstream anthropology as the basis upon which an accommodation between nature and nurture, as well as the social and the individual, was to be founded. It can be argued that much anthropology subsequent to Mead's and Benedict's work privileged the social over the individual, so that the latter became nearly effaced in the process. By contrast, both Benedict and Mead spent great portions of their time on the question of temperament and deviance. It strikes me that in today's intellectual environment, their precise delineations of the ways in which temperament and deviance interact with culture present us with a conceptual framework that could be profitably revisited for its theoretical implications, although we may not choose to revive it in the form it took during the 1930s. For like Benedict and Mead, those of us who are interested in cultural difference operate in an intellectual milieu in which genetic explanations have a wide and increasing popularity among the educated public.

The resistance of the Boasian school of American anthropology against genetic explanations current in their day was not primarily a battle against the idea of a universal "human nature." The genetic explanations Boas and his disciples were most concerned to fight were not, as today's purport to be, attempts to explain human universals. Lest we forget, genetic explanations current in both anthropology and the popular mind during the 1930s did not hide their racial implications. Such explanations were frank in their claim to explain differences between human groups, not similarities. It was this climate of explanation that Boas and his students, including Mead and Benedict, challenged.

The concept of temperament in Mead's and Benedict's writing is interesting in this context. It does not deny the possibility of innate and possibly genetic differences among human beings. In fact, such differences are posited to be everywhere and always. However, they are taken out of the racial fray. They are differences only among individuals, never among groups. Such a perspective is consonant with what anthropologists believe today. It is based on the principle, which still stands in human biology, that human genetic variability is greater within groups than between them. Because they addressed wider audiences than their own small academic group of anthropologists, both authors realized, as did Boas, that the general educated public was not about to jettison all genetic explanation. Not in the 1920s and 1930s, as not today. The situation in the post-World War II era was different, and perhaps more amenable to a thoroughgoing relativism, even possibly a "blank slate" kind of relativism. But that era is now over and we have again in some ways returned to theirs.

The difference today is that, while we are experiencing a renewal of genetic explanations of human nature, the most prominent advocates of these, such as Pinker (2002), do not use genetics to explain group differences. Inheritance is used to explain purportedly human universals (of which many are probably real, but others may be artifacts of ethnocentric investigatory techniques), and to explain individual personalities, as in the time of Mead and Benedict. However, today's neo-evolutionists do not, with few exceptions, attribute specific traits or ethoses of human groups to genetic differences. The most public spokespersons of a revived genetic explanation of human nature deny, with conviction, that their main interest is legitimizing a kind of crypto-racism.[12] Of course, a neo-racist movement does exist below the radar of intellectual respectability, and it has indeed singled out Franz Boas and his followers for demonization.[13]

There is no justification for attacking either Mead or Benedict for espousing a "blank slate" view of human psychology or motivation at the individual level.[14] Human beings are malleable in the sense that they will adapt to fit any culture to which they are enculturated as children—and these cultures vary widely. Configurations of particular cultures do not arise out of the genetic characteristics of the individuals who comprise particular societies. In other words, cultural differences are not in any way created by racial genetic differences. According to Mead's and Benedict's analyses, culture exists in a dynamic interaction with individual temperament. In this "culture and temperament" perspective, culture may, in some sense, standardize personalities in accord with particular cultural values. However, human personalities are not culture's sole creation or manufacture. Indeed, different and even so-called "deviant" temperaments exist in all cultures. Acting as a selecting agent, albeit

for Mead and Benedict a strong one, culture selects and then exaggerates certain human potentials, reinforcing some and suppressing others, or at times channeling the expression of these potentials in different ways.

Gregory Bateson's *Naven* as a Configurationist Work

It remained to Gregory Bateson's ([1936] 1958) *Naven* to add the dimension of interactive social process to this view. Indeed, Bateson himself claimed that his book had been profoundly influenced by *Patterns of Culture*. As he remarked during a 1976 symposium:

> Into this puzzlement came the manuscript of Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, and the first suggestion of a field of theory where I might contribute. It took some years to develop the linkage between character of persons and configuration of cultures. Margaret's first big contribution in that area was *Sex and Temperament*; mine was *Naven* (G. Bateson 1991:89).

Bateson's debt to Benedict might have been more visible had he followed up on his resolve, stated in his 1936 Epilogue to *Naven*, to use the term "configuration" for some of the meanings he had incorporated into the term "ethos." As I mentioned above, Mead uses the term "ethos" almost exclusively in *Sex and Temperament*, probably following Bateson's use of the term as he was developing it in his studies of the Iatmul of New Guinea, while Benedict does not use "ethos" but instead uses the concepts of configuration and pattern. Bateson's statement in his 1936 Epilogue to *Naven* can be helpful in sorting out the relationships among these concepts as he saw them at that time. Bateson wrote that he would thenceforth use "configuration" to refer to the "pervasive characteristics of a culture which can be ascribed to the standardization of the individuals" (G. Bateson [1936] 1958:265). He further noted that "Dr. Benedict has agreed with me in conversation that, in her original use of this term, she intended it to include the standardization of many different aspects of personality" (G. Bateson [1936] 1958: 265). Bateson retained the term "ethos" for the affective dimension of this standardization, which he distinguished from another component of configuration, one he had termed *"eidos,"* defined in the original text of *Naven* as "a standardization of the cognitive aspects of personality" (G. Bateson [1936] 1958:220), related to "the general patterning of the cultural structure" (G. Bateson [1936] 1958:30). I interpret Bateson's discussion of these concepts in his 1936 Epilogue to *Naven* as marking a moment of insight on his part regarding the differences between his (and Mead's) use of a concept of ethos,

privileging the affective dimension of culture, and Benedict's wider concept of configuration which incorporated both affective and cognitive aspects.

Bateson's discussion here can help us understand how Benedict's concepts of configuration and pattern actually transcended, for him, any so-called view of culture as personality writ large.[15] Bateson's interest in theoretical precision provides us with an illuminating contrast between Benedict's use of a wider concept of configuration, bridging both the general pattern of the culture and its ethos, and Mead's almost exclusive use of the concept of ethos, which emphasized the affective dimension. Accordingly, Mead's ethnographic choices in *Sex and Temperament* need to be understood in the light of her choice to describe primarily ethos rather than cultural pattern or configuration in Benedict's wider sense.

In *Naven* Bateson ([1936] 1958) transformed these ideas into an incipient systems theory that aimed to examine the question of how ethos can be a significant perspective by which to view the dynamics of cultural process. Like Mead, Bateson saw men and women as being influenced by their culture into adopting standardized contrasts in what might be called gender ethos. But unlike Mead, he was not content merely to compare ethoses among different cultures; instead he created a dynamic model of the Iatmul that focused on how the various ethoses interacted in what later would be called feedback relationships. Comparisons of these "schismogenic," or feedback, relationships with processes in the Western world can be found throughout *Naven* (G. Bateson [1936] 1958: 171–197). However, Bateson seems to have been less interested than either Mead or Benedict in large-scale or systematic cultural comparisons such as those set forth in *Patterns of Culture* or *Sex and Temperament*. Instead, he took from the former a concept of ethos he used toward very different ends. From the latter text he took the idea of sex (gender) contrasts in ethos (G. Bateson [1936] 1958: 172), but he was interested in how these contrasts played out in cultural dynamics of the type he would later characterize as cybernetic (G. Bateson 1972), rather than in cultural comparison.

The Danger of Premature Configuration?

In spite of its conceptual and theoretical development in the works of Benedict, Mead, and the early Bateson, the configurationist school was not fated to find followers in the practice of postwar anthropology, for reasons beyond the scope of this article. Today most anthropologists would not define their discipline as being in the business of contrasting ethoses, which are notoriously elusive and hard to substantiate. In a recent article criticizing Mead's denial of significant warfare among the Mountain Arapesh, Paul Roscoe (2003) blames

Benedict's pattern theory for Mead's inability to take account of the evidence for warfare, which should have been evident even from her own (and Reo Fortune's) notes and published work. Roscoe (2003:589) claims that "Benedict's supposition that cultures organize themselves according to particular gestalts had a powerful capacity for self-validation." He continues:

> Whatever evidence seemed to contradict the gestalt discerned by the anthropological analyst could automatically be invalidated by the further propositions that culture worked to (1) refashion inharmonious cultural traits to forge a new, harmonious whole and (2) transform individualists who broke from the pattern into deviants. Perhaps, then [in the Samoan case, but by extension for the Arapesh as well]...Benedict had furnished her [Mead] with a methodological deutero-gestalt that worked insidiously to confirm those interpretations (Roscoe 2003:589).

Paradoxically, Benedict herself may have worried about this possible consequence of her theory of cultural configuration. In an underappreciated comment in *Patterns of Culture*, Benedict warned that:

> Facile generalizations about the integration of culture are most dangerous in field-work. When one is mastering the language and all the idiosyncrasies of behaviour of an esoteric culture, preoccupation with its configuration may well be an obstacle to a genuine understanding. . . . [G]eneralizations about the integration of culture will be empty in proportion as they are dogmatic and universalized ([1934] 1959:229).

In spite of such Zen warnings, it is probably the rare fieldworker who does not at some point examine whether the cultural data generated in the process of research "fits" some emerging *gestalt* that makes sense of the data's seeming chaos and contradictions. There are many "closet Benedicts" in anthropology, but probably few of them would today use a concept of cultural pattern, as Benedict and Mead both did, to demonstrate to a wider public the variability of cultures.

Conclusion: Benedict's and Mead's Works Need a Second Look

The demonstration of cultural variability through rhetorics of contrast and comparison was a task for which Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead felt the time was ripe in the 1930s. But what of today? Culture is an idea that has

taken hold in the popular mind, but not in a way that would have been understood by the anthropological profession in much of the 20th-century. Segments of the public now seem to believe either that culture is something that is being totally effaced by globalization, or else something easily imposed by a corporate CEO's fiat.

Whatever the faults of their approaches may have been, *Patterns of Culture* and *Sex and Temperament* address subtle points. Cultures do vary, and it is important to set forth the range of their variation, which is surprisingly wide when looked at from the point of view of a naïve ethnocentrism. Yet individual temperament, which may result from an interaction between biology and personal experience, is not effaced by culture. Cultures do not inscribe modal personalities on a "blank slate," but select for valued dispositions and behaviors via the upbringing of children, the rewards and discouragements of everyday life, and the common ideas that are used to discuss social life and to think about it. (Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead also recognized that this selection is not infallible and deviance exists in every society.) It is important to see cultures, and individuals within those cultures, relativistically in context. But this does not mean that all judgment is suspended indefinitely; in fact, moral and aesthetic perception is part of the fieldworker's toolkit. Possibly many cultures exhibit a kind of aesthetic and conceptual unity in the different aspects of their lives; indeed, it may be dangerous for ethnographic fieldworkers to think that they have perceived a configurational pattern too early in fieldwork, but an important dimension of culture may be lost if anthropologists neglect this aspect.

Whatever the accuracies and inaccuracies of Benedict's and Mead's cultural portraits, which were painted with the intention of illuminating the existence of the cultural realm by well-placed contrasts, their concept of temperament and its relationship to culture is one that addresses many of the concerns about nature and nurture which still bedevil us. The approach they outlined may usefully be revisited by those anthropologists who still believe that "culture" delimits something more than an epiphenomenon of the agency of self-seeking monads, or, for that matter, of disembodied power structures. Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead presented a richer perspective than we sometimes think, one that provocatively addressed issues of its own time, and is worth considering once again in our own.

NOTES

I would like to thank Mary Catherine Bateson for her comments on this article.

1. Mead does not directly define "ethos" in *Sex and Temperament.* The reference is to

an index entry which demonstrates the range of topics to which she explicitly or implicitly used the term.

2. The popular success of Steven Pinker's (2002) book, *The Blank Slate*, has encouraged a belief that Boasian anthropologists (including Benedict and Mead) did not accept any genetic constraints on human nature, and further, that they believed human nature and personality to be malleable by culture because they are formed by culture as if in a "factory." Pinker feels it unnecessary to substantiate this view except by providing his readers with a few "damning" quotes by Benedict and by Mead (Pinker 2002:25). Pinker gives an identical out-of-context "sound-bite" treatment to a whole series of significant theorists in anthropological history from Franz Boas to George Murdock to Clifford Geertz. In any case, Benedict's and Mead's position was not of this "blank slate" variety, as both of them discussed in detail the interaction of biological and cultural factors in producing the modal personalities of various cultures.

3. Reo Fortune was the ethnographer of Dobu, and he also studied the Sepik societies described in *Sex and Temperament* along with Margaret Mead. When I read Benedict's and Mead's books as a student, it was hard to avoid feeling that their emphasis on the competitive and hostile aspects of Dobu and Mundugumor must have had something to do with Fortune's own preoccupations in the study of culture. I shall not, however, attempt to pursue that intriguing question further here.

4. Mead is quite clear that what is at stake in *Sex and Temperament* are not sex roles in a sociological sense, but rather the temperaments and personalities which are stereotypically assigned to the genders who fill these roles. According to Mead's ([1935] 1950: xiii–xvi) "Introduction," these temperaments may vary more than the sex roles themselves.

5. *Erewhon* was mentioned on "Reading Suggested by Gregory Bateson," a one-page list posted on Bateson's office door at the University of California at Santa Cruz. This list was published in *The Co-Evolution Quarterly* (G. Bateson 1974).

6. Caffrey (1989:215–237) has discussed at length the place of Benedict's configurationism in contemporary and subsequent debates about how anthropology was or could be a "science."

7. The genesis of the specific thesis of *Sex and Temperament* in fact relates to a complex set of ideations (sometimes known as "the squares") discussed in Mead's autobiographical *Blackberry Winter* (Mead ([1972] 1995:217–221; see also Banner 2003:326–336), M. C. Bateson (1984:132–142), and Sullivan (2004). These pose intriguing and seductive problems of both theory and biography, which I avoid in the present context of this article, since they detract from a consideration of the ideas in *Sex and Temperament* in their own terms. Skepticism of "the squares" should not lessen appreciation for Mead's published arguments any more than a consideration of Isaac Newton's arcane theological and mystical writings should make one skeptical of his physics.

8. The term "evolutionism" in this sense has a historical meaning, not to be confused with current applications of evolutionary theory to human universals. Nineteenth-century social evolutionism implied the existence of different stages of society and culture ranked from inferior to superior. Each human society was supposed to progress from primitive

stages to civilized ones according to a specific sequence. Teleological social or cultural evolutionism of this kind is *not* characteristic of most late 20th and early 21st century applications of Darwinist evolutionary theory to human beings (e.g. Pinker 2002).

9. This aspect of their work, particularly Mead's, has been noted by feminist scholars. Newman's (1996) provocative article anticipates several of the lines of argument made here. (I was not made aware of this article until after I had formulated the arguments in this essay.) Newman's position as a feminist historian gives her a certain distance from the ethnography wars that enables her to see certain historical truths regarding Mead (and, implicitly, Benedict as well):

> Mead was not a moral relativist, nor was she attempting to write value-free ethnographies. Her understanding of cultural relativism did not prevent her from making moral distinctions among various cultural practices. Thus, I prefer the term cultural comparativism, for it enables us to retain the idea that for Mead the point of studying other cultures was not to accept all social arrangements as equally valid, but to determine which arrangements represented better ways of living. Such a perspective meant that Mead and others who worked within this paradigm resisted normative judgments of the sort that automatically called for primitives to adopt civilized gender roles, but they did not suspend all judgments. Mead wanted to expand Americans' repertoire of conceivable alternatives so that they might envision new ways of reforming their social institutions (Newman 1996:236–237).

Newman's (1996:234–239) work is also strong on the place of gender within 19th-century "evolutionist" anthropology, and on how Mead's work both overturned the assumptions of that so-called "evolutionism," and yet in some ways also reproduced some of its ideas. Banner (2003b), however, argues that it is not fair to count Mead as believing in the superiority of the West. My own reading of Mead's core beliefs makes me closer to Banner's position on this particular point than I am to Newman's.

10. I am indebted here to a discussion on the ASAONET Internet "Listserv" discussion group on the topic of relativism in contemporary anthropology, and in particular to Richard Feinberg's (9 March 2004) posting on that list. The discussion did not particularly focus on Mead or Benedict, but rather on how to discuss relativism with today's anthropology students.

11. For Mead's grounding in what she thought would become a universalistic, not relativistic, science of psychology, see Patricia Francis (this volume, 74–90).

12. For the social determinists among us, I note here that today's alleged meritocracy justifies itself by the presence of diversity in its elites, or almost-elites. Thus racism, as a doctrine, is not "necessary" today for the justification of hierarchy or inequality. Individual difference, the "merit" in the ideology of meritocracy, suffices for this—albeit sometimes culture, in the form of pathological subculture, is blamed for the failure of individuals or groups.

13. Examples of this movement are not difficult to find on the Internet. Current denunciations of the Boasians in the interest of views far from the mainstream can be noted in publications sponsored by the Institute for Historical Review (Whitney 2002:20), a Holo-

caust revisionist group, and the Virginia Dare Society (Francis 2002), which advocates a racially tinged American nativist ethnonationalism.

14. Mead 's refutation of the blank slate follows:

> If human nature were completely homogeneous raw material, lacking specific drives and characterized by no important constitutional differences between individuals, then individuals who display personality traits so antithetical to the social pressure should not reappear in societies of such differing emphases (Mead [1935] 1950:208).

Mary Catherine Bateson's (1984:128–140) memoir of her parents contains a lengthy discussion of Mead's intellectual concerns and development at the time of writing *Sex and Temperament*, and thereafter. This account describes a Mead who was willing to entertain some role for the biologically given in human personality—even a role which involves gender (M. C. Bateson [1984:131])—but only insofar as this could be expressed so as not to give aid and comfort to, in Mary Catherine Bateson's (1984:139) evocative words, "those who evoke the old, cruel dichotomy of nature versus nurture and misuse biological explanations to justify social facts."

15. See Sullivan (this volume, 91–105) for a refutation of the prevalent misunderstanding that Benedict's or Mead's vision of culture was limited to such a conception.

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MARGARET MEAD AND GREGORY BATESON IN THE SEPIK, 1938: A TIMELY POLEMIC FROM A LOST ANTHROPOLOGICAL EFFLORESCENCE

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Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson's 1938 study of a Iatmul-speaking village in the middle Sepik River, Papua New Guinea, remains an anthropological efflorescence. At the very least, this collaboration resulted in a well-known fieldwork photo: Mead and Bateson in the famous "mosquito room." Ironically, little is actually known about the 1938 undertaking, which remains, however famous, sadly obscure. Towards correcting this misjudgment, I have two objectives. First, I want to provide a selective overview of the 1938 project, focusing on its unique outlook, tone, voices, morality, and theoretical perspectives. But my objective is not merely historical and descriptive. Hence, my second goal is polemical: to argue that Mead and Bateson's long-ago study, at once famous and obscure, is wholly relevant for contemporary anthropology.

Introduction

CONSIDER A FAMOUS ETHNOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT: the 1938 "mosquito room" in Tambunum, a Iatmul village in the Sepik River of what is now Papua New Guinea. Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, poised before their typewriters, transcribe hand-written jottings into formal fieldnotes. Perhaps no photo, however mute, more famously typifies the collaborative, dialogical creation of anthropological fieldwork.[1] Ironically, anthropology has little understanding of what Mead and Bateson were actually writing. Few have read the notes. Consequently, my task here is to begin re-animating this photo with voice and relevance. No longer should one of the great collaborative projects of 20th-century social science remain quiet.

In 1938, Mead and Bateson conducted a six-month study in the Eastern Iatmul village of Tambunum in the middle Sepik River of what was then the

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FIGURE 1. **"Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson typing fieldnotes in the mosquito room, Tambunum Village, 1938."** (Photograph by Gregory Bateson and reproduced from the Margaret Mead Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Courtesy of the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc., New York.)

Territory of New Guinea. The resulting unpublished notes, myriad photographs, and hours of film provide keen insights into one of the "classic" peoples of anthropology. The 1938 effort thus complemented Bateson's earlier ethnography of Iatmul (e.g., 1932, 1936). But Mead and Bateson also compared Iatmul to Bali, Tchambuli, Mundugumor, Arapesh, Manus, and Samoa, thus coalescing some of the key ethnographies of the early 20th-century. They discussed Anna Freud and Erik Erikson; theorized about sequences of social interaction; pondered cross-cultural differences in motivation, gender, emotion, and socialization; and reflected on individual and cultural "consistency." Mead and Bateson collected scores of children's drawings. They recorded genealogies, life histories, character sketches, feuds, crocodile hunts, house building, funerary ceremonies, courtship rites, death, birth, and baths. They typed 2,500 pages of notes, developed 10,000 photos, and shot 10,000 feet of film.[2] They performed, to echo Mead, a lifetime of work in six months.

The 1938 project exemplified many of the classic intellectual tropes of modernism such as confidence, clarity, holism, and comparison. Indeed, the Tambunum collaboration prefigured several key moments and paradigms in mid-century to post-War social thought, including psychological anthro-

pology, cybernetics, communications theory, and the double-bind theory of schizophrenia. More than that, Mead and Bateson anticipated many of the ethical and humanistic issues that beset contemporary anthropology. In short, the 1938 project reveals a moral sensibility and a nuanced, sometimes poetic vision of culture that are wholly relevant for the 21st century.

Yet Mead and Bateson published only snippets from this project, no monograph, and a few short films.[3] The 1938 study has remained relatively obscure, a mute moment in the history of anthropology wanting for greater voice. This essay, then, is a modest rehabilitation and defense of Mead and Bateson that sees the 1938 fieldnotes as the foundation for an unwritten book that I would call *Iatmul Character*. My goal in this essay is not merely to record the actual voices and tones of this fieldwork. Rather, I have a more polemical point: Mead's 1938 Iatmul research contains important messages for anthropology today.

"Concrete Masses of Material"

I never met Mead or Bateson. But I have dwelled in their shadows since my early graduate studies in the mid-1980s. I studied with David Lipset who, after writing Bateson's biography (Lipset 1982), began ongoing ethnography with Kathleen Barlow among the Murik of the Sepik Estuary—on Mead's suggestion (Lipset 1997; see also Barlow 2001). While Lipset did not himself conduct fieldwork in the middle Sepik, I did. In fact, I went to the precise village where Mead and Bateson centered their 1938 project, Tambunum, and where I have studied since the late 1980s (Silverman 2001, 2004).[4] For me, the proverbial "field" is rich with anthropological legacy. Tales about my predecessors were among the first anecdotes I heard in Tambunum.

There is a valid point to this self-indulgence. As an "ethnographic double" to Mead and Bateson—who, to me, must remain unknowable, a predicament discussed by Nancy Lutkehaus (1990) in regard to Camilla Wedgewood—my own commitment to the 1938 fieldnotes is hardly impartial. I do not seek to refute Mead and Bateson's perspectives on Iatmul. Quite the opposite. I find the rigor and accuracy of their Iatmul ethnography to be exemplary. When Mead typed a list of "Research Points" for the Iatmul project on 18 April 1938, she indicated the importance of obtaining "concrete masses of material" on a wide variety of topics, ranging from father-son behavior, to courtship, to the histories of clan fragmentation. And "concrete masses of material" they got.

Mead's Iatmul notes offer thoughtful reflections on culture theory, ritual fantasy, gender, socialization, personality, and emotion. Moreover, Mead thoroughly grounded her theoretical notions in meticulous fieldwork. From

the perspective of the 1938 notes, then, Mead was a brilliant fieldworker. She possessed a gifted ability to encapsulate and evoke the emotional tones and Malinowskian "imponderabilia" of daily life. Mead's skill at observing and recording fleeting gestures, minute turns of posture, and ephemeral wisps of interaction was uncanny. In short, the 1938 fieldnotes disclose remarkable ethnographic perception.

From Bali to New Guinea

The goal of the 1938 project was to expand on the more famous Balinese study that immediately preceded it. This earlier ethnography resulted in the pioneering book, *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis* (Bateson and Mead 1942; see also Mead and Macgregor 1951; Lakoff 1996; and Sullivan 1999). The novel methodology of *Balinese Character* substituted and juxtaposed photos with two distinct styles of text: Bateson's analytic and philosophical sophistication, honed through the writing of *Naven* (1936), and Mead's impressionistic prose, partly inspired from Ruth Benedict. Additionally, Mead and Bateson sought to introduce greater rigor into *her* focus on emotion, and greater humanism into *his* epistemology. From this angle, the photographs in *Balinese Character* mediated between Mead's now-more-scientific humanism and Bateson's now-more-humanistic science.

Balinese Character is anthropology's earliest experimental, polyvocal ethnography. The book disperses its authority among multiple modes of representation, and "plays" with the dissonances and symmetries between two literary genres and visuality. The 1938 project likewise offers an embedded series of anthropological conversations, as befitting the famous photo of the "mosquito room"—conversations between Mead and Bateson, between text and image, between culture and body, as I will amplify momentarily, and between Iatmul and other Pacific societies. Mead and Bateson understood in the 1930s what Clifford Geertz (1973) said forty years later: "the line between the mode of representation and substantive content is . . . undrawable."

Of course, Mead had been doing this all along, even before she met Bateson. *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead 1928) transgressed scientific canons. Long-ago, Mead presaged anthropological interpretivism, postmodernism, and feminism (see Lutkehaus 1990; Sanjek 1990b). Astonishingly, *Balinese Character* and Mead's non-Samoan work is largely absent from these recent paradigms (see also Lutkehaus 1995). However, the 1938 study, like *Balinese Character*, is a self-conscious meditation on the literary "crisis of representation" that was composed decades before Marcus and Fisher (1986) canonized this "crisis" in anthropology.

Voice

Although the 1938 fieldnotes record actual dialogue between Mead and Bateson, it is Mead's voice that we hear (see also Romanucci-Ross 1976). And while it is Bateson's eye that looks through the viewfinder, he focuses on interactions that we should associate with Mead: children, for example, and mothers. Bateson's own Iatmul fieldnotes from the later 1920s and early 1930s were largely descriptive rather than analytical, as Bateson himself admits in his book *Naven*, where theoretical innovation arose *after* the fieldwork experience. By contrast, many of the observations in the 1938 fieldnotes are directly tied to sweeping points of epistemological and methodological importance. Yet these high-level concerns continuously dialogue with an acute attention to detail that captures the emotional tones of the moment (see also Yans-McLaughlin 1986:190–192).[5] Mead's genius was to draw broad, humanistic conclusions of widespread appeal while remaining within the space of concrete ethnography. The literary qualities of the notes are a shifting amalgam of voice, gender, focus, cadence, style, tone, and tempo, from leisurely discussions about individual personalities to the hectic pace of second-by-second observations.

Mead's notes literally represent the dialogical quality of her ethnography. On the left-hand side of the page she transcribed her precise observations of on-the-ground activity, often timed to the second! On the right-hand side Mead later added theoretical elaboration. For example, here are observations from 6 May 1938, updated three days afterward: "Namungku suckling at r[igh]t breast. Pulls at mother['s] pulpul, holds shell left hand, puts r[igh]t hand to nipple, changes hands, holds breast with left hand, shell with r[igh]t sucks on." To this, Mead added these comments:

> Watch these shells as moveable breasts. . . . Consider the relationship of moveable breasts, and the idea of woman as made up of moveable parts (note vulvas handled as separate objects in initiatory ceremonies) with tales of thefts of flutes, bullroarers, beards. . . . If teething children chew of these hard breast substitutes, various shifts in oral sadism stages may result.[6] Note Balinese babies learn to chew on their own ornaments. Here both own and mothers are available.

Perhaps all ethnographers view their notes as a grand dialogue between different levels of observation and theorization. But Mead's notes seem ideal. They converse between methodical observation and theoretical speculation, between minute interaction and cross-cultural comparison, and between a "big picture" of interest to other readers and the immediacy of human experience.

Another fieldnote interpretation is revealing: "Girl, 10. . . sits playing with a string of beads, 1 strand in her mouth but she has taken them off to do this. Watch. Tendency to detach ornaments from own person before playing with them. Another anti-narcissan point" (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 15/17 May 1938). And while observing a girl playing with a koala doll, Mead (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 15/17 August 1938) comments, "good case of treatment of part of body as other-than-self." These ideas are nowhere embedded in any obvious way in the observational notes themselves. Indeed, the latter comment was paired in the same note with these observations:

> . . . sets the doll down and pats herself on both knees.
> . . . takes it up, pats it.
> . . . says "mendinta" [*tokpisin*, or Neo-Melanesian, for "never mind"] of the doll
> . . . pats it.
> . . . puts one hand on its buttocks and pats the back of this hand with her other hand.
> . . . stands it up and pats it (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 15/17 August 1938).

And so forth. Reading these notes is a complex enterprise, tacking between the hectic pace of sensory impressions and a remarkable attention to detail, and the more leisurely yet equally rigorous foray into theories, comparisons, hints, and inter-textual feints (see also Boon 1999:39–41; Lyons and Lyons 1997). There is a unremitting drive to record everything, no matter how minute, and then to try and relate it to something of grand, ethological and eidological importance. It was culture in a nuance or gesture.

Body

Throughout their careers, Bateson and Mead deftly tied norms of infant and childhood social experiences to adult patterns of behavior and activities. For them, the foundations of learning were established in infancy through ". . . the child's continuous adaptation to movements into which it is guided by the parent who holds it" (Bateson and Mead 1942:16). They anchored cultural patterns of emotion (ethos) and cognition (eidos) to the body as it moved literally and metaphorically through the lifecycle. Like Marcel Mauss ([1935] 1979), Mead rightly invested considerable importance in "techniques of the body," especially in regard to emotion and cultural themes. But unlike Mauss, Mead stressed the importance of childhood, socialization, gender, and individual variation in bodily comportment. Mead also studied the pat-

terned continuities of bodily techniques across a broad spectrum of non-contiguous contexts and behaviors. In fact, Sullivan (1999:19) reports that Mead and Bateson considered using *The Anatomy of Culture* as the title of *Balinese Character*. How fitting. Mead's attention to embodiment, and her sensitivity to modes of anthropological representation, recall the hallmarks of contemporary social thought.[7] But anthropologists today rarely associate these topics with Mead, thus denying her rightful intellectual due and relevance.

Mead and Bateson devised a sophisticated method for capturing and theorizing subtle emotional, cognitive, cultural, social-structural, aesthetic, and temperamental differences cross-culturally (see also Sullivan 1999). This method was literary and visual, and focused, to repeat, on the body. The 1938 fieldnotes represent multiple dimensions of the cultural body and embodied culture: posture, movement, glance, expression, balance, tension, poise, and so forth. These and other aspects of culture—including individual character as per John Dewey, and cultural integration as per Ruth Benedict (Sullivan 1999:19–21)—are not, according to Mead, particularly amenable to mere verbal analysis.[8]

Mead's bodily focus nicely emerges in a passage on the aggressive style of infant bathing among Iatmul. To cleanse their feet, mothers forcefully and matter-of-factly swung children by the arms so their heels skimmed through the water. "Query," asks Mead:

> What effect does swinging a baby by its arms. Does it make the arm a more integral part of the trunk or not. Does this holding of young babies in palm of hand and squeezing the chest, tend to pack the child closer and tighter in feeling? Bali, relaxed within an iron frame, Iatmul, a coiled spring limited in action by its tensity only (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 15/17 May 1938)

Here is a "point to follow up in photography" for May 6/9:

> Patterns and importance of interlaced half tensed hand positions, and relationship to finger games which pairs of children play. Whereas a Balinese hand is relaxed in what seem to us distorted and unnatural positions, these peoples hands are put, tensed or half tensed into positions which involve support, either given by the other hand, or by the other hand of another child. Consider: inter-play between two hands with two hands symbolizing different things. . . . Inter-play between two hands being derivative from inter-play between two persons, as children. Watch sex relationship, age, and

> which hands used to which, and whether common playing pairs exchanges roles, in active-passive games like finger-pulling (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 6/9 May 1938).

The photos and text of the 1938 fieldnotes, like those in *Balinese Character*, keenly capture the nearly invisible aspects of culture that are expressed through bodily attitudes. Moreover, Mead's focus on the body subtly *de*-exoticized the Balinese and Iatmul by stressing the mundane aspects of a localized humanity—the delicacy of a pose, or the sobs of a child.

Emotion

Often, Mead's prose in the 1938 fieldnotes evokes the emotional tenor of a distant cultural moment. Her literary style reduces cultural differences, or casts these differences into a type of global humanism that, while born of the optimism from an earlier era of American liberalism, still seems timely. After the death of an infant, writes Mead, close kin display:

> . . . a kind of simple tenderness for the potential personality of the dead baby, it had a fine nose, it had its ears pierced now but if it had lived they would have been pierced much later, 'I though you would stay and grow big' the father said. The ritual was also simple and personal
> . . . the little rite of the mother giving it her breast
> . . . was inexpressingly touching. . . . There was no horror and no fear and no attempt to escape from the realities of the situation (LOC: MMP, Fieldnotes, 5/7 June 1938; see also Mead [1977:234]).

The mother, to paraphrase the rest of the note, cradled her child, stroking its face, her tears falling to its little body. She placed her breast into the child's mouth, and then laid her infant into the grave. While Mead embraced the canons of anthropological science and its imperative to record events, her analytic gaze was hardly dispassionate. It encompassed, again and again, "inexpressingly touching" qualities. Mead uses a scene of unimaginable tragedy to reach out to a common humanity.[9]

Truth

Today, Mead's innovations and outlook are often eclipsed by debates surrounding the brute facticity of ethnographic data. Yet the 1938 fieldnotes, in my reading, expand beyond positivist dichotomies of "correct" and "wrong."

In Samoa, some critics say, Mead was fooled by young girls. Then, in Bali, she was again misled, this time by informants who were far more politically and historically aware than Mead, and so feared the wrath of colonial administrators. Little in the 1938 notes support these accusations. They present Mead as a gifted fieldworker.

Mead highlighted individual biographies. She recorded the anthropologists' involvement in daily affairs of the village. Hers was no veranda-style ethnography. Mead and Bateson subscribed neither to ethnographic omniscience, nor to cultural homogeneity and anonymity. Ironically, the famous photo of the "mosquito room" portrays local people as peripheral, peering in on the cloistered anthropologists.[10] But most of Bateson's photos of Mead depict something quite different: Mead interacting directly with the people of Tambunum village in their day-to-day affairs.

I am sketching a moral portrait of Mead to counteract those anthropologists who casually, sometimes ridiculously, rebuke her method and writing. For example, Pollmann (1990) dismisses *Balinese Character* as colonial fiction. Romy (1996:145–147) scorns Mead's romantic pen, like the "cool medical eye" of Bateson's camera, for pathologizing the Balinese as schizophrenic. And Lakoff (1996) draws on Foucault to liken Mead's "posture and personality" perspective to Jeremy Bentham's infamous panopticon, a prison that allows for the continuous surveillance of inmates who are unable to see their seer. Doubtless, one could also read Mead's Iatmul as a Hobbesian alternative to the Rousseauistic Balinese (but at least not schizoid), or see Mead as infantalizing other cultures by suggesting that anthropology might have something to teach Americans about raising children. But these are partial truths, at best, intended mainly to showcase the critic's own sense of moral importance, and not very interesting ones.

Lacking in this censure is any sense for the elegance, subtlety, and humanism of Mead's anthropology—in spite of the colonial setting. Ironically, most critiques of Mead promote an ethical vision of anthropology that can be directly traced to Mead: diffusing authority; experimenting with voice, gaze, and genre; blurring the boundary between Science and Humanism; embracing cultural diversity; and attending to the little-noticed toils and triumphs of everyday life.

Long before I arrived in Tambunum, the river washed away the famous "mosquito room." But Mead and Bateson remain a constant presence in the village, and not merely the stuff of nostalgia. Eastern Iatmul read their books, delight in viewing the old photos, and even display a letter by Mead to a magistrate during a legal land dispute. Villagers often compared my own research to Mead and Bateson. Pacific anthropologists should do likewise, not for flattery or justification, but to learn about the possibilities for the discipline.

NOTES

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1. Among other places, variations of the "mosquito room" photograph appear on the cover of Sanjek's edited volume on fieldnotes (1990a), and in Banner's (2003) biography of Mead and Ruth Benedict, as well as in Mead's books, *Blackberry Winter* (1972:225) and *Letters from the Field* (1977:239).

2. As I read through Mead and Bateson's unpublished 1938 fieldnotes in the Margaret Mead Papers of the Library of Congress (LOC: MMP), I recorded only the date of the original notes, not the full Box and file classifications. My citations are thus incomplete. I apologize for this omission.

3. These works are largely under-appreciated: e.g., Mead (1937, 1940a, 1940b, 1941, 1943, 1947, 1950, 1952, 1954, 1972); Bateson (1941, 1949); and Mead and Bateson ([1954] 1988).

4. A close colleague of Mead, Rhoda Metraux (1976, 1978), studied in Tambunum during the 1970s.

5. The 1938 fieldnotes are not devoid of the truly mundane (yet truly important to the fieldworker!): "Mrs. Goss' bread recipe;" the trade value of matches, razors, beads, teaspoons of salt, and fishing hooks; and requisitions that include Palmolive soap, Listerine tooth paste, 500 sticks of trade tobacco, Bicarb soda, and tins of asparagus, Bovril beef spread, Holbrooks mango chutney, Cadbury's Chocolate, Mortons dates, St. George oysters, Arnotts biscuits, Campbells soups, Colman's mustard, Vienna sausages, as well as Victoria Bitter, Green Chartreuse, two decanters of King George whiskey, and a .32 Browning Automatic pistol.

6. Iatmul babies "cut their teeth" on their mothers' shell ornaments (Mead [1949] 1968:163).

7. Lutkehaus (1995:195) makes the same point in regard to Mead's ([1949] 1968) *Male and Female*.

8. For the role of Benedict in Mead's thought, as well as the famous Sepik imbroglio of Mead, Reo Fortune, and Bateson, see Banner (2003), Bateson (1936), Boon (1984, 1985, 1999), and Lipset (1982:138).

9. Gewertz and Errington (2002:10) look to Mead when concluding their stirring account of a Chambri funeral performed for their own daughter:

We came to recognize that the unsettling and often wrenching challenge Margaret Mead has set for us all, to contextualize and compare culturally embedded lives, might serve everyone well in these troubled times.

10. The famous photo is one of a series taken by Bateson of himself and Mead at their typewriters in the "mosquito room," separately and together. In some of the photos, one can just make out the remote in Bateson's right hand.

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TALES FROM THE INTERNET: MARGARET MEAD'S LEGACY IN AMERICAN CULTURE

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This essay explores the importance of Margaret Mead for American society as revealed through the cultural domain of the Internet. By examining sites accessible through popular search engines, the essay analyzes Mead's life using Joseph Campbell's myth of the hero's journey. Mead's legend emphasizes her journey to far places and her return with important gifts of knowledge for society. Mead is also a distinctly American hero by representing values of pioneering, defense of personal freedom, and commitment to bettering society. The recognition of the importance of culture on human behavior, Mead's own life as a role model for people, the wisdom of her quotations, and anthropology itself—which has become synonymous with Mead in the popular mind—are all restorative gifts from Mead, the hero.

NOT LONG AGO, I encountered Margaret Mead's name in the course of non-anthropology events twice in one week. The first was at a meeting where the speaker quoted Mead on the challenges of educating children in a changing culture. The second was an article on corporate behavior where the scientist was compared to Margaret Mead. I wondered how Mead, dead more than twenty years, is so important that the American public still responds to her name. I decided to investigate the extent of Mead's presence in the new cultural domain of the Internet.

The Internet was still in its infancy at the time of Mead's death in 1978, as was the personal computer. Mead would not have participated in Internet communication, which came into its own in the 1990s. Nevertheless, I had no difficulty in finding Mead's name using the popular search engines. In fact, I found a veritable celebration of Mead on the Internet. Her name is on more than a hundred Web sites, including over thirty biographies—

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some composed by respected encyclopedias, others by unknown writers. I found her quotations on sites of dozens of organizations. Three schools are named after her, as are two awards and a film festival. Her image is on a U.S. postage stamp. Her books can be easily ordered through the Internet. You may order an audiobook of an actress reading from Mead's work, and buy a poster of her portrait and words. An entrepreneur selling rune cards uses her name as endorsement. A grade school curriculum is designed about her life and contributions. She is presented as a role model for young people and her words are incorporated into dozens of grassroots sites, speaking to community action, the environment, and love for other human beings.

All of this leads me to say that Mead has come to symbolize more than Mead the person. As revealed through the Internet, Mead is a legend that can be interpreted as that of a mythic hero or heroine. She represents values of importance to Americans. In this essay, I explore Internet Web sites to determine what these values are and what Mead means to the public.

The Internet itself provides a public forum for individual statements and group discussions. Entries are not necessarily reviewed nor validated. The Internet as a medium, while vibrant and constantly changing, also has the capacity to be static. Web site addresses may change overnight and links from one site to another may be broken without notice. At the same time, Web pages may be left unchanged for years; information may be old or inaccurate. Chat-rooms and listserves may be archived, and conversations once lively and cutting-edge, are now outdated. The Internet is creative as well as pedantic. Some sites are filled with graphics, others with uninterrupted text. Sites may have grammatical and spelling errors, and factual inaccuracies. Some sites are original; other blatantly plagiarized. Most sites do not identify the author of the words nor the date of writing.

This essay gains its inspiration from the dozens of personal Web pages that in some way refer to Margaret Mead. I have not used academic databases nor Internet library sources. In fact, I have tried to avoid the peer-review, scholarly side of the Internet. I am looking for the image of Mead as revealed through Web sites accessible through popular search engines. My interest is not in the accuracy of the Internet accounts but in the message conveyed.

The Hero's Journey

The journey of the hero is described by Joseph Campbell (1968) as a monomyth crossing all cultures. In this myth, the hero follows the path of adventure through the passages of separation, initiation, and return. From a childhood

showing manifestations of future destiny, the hero hears the call of adventure and sets out from home (Campbell (1968:320). The hero passes over the "threshold of adventure," and with the aid of helpers, journeys into unfamiliar worlds where the hero is tested and triumphs (Campbell 1968:245–246). In the process, the hero is transformed, gaining expanded consciousness and freedom. In the final stage, the hero returns to the homeland, bringing the boon, the gift that will restore the society (Campbell 1968:196–197). The hero's final challenge is reintegration into society, to move from the land of the exotic to the land of the common place, and to present society with "life-redeeming elixir" (Campbell 1968:216). Although the hero is honored and recognized by society, the purpose in the hero's journey is not to benefit the hero. Campbell (1988:xv) sees this as the distinction between a celebrity and hero; the hero gains wisdom to serve others.

Early Life

Like mythological figures, facts of Mead's origins are shrouded in mist—or at least inconsistencies in Internet accounts. While many sites agree she was born in Philadelphia in 1901, some maintain that she was born on 16 December, some on 17 December, others on 18 December. Some note that she was one of a family of five children; others that she was the oldest of four (*Birthdays, December 17* [n.d.; hereafter *Birthdays]*; Del Monte et al., 1999; Emuseum 2004; Flaherty 2004; Gale Group n.d.; Ogieva n.d.; Raven n.d.; Sable 1996). Stories of her childhood foreshadow both her life as an anthropologist, and her boon, her gift, to society. Born to highly educated parents, Mead was distinctive from other children. From an early age she was an independent thinker and was taught to observe the behavior of other children. Her family encouraged her to play with children of all economic and racial backgrounds. She was schooled in feminist ideas by her mother and grandmother who taught her that women could have professions. Mead, herself, felt her distinctiveness and determined to make a difference in society (Gale Group n.d.; GirlSite 2000; Keeler 1997; Kristi 1997; Ogieva n.d.; Raven n.d.).

Preparation for the Hero's Journey

Higher education was primary for the young Mead. Her father resisted her attending college: she had to struggle to persuade him to let her go. She attended DePauw University in Indiana, but then transferred to Barnard College in New York before entering graduate school at Columbia University. Two important people emerge as helpers from this time: Franz Boas, a

mentor, and Ruth Benedict, a friend and collaborator (Fact Monster 2000; Gale Group n.d.; National Women's Hall of Fame 1998).

The Calling

In college Mead was introduced to the field of anthropology and became aware of rapidly disappearing cultures around the world: "That settled it for me. Anthropology had to be done now. Other things could wait" (quoted in Gale Group n.d.).

The Journey

Under Boas' guidance, but, according to some, against his will, (e.g., National Women's Hall of Fame 1998; Snider 2000), Mead set out alone for Samoa. She was either twenty-three or twenty-four years old, depending on the account. Anthropological research fascinated her. Although Samoa was her most famous destination, she subsequently lived and studied throughout Oceania, including New Guinea and Bali. Throughout her journeys, Mead studied and lived with the local people, learning their languages and cultures (*American Museum of Natural History* 2004; Blackbirch Press 1999; Encarta Online Encyclopedia 2000 [hereafter Encarta]; Gale Group n.d.; Oxford University Press 1999 [hereafter Oxford]).

The Road of Trials

Living conditions were sometimes challenging. She wrote home:

> 'The natives are superficially agreeable, but they go in for cannibalism, headhunting, infanticide, incest, avoidance and joking relationships, and biting lice in half with their teeth' (quoted in National Women's Hall of Fame [1998]).

Mead's personal life was challenged as well. While studying in New Guinea she met Gregory Bateson, who became her third husband and the father of her daughter, and with whom she was to do much research. Mead had also collaborated in research with her second husband, (an anthropologist, or perhaps a psychologist), Reo Fortune, whom she met on her original return from Samoa, or en route to Europe, depending on accounts. Mead's first husband was a young theology student whom she married after graduation from college (*Emuseum* 2004; Flaherty 2004; Gale Group n.d.).

Reintegration into Society

When she returned from her adventures abroad, Mead published *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928). Mead became famous for this book, which has never gone out of print, and later published other works based on her South Seas voyages, including *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930), *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), and *Male and Female* (1949), among others (Comptons 1998; Flaherty 2004; Keeler 1997; Women's International Center 2001). She worked at the American Museum of Natural History in New York for her entire adult life. She also taught at Columbia University and was professor, chair, and perhaps, founder of the anthropology department at Fordham University (Encarta 2000; Fact Monster 2000; Flaherty 2004; Keeler 1997).

Mead brought ideas from her anthropological experience into the public forum (see also McDowell and Bateson [this volume, 4–18 and 162–175]). She was an interpreter, and an intermediary, of other cultures for American society. Through a regular column in *Redbook* magazine, she gave advice and counseling on many issues, including women's rights, child rearing, adolescence, sexual morality, sex roles, race relations, population control, drug abuse, human rights, world-hunger, environmental pollution, and mental health. She also appeared on popular television, including *The Tonight Show*, with Johnny Carson. In 1969, she was named by *Time Magazine* as "Mother of the World" or as "Mother of the Year," depending upon accounts (Comptons 1998; Encarta 2000; Gale Group n.d.; Henne-Wu 1997; Kristi 1997; Lynden n.d.; National Women's Hall of Fame 1998; Raven n.d.; Snider 2000). She hoped that her work would help make society more humane and socially responsible (*American Museum of Natural History* 2004).

A world-recognized scholar and leader, Mead was influential in the United Nations and active in the World Federation for Mental Health. She wrote forty-four books and more than a thousand articles that have been translated into many languages. She received twenty-eight honorary doctorates and was the first anthropologist to be President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Delmonte et al., 1999; Fact Monster 2000; Keeler 1997; Margaret Mead Centennial 2001 [2000; hereafter Mead Centennial]; Oxford 1999; Raven n.d.). When she died in New York City on 15 November in 1978 or 1979, a Pacific tribe honored her with a five-day ceremony normally reserved for the highest chiefs. She was posthumously awarded the United States' highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, for her life of service to the public good (Comptons 1998; Del Monte et al., 1999; Mead Centennial 2000; Oxford 1999).

The Boon

What was the boon that Margaret Mead brought back? How did her heroic journey help restore society? Four gifts from Mead are identified from the Internet tales: the recognition of the importance of culture on human behavior; elevation of the field of anthropology; Mead herself as a role model; and a particularly significant quotation that has guided individuals and groups for several decades.

The awareness of importance of culture on human behavior is her first gift (Encyclopedia Britannica 2004; World Book 2000). The essence of this gift is articulated in a quote attributed to Mead: "I have spent most of my life studying the lives other peoples–faraway peoples–so that Americans might better understand themselves" (quoted in *American Museum of National History* 2004; Lynden n.d.). This quotation points, as a needle on a compass, to the boon which Mead gave to the general public. This was that the way we as human beings are raised, our family structures, our community, the things we are taught–all of these things go through the lens of culture and that variation in behavior is primarily a result of culture rather than biology. Because of this, we can change behavior and change society. Mead's gift showed Americans that because people can learn from each other, human diversity is a wonderful and vital resource. This gift of the awareness of the importance of culture on human behavior helped break stereotyped sex roles, and encouraged people to live to their fullest potential (GirlSite 2000; Henne-Wu 1997; Mead Centennial 2000):

> Margaret went to Samoa, a set of islands in the Pacific Ocean, to study the people there. She watched how people acted around each other, how they spoke, and their body language. On some islands, she noticed that women were in charge of business and men were the artists. Margaret took trips 14 times to study different people and their cultures. She found that men and women are often raised or expected to act a certain way, and these ways can be very different in different societies. By looking at these other cultures, she learned how our society also expects people to act certain ways. . . . Dr. Margaret Mead taught people that they can do anything they are talented at, no matter what society expects them to do (Historia-Mead 2002).

Accompanying the gift of cultural awareness is the gift of anthropology. Mead strove to bring the benefits of anthropology to the public consciousness. She also pioneered the field of psychological anthropology. She was one of the first anthropologists to study child-rearing practices and to promote

the point of view of women and children (*American Museum of Natural History* 2004; Fact Monster 2000; Kristi 1997; Snider 2000; Society for Applied Anthropology 2004; Women's International Center 2001). Mead's gift of anthropology to the public is remembered in the Margaret Mead Award given by the Society for Applied Anthropology:

> Margaret Mead, for years among the best known women in the world, was also the best known anthropologist, with a particular talent for bringing anthropology fully into the light of public attention. The Margaret Mead Award . . . celebrate[s] the tradition of bringing anthropology to bear on wider social and cultural issues. The awardee's activity will exemplify skills in broadening the impact of anthropology—skills for which Margaret Mead was admired widely (Society for Applied Anthropology 2004).

The third gift is that of Mead herself. Mead was a superwoman of the 20th century and continues to be a role model for adults and children; men and women, boys and girls alike.

> Margaret Mead left a lasting impression on people from her generation as well as those who live today. . . . To women, she served as a source of inspiration for her achievements in a professional field. Through her work as an anthropologist, Mead helped bridge gaps between cultures to resolve misconceptions and existing prejudices. It is easy to see the great contribution that Margaret made to the world and why she is viewed to be an individual that made a difference (Keeler 1997).

Mead was a visionary, speaking out for world peace, and love of the planet earth. She was *avant guarde*, applying technologies of film in new ways and exploring new philosophies. She was practical and outspoken. She perceived human life in holistic terms, seeing how changes in one area affected others. She thus brought new perspectives to issues and worked to find creative solutions (Mead Centennial 2000; Mermin 2000). Mead was comfortable with herself and with her life. "Though married and divorced three times, Mead firmly stated, 'I don't consider my marriages as failures. It's idiotic to assume that because a marriage ends, it's failed'" (quoted in Gale Group n.d.). Mead enjoyed motherhood and being a grandmother as well. She lived a long full life and was active until the end. She is quoted as saying, "'Sooner or later I'm going to die, but I'm not going to retire'" (quoted in Cybernation n.d.).

The final restorative boon that Mead brought back for society was the conveyance of a deep respect for the power and importance of the individual. This respect is revealed in a quotation attributed to Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." On the Internet, this is perhaps the most visible of Mead's gifts. These words are watchwords for dozens of groups and concerned individuals.

No one knows exactly where or when Mead actually spoke or wrote these words. On the Institute for Intercultural Studies sponsored Web page, authorities on Mead's life admit that although they receive many inquiries about Mead's "admonition," they are unable to locate when and where it was first used (Mead Centennial 2000). The words may have been spoken spontaneously and then reported in a newspaper. The origin of the quote is a topic of discussion on at least two listserves, but neither sheds light on the origin of the quote (see *Deep Ecology* 1996).

The quote gives hope to people trying to make a difference in their community. As the author of Margaret Mead Centennial site writes:

> Margaret Mead's remark about the power of cooperative action for change has inspired original thinking and activity by hundreds of individuals and organizations. When discussing problems and conflicts, she used to say, in the most matter-of-fact tone of voice, 'We need a new social invention' (quoted in Mead Centennial 2000).

Many groups seem to be doing just that, and use her quote to support them. For example, the November Coalition, an action group concerned about American citizens imprisoned on drug charges, prominently uses the quotation in their Web pages and acknowledges its importance to their work: "The famous Margaret Mead quote became our mantra: 'Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world–indeed it is the only thing that ever has'" (quoted in Callahan 1999). In this same site, the editor notes:

> It was this small vigil in New York City that drew the writer from *Newsweek Magazine* . . . ! Reminds me of some dear words from Margaret Mead, 'Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world, indeed, it is the only thing that ever has' (quoted in Callahan 1999).

The importance of Mead's quote is seen beyond its sheer number of occurrences. On *quotegeek.com* (Kate 2003), readers rated this quote 10–the

highest score possible. On *honorandcourage.com* (n.d.), the quotation is the only entry on the Web site. There are no other links, and the site is not part of any other series. Mead's statement appears to be the only reason for the site's existence. The quote's importance is also supported by the suggestion that it has entered American folklore. The words have apparently been passed from person to person, from organization to organization. The essence is preserved, even if the actual words may vary. Thus we find: "Never doubt that a small group of dedicated individuals can change the world . . . indeed, it's the only thing that ever has" (Food for Thought 2004); or "Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have" (Quoteland 2001); or "A small group of thoughtful and concerned citizens can change the world" (Forgach and Wilkes 1999).

Campbell (1968:238) maintains that the ultimate boon which the hero brings back from the journey is the "freedom to live." The subtitle of one of Mead's Internet biographies is "An Anthropology of Human Freedom" (Mead Centennial 2000). The restorative boon is an expressed part of her legacy.

Mead's position in American Society as someone beyond the ordinary was articulated by New York's Senator Jacob K. Javits in his statement for *The Congressional Record* on 15 January 1979:

> 'Margaret Mead lives on. She is with us in the brilliant studies she conducted on human behavior; she lives on in the many books she has authored; her ideas thrive in the minds of her students whom she stimulated with her zeal and zest for the search for knowledge and truth' (quoted in Mead Centennial 2000).

Mead's importance is also suggested by the dignitaries who comprised the Margaret Mead Centennial 2001 Honorary Committee. Former President Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter were the honorary co-chairs, while the committee itself included luminaries known for their care of others and of the world. The International Honorary Committee, chaired by Claude Lévi-Straus, brought together representatives of the anthropological community from thirty countries (Mead Centennial 2000).

Mead's name is enshrined in institutions and events, including an international video and film festival, a journalism award, an applied anthropology award, and a U.S. postage stamp. Three schools are named in her honor: Margaret Mead Elementary, (Sammamish, Washington); Margaret Mead Junior High School (Elk Grove Village, Illinois); and Margaret Mead School PS #209 (Brooklyn, New York). At Margaret Mead Elementary, Jim Anderson's 1998-99 3rd/4th grade class created a 10 by 12 foot mural of Margaret Mead, inspired by a public mural of Martin Luther King. Although not totally ac-

curate, "The design included a border to symbolize the time Margaret Mead spent in Africa and Samoa doing research" (Anderson and Briggs 1999).

Mead's importance is also signified by the fact that she needs no introduction to the American public. Her name is synonymous with anthropology and anthropologists. When the subject of an article concerns anthropology, frequently Mead's name is included to alert the public to this fact. For example, on a financial information Web site, the headline for an article about organizational analysis reads: "Anthropologists Go Native in the Corporate Village. Get me Margaret Mead! The biggest names in business—GM, Intel, Nynex—enlist anthropologists to decode the rituals of corporate life" (Kane 1996).

Intel's Web site, discussing "Designing the Perfect Product," states:

> If the word 'anthropology' makes you think of Margaret Mead wandering around the jungles of Samoa, you haven't heard of ethnography. Like traditional anthropology, it involves long-term observation of people in their natural habitats (Intel 2000; see also Mendels [2000] for *Business Week*).

In addition, Mead's name adds credibility to topics concerning anthropology. For example, when interviewing a new anthropologist, the online journalist uses Mead to set the stage before drawing in pop culture:

> Margaret Mead to Tomb Raider. . . . Back in the good old days, women anthropologists were figures of respect and scholarly integrity. Right? I mean even though Margaret Mead looks freaky with those masks, and her first book. . . with its "free love in the South Pacific" theme was a little risqué, she was still quite respectable. But today there is a whole new anthropologist icon on the scene. She's Laura Croft, a gun-wielding, short-shorts wearing, tomb-raiding video game heroine (Womenshands n.d.).

Myths and Heroes

Why should we be concerned about stories from the Internet that may or not be true? For anthropologists, myths may indeed be tall tales that are factually incomplete or inaccurate. Myths are "sacred narratives" (Howard and Dunaif-Hattis 1992:552) that take events and people beyond the realm of the mundane. Such narratives tell about culture heroes and their exploits. These stories help people to understand themselves and their society, and uphold confidence in the social order. Myths as sacred narratives also provide practical guidance and moral wisdom (Eliade 1963:2, 8; Mair 1963:27; Malinowski [1948]1992:101).

Although myths may contain truth, they are not necessarily true in themselves. Myths are accepted on faith rather than logic, since they cannot necessarily be proven. Furthermore, stories and quotations from heroes are taken out of context and lose scientific validity. They become a "metalanguage" with symbolism and meanings of their own (Barthes 1972:109, 114–115). In the legend of Mead, as repeated throughout the Internet, details shift: the dates of her birth and death; where she met Franz Boas; where she met her husbands; where she did field research; what was her actual award from *Time Magazine*. In the myth, precise history is not important. What *is* important are the messages communicated and the values they represent.

Myths of heroes are particularly important because the hero represents the highest values of the culture, the "soul of the community"(May 1991). Heroes help a society to clarify important qualities and serve the important function of role models. Bettelheim (1977) notes the particular need for heroes for today's children raised outside the traditional security of the extended family and community.

> [I]t is important to provide the modern child with images of heroes who have to go out into the world all by themselves and who, although originally ignorant of the ultimate things, find secure places in the world by following their right way with deep inner confidence (Bettelheim 1977:11).

Children learn that though they may feel abandoned in the world, they will ultimately be guided, like their heroes, and given help when needed. The story of the lone hero, successfully establishing rich and meaningful and relations with the world, continues to reassure and give confidence to people (Bettelheim 1977:11).

The American Hero

The United States has its own set of heroes. Typically they are a no-nonsense, straight-talking, lot. They are brave pioneers who are not afraid of authority. Legendary American heroes such as Daniel Boone, Annie Oakley, Charles Lindbergh, and Martin Luther King, Jr., are defenders of personal freedom and committed to bettering society. These heroes speak to and for common folk (Geist and Nachbar 1983:206; House 1993:65–71).

Mead is also a distinctively American hero who represents American values. She was a pioneer, "an intrepid explorer" (Lynden n.d.), "a true groundbreaker" (Raven n.d.). Mead "pushed back the boundaries of her science" (National Women's Hall of Fame 1998), and "pioneered research methods

that helped shape American public policy" (Gale Group n.d.). On the postage stamp issued with her picture, the U.S. Postal Service (2003) notes, "Mead explored the effect of culture on the behavior and personalities of children and adults, as well as the differences between men and women." The background of the stamp shows a palm tree and a piece of tapa cloth, representing the South Pacific, associated with her studies (United States Postal Service 2003). Her journeys required courage and pioneer spirit as she forayed into the areas of controversy and "Unmapped Country" (Women's International Center, 2001). Mead was a pioneer in the field of anthropology (Del Monte et al., 1999; Snider 2000). Her pioneer use of film is honored in the annual Mead Film and Video Festival at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and other locations. This unique festival continues to be an important way of disseminating anthropological ideas to the public (Mermin 2000; University of Southern California 1997).

The focus of Mead's pioneer work, the reason for her boon, is the betterment of society. In her lifetime, she spoke out on a wide range of social issues, including testifying in the U.S. Congress (*American Museum of Natural History* 2004). The many community organizations using Mead's famous quote on their Web sites reflect her concern for society. Such organizations include those for volunteer service, tax reform, patient care advocacy, peace in the Middle East, citizens against drugs, citizens in favor of drugs, citizens against hate crimes, and parent-teacher associations, among others. Her concern for the quality of life of women is reflected in an award in her name given by the American Medical Writers Association. The Margaret Mead Award for Reporting on Postmenopausal Health is given for writing on health issues for older women (American Medical Writers Association 1998).

Mead was a defender of the individual, regardless of age or sex (Historia-Mead 2002). She sought equality and a future where "each boy and girl feels a whole human being" (StoryTapes n.d.). This follows the "wise saint" American archetype identified by House (1993:68–69), whereby through experience a hero achieves wisdom to help others. Guiding words attributed to her, "There is no greater insight into the future than recognizing when we save our children, we save ourselves," reflect this wisdom (Texas Juvenile Probation Commission 2004). Di Leonardo (2001:29; 36) notes that Mead is viewed as a "holy woman" who continues to inspire equality, understanding, and liberation.

Mead's detractors are revealed occasionally in the Internet sites. When controversy is mentioned, it is generally in passing, as in this entry:

> In recent years, some of Mead's early research on Samoa has been questioned, most notably by the Australian anthropologist Derek

> Freeman, who argues that she was wrong about Samoan norms on sexuality. Nevertheless, her life-time achievements eclipse the controversy surrounding her earliest fieldwork. We celebrate Margaret Mead, a woman anthropologist who was a strong proponent of women's rights, who shone a light of understanding on human nature, and a clear and forceful entity who provided much knowledge to the field of anthropology and psychology. *"To cherish the life of the world . . ." Margaret Mead* (Del Monte et al., 1999).

Campbell (1968:196–197) notes that the hero's return to the world may be complicated if the boon has been gained in opposition of gods, demons, or a guardian. But there is little in the Internet tales to indicate that this is the case. In fact, Mead's story on the Internet more closely follows the path of victory:

> If the hero in his triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron (Campbell 1968:196–197).

Essentially, Derek Freeman's (1983) critique of Mead's ethnography is ignored. His critique of Mead falls short because his concerns about "scientific objectivity" in her early research do not make a difference in the areas in which Mead is important to the public (see also Bateson, this volume). Lifestyle issues of childrearing, family structure, and community activism, as well as personal qualities of courage, pioneering, and serving as a role model are important, not because they are "objective" or "scientific," but because they represent cultural values of the highest order. The veracity of a story may not be proven, but we have faith in the essence behind the story, i. e., in the person and in the cultural values.

While Freeman (1983), through his choice of sub-title for his book (*The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*) knew that he was challenging more than just Mead's writing, he may not have been aware how deeply imbedded she is in American society. Indeed, in critiquing Mead and *Coming of Age in Samoa*, he challenged a young woman (she was twenty-seven when the book was published), and specifically a young American woman. In the model of the hero and the hero's journey, Freeman challenged a young woman who represented the spirit of the pioneer, who traveled to faraway places to learn important lessons to bring back to her own society. Mead is embedded as America's anthropologist who loved her society and worked to strengthen it.

While the focus of the myth and of this essay has been on American society, it is clear that the values Mead represents transcend borders. Mead's quote appears on Web sites in Canada and Latin America, as well as in Australia and Europe. As a contemporary hero, Mead represents the multicultural promise of modern day life and the reality of the global village. Through her gifts she teaches us to embrace differences and not to fear them. Her boon, delivered in the 20th century, continues to guide our society in the new millennium.

Margaret Mead: The People's Anthropologist

When I was a first-year anthropology student in the 1960s at the University of Auckland in New Zealand, our professor reviewed anthropological work in North America. He raised Margaret Mead as a prominent name in American Anthropology, and with just the slightest hint of gentlemanly disdain, noted that she was best known for popularizing the discipline.

After spending hours on the Internet and finding her name on more than one hundred Web sites, I would suggest that Margaret Mead has indeed not only popularized anthropology but has, herself, become popularized. Margaret Mead's name is itself synonymous with anthropology in the American eye. She is the people's anthropologist. Much like the painter, Norman Rockwell, she is beloved by the American people, in spite of critics' opinions.

Margaret Mead is alive and well in American popular culture. She is accorded a permanent place in American history as a great American woman; she is the spokesperson for the common person. Her words celebrate the committed person and continue to inspire citizens. She is presented as a role model and an inspiration for young people. She has come to fill that rare role of an American woman hero who continues to inspire and sustain society.

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USING AND ABUSING THE WORKS OF THE ANCESTORS: MARGARET MEAD

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Because early-twentieth-century anthropologists worked under very different circumstances from those of anthropologists today, they have become easy to criticize and hard to use fruitfully. Finding the appropriate use of Margaret Mead's work today is a goal she would have felt at home with. Criticism and correction are essential, but opportunistic uses of Mead's work, legacy, and persona, like the attack by Derek Freeman that made him famous, are essentially wasteful and exploitative. By focusing attention on Mead's earliest work, Freeman obscured her lifelong contribution and undermined concepts she helped embed in American thinking, like the indispensable (if vague) concept of culture, the importance of learning and environment, and the holistic approach to patterns of human adaptation, concepts under attack today. In terms of legacy, she saw her field notes as the most valuable part of her work, but perhaps the most important example she set was her own development over time.

IT IS AN HONOR to contribute to this volume, especially as I am vividly aware that others know much more about the social anthropology of Oceania than I do. All of us in this profession, however, share the sense of how extraordinarily fertile Oceania has been in terms of the development of anthropological theory and method. These archipelagos—and the complex topography of the larger ones—have allowed so many separate cultures to flourish, exploring variations on overlapping themes, that they have been in many ways the Galapagos Islands for all our thinking about cultural variation. The work done in Oceania provides a kind of bedrock for what anthropologists do in other places and for the ways of thinking they make available outside of the profession. The work done by my mother, Margaret Mead, on seven differ-

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ent cultures in the South Pacific, with the vivid contrasts it contributed to her thinking, is also part of the background against which anthropologists work, wherever they may be on the planet, and it was the starting place for all her thinking about other issues.

Looking at Oceania today, there is more continuity in the cultures of the area than the ethnographers of Mead's generation expected. When Mead ended more than two decades of fieldwork, with World War II already shadowing the Pacific, she expected total disruption. Salvage anthropologists of her generation were concerned with the loss of preliterate cultures everywhere in the world. Ruth Benedict presented anthropology to Mead as an urgent task that had to be done quickly (Mead 1972:122). Today we are all aware that these cultures are not as fragile as anthropologists thought and aware also of the constant tides of change lurking behind descriptions written in the ethnographic present. The part of Samoa Mead studied was already changing by the time of her first field trip. When she went back to visit she was delighted to see again what she remembered as an appealing and harmonious culture in spite of all the outside influences, though complicated and stressful in new ways.

Nevertheless, we are aware of the huge change that has taken place, the need to understand ongoing change, and the need to have a baseline in order to understand that change. The records left by earlier anthropologists, who felt they were so much under the gun of culture loss, are an irreplaceable source for ongoing understanding. From the 1950s on, Mead's work focused increasingly on the question of change, replacing the question of how a newborn infant grows up to become culturally Samoan or Manus with the question of what it might mean to be Samoan or Manus as part of a global community.

In speaking about, among other things, the uses of Margaret Mead, I want to make it very clear that she thought in those terms herself. In the 1960s and 1970s, when my husband and I were living and working in the Philippines and later in Iran, both of us with urban jobs and only partially involved in research, my mother used to descend on us in the course of her travels. She'd telephone to say she was coming, saying, "Now, I want you kids to use me." Usefulness remains key to the many roles she played and the choices she made. She meant us to take the occasion of her visit to move forward in our work. For instance, we might arrange for her to give a speech and brief her on what we thought needed to be said to that audience at that time. Then she would pick our brains and give our suggestions her own twist. Or we might give a reception for her and invite people who might not turn out for us but would for her.

Similarly, when Mead retired as curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, she encouraged the museum to

set up a Margaret Mead Fund to strengthen the Department of Ethnology. What she said was, "The public won't remember me in five years. If you're going to get any mileage out of my name, you'd better do it quickly." Some two decades have passed since her death, and I think we can see both truth and error in her words, and that both use and abuse continue.

Mead had a major commitment to communicating with the public. She appeared on talk shows and wrote for *Redbook* magazine, putting most of the income into the Institute for Intercultural Studies to support continuing work. She felt it was of first importance that thoughtful Americans should understand the key ideas of anthropology in preparation for an increasing engagement in world affairs in both war and peace. Clearly she relished fame, but she felt that fame brought responsibilities. In her public persona it was as if she spoke right to the frontier of what her audience was ready to learn, which gave her thinking a quality of evanescence, quickly metabolized into the familiar. Many of those who heard her speak had the experience of thinking: "That was brilliant! I never thought of that." But then somehow, after about a week, they would begin to feel as if they had always known whatever it was. For many of the students she worked with most closely, her ideas went into their dissertations as if the students had thought of them themselves, or perhaps had always known them, because they had been so fully absorbed. This was no accident, for what she said was firmly based on an understanding of the thoughtways of those she addressed, and she carefully avoided the obscure and distancing rhetoric so often preferred by intellectuals and academics. This clarity was facilitated in speaking to American audiences by the fact that Mead did not feel alienated from her own culture as so many of us do. For all these reasons, there is a very real sense in which much of what Mead had to say has been absorbed both in the profession and in American society.

A comparison is helpful. The work of my father, Gregory Bateson, has never become common sense and never been fully absorbed by the profession. His way of thinking, even in the very early work that is best known (G. Bateson 1936), pulls away from familiar assumptions, and later in his career he shared his own unresolved intellectual struggle by falling back on enigmatic and even poetic modes of expression. Mead seems too easy; Bateson seems too difficult, though not in the ways that the academy prefers. But Bateson is more accessible today than he was thirty years ago, while Mead's writings reward rereading with nuggets barely noticed the first time around.

Unfortunately, this is only part of the ongoing story of Mead's intellectual legacy. The publicity given to Derek Freeman's attack (1983) on *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead [1928] 2001), begun after her death and unremitting until his own in 2001, has left the public feeling that all of her work was

compromised. Nevertheless, much of her influence has remained at an unconscious or unattributed level. After the original sensation, anthropologists gradually and skillfully came to her defense, too late to interest the media (see, for example, Côté and Shankman, this volume, 60–73 and 46–59). But we have largely allowed Freeman to suggest that *Coming of Age in Samoa* was both central and typical of Mead's work, rather than an early chapter. It is as if we were always talking about a small part of Mead, her left toe perhaps, a fragment of what she represented and achieved. The entire discussion often seems to be about Samoa and not only about Samoa but about adolescent sex in Samoa, with her descriptions paraphrased and distorted in Freeman's account (see Shankman and McDowell, both in this volume, 46–59 and 4–18; also McDowell 1984).

There are other opportunistic uses of Mead. One of the ways, particularly in this country, that people achieve a sort of derivative attention for themselves is by attacking a famous person. There is particular relish to be had in attacking a high-achieving woman, especially with a snigger about sex. But Mead is not only an opportunistic target, she is a surrogate target. If, like Derek Freeman, you happen to dislike virtually all of American cultural anthropology, you can use Mead as your "hook." You can get a book published if you put Margaret Mead in the title. Anthropologists were slow to realize how much of Freeman's attack on Mead was an attack on them, on their work, and on the principles of the discipline in which they had been trained. Many colleagues gloated. Used as a target, Mead has undoubtedly been a surrogate for others as well, some of them probably outside of anthropology and unidentified to us. One wonders if, in these attacks, Mead was also a surrogate for some other female figure in the past of the attacker, which may explain a certain obsessive tone (see Côté, this volume, 60–73).

It is common to use historical figures to represent the values that underlie an emerging understanding of history or as targets for criticism to dramatize flaws that still exist. This may be frustrating to scholars but is standard in both oral and written traditions, as complex and multifaceted figures are mythologized and simplified—even caricatured—in teaching the next generation. There is also a certain intellectual laziness that turns up in classrooms and textbooks, where we use the names of individuals as tags for oversimplified positions (like "absolute cultural determinism," an intellectual impossibility!). This means losing track of the complexity of ideas, the value and range of the work, and the many thinkers who contributed to it (see also Guddemi and Sullivan, this volume, 106–127 and 91–105). The strategy of label and dismiss is convenient but wasteful. There is another and more constructive sense in which each of us can use Mead, with caution, for what we wish to develop or to change about ourselves. When we criticize someone from the

past, it is a way of framing what we intend to do differently. We can look at someone's work and both critique it and learn from it, and this is after all the essential process of science. Any thoughtful account of a mentor or parent can be expected to contain a measure of ambivalence, the ground of further growth. We also look at our own past work and benefit both from what we still affirm and from what we need to revise. Mead was not an ideal parent, and I have followed her in some things and done others differently. Yet I and younger Americans have benefited from what Mead learned in Samoa, New Guinea, and Bali, some of which was passed on through her writings and her influence on Benjamin Spock (M. C. Bateson 1984:29).

Changing times have also given us new ethical insights into the relationships that surround and undergird our work, with new concepts of cultural property and informed consent. Recently I have heard the term "presentism" used to refer to a form of bigotry that arises when we project the standards of the present on the past, editing the past instead of inventing the future. A relatively trivial example of this problem is that at the beginning of her career, Mead, like her contemporaries, routinely used the term "primitive" and sometimes the term "savages." By the end of her career, she, with increasing consistency, spoke of "preliterate peoples" rather than of "primitive peoples," and now the term "indigenous peoples" is in fashion. Surely all of us have modified our vocabulary, partly because it's trendy but partly because we have developed significant new kinds of sensitivity in the way we speak and write, even though this has introduced some absurdities. But it is very important, when you read a document from the 1920s, to interpret and judge it in that context. The failure to do so is a form of presentism. For example, the proportion of sexually active teenagers is higher in the United States today than it was when Mead was writing, higher than it was among the Samoan girls she was writing about. Part of the problem is that reading the reviews from that time today suggests that *Coming of Age in Samoa* is a lot sexier than it is.

The work of an ethnographer is too multifaceted to be refuted simply, the way a laboratory hypothesis can be refuted by carefully designed experiments, but all ethnography requires correction and amplification when possible. Freeman's success was not as a refutation but as a distraction. None of us would be happy to see our lives reduced to the work we did in a two-year period in our early twenties, nor would we want to see our later efforts wasted. Instead, we think back and celebrate the fact that we have learned and would do it differently now. The issue is not just that Mead did important work after the 1920s. She did something else important to emulate. She learned from her experience. She developed. It is important to become aware, in the way we look at the historical figures of the disci-

pline, of the way they evolved. The picture of Mead that most people have is a snapshot that has no development. Icons, even those most treasured, become static.

Mead made one very fundamental change in all of her field trips after Samoa. She never again did fieldwork by herself. She, I believe, recognized that the lack of opportunity to discuss what she was seeing and thinking with a peer limited what she was able to see and think. My own belief is that what she saw and reported in Samoa was largely accurate, as Lowell Holmes affirms (1987), but incomplete, lopsided (see also Shankman, this volume, 46–59). There were aspects of Samoan culture she was not seeing and responding to. She never again went to the field for an extended period alone. Aware of the historical blind spots of male-dominated ethnography, she argued for male and female teams. When Reo Fortune preferred to insulate their work from each other, she deplored the waste (Mead 1972:205).

Mead believed strongly in returning to a field site. After World War II, she felt that her diachronic perspective would be wasted it she turned to new sites, and this awareness of double vision took her back to Manus to study change within one generation (Mead [1956] 2001:14–15). It sometimes happens, for all sorts of practical reasons, that an anthropologist makes one substantive field trip in early youth that provides the raw material for a dissertation and then mines those notes for articles for the rest of a professional career. But those who return to the field, having developed through time, see things differently. Experience at two different field sites or at the same site after a period of years offers even the solitary ethnographer something like the experience of teamwork, of dialog.

Surprisingly, Mead did not think her books were her most important work. What she felt was of absolute, long-term, irreplaceable importance was the body of original field notes, because other people would be able to use them and think new thoughts. The book that comes out about fieldwork is an interpretation of the notes. The notes are limited by what the individual ethnographer is able to notice, and we are all limited in that way, but our interpretations are even more limited and selective in what they include. With good notes (and Mead took very full notes), well preserved (and she typed huge quantities every night and made sure they were archived in the Library of Congress), there is more in the notes than we ourselves know. And because the societies we study are changing, no one can ever go back and see exactly the same things that we saw. Restudies are important precisely because anthropology is not a replicable science; and the most divergent restudies, like the works of Redfield (1930) and Lewis (1951) in Tepoztlán, are important not as refutations, but for the depth and perspective provided by two different points of view and two different personalities.

When Mead wrote about the time that she spent with my father in Bali and Iatmul, just before World War II, working with an intensity and excitement that boggles the mind (see Silverman, this volume), she commented that Gregory Bateson never came back to this kind of field work. "Instead, he has preferred to generate small stretches of data, based on tape recordings and films of interviews with schizophrenics and observations of octopuses in tanks, otters at the zoo, or dolphins in captivity, making records that are not in themselves priceless or timelessly valuable and that can be discarded when the thinking they were meant to underpin is done." (Mead 1972:238–239)

The point is not that some of these efforts fall outside of anthropology. The point is that she saw the films and tapes as insufficiently contextualized, so that although they were interesting to think with and led to new and important ideas, they were not invaluable as primary data, not "priceless or timelessly valuable."

In contrast, she impounded all the material from my father's New Guinea and Bali fieldwork in the Museum of Natural History along with material from several other anthropologists because, as she said, anthropologists lose things, especially when they are shoved out of their offices by universities. She made her offices at the museum a storehouse for the kind of data about human cultural diversity that she felt was absolutely irreplaceable. Since my own work in recent years is based on interviews and tape recordings that are also not fully contextualized in that sense, I have thought about this a good deal. I think it is true that the work that I do does not create a corpus of irreplaceable primary material; it is rather a transition stage in the development of thinking about the possible adaptations of individuals to the challenges of change (M. C. Bateson 1984).

As far as Mead was concerned, her ethnographic notes are her most important legacy. I have been working with publishers to get Mead's books and monographs reissued and available. New editions are less significant, however, than the use that other anthropologists have made of the notes (e.g., Errington and Gewertz 1989; McDowell 1991; Orans 1996; Silverman, this volume), writing new interpretations that can be juxtaposed to Mead's work and go beyond it. A steady stream of researchers has been going through the papers and photographs at the Library of Congress. There are some five hundred thousand items in the Mead Archives, the largest individual collection of papers in the library. It stands as a reminder of the critical importance of preserving field notes and accepting the vulnerability to reinterpretation as a responsibility that we all have to the future.

When Mead's books came out in new editions during her lifetime she wrote new prefaces, chronicling changing points of view, but she did not vio-

late the integrity of the texts by retrospective editing. Thus the books are primary data about the state of anthropology and her thinking at the time each was written. A long series of anthropology students who worked for Mead remember her insistence that everything should be dated, that, indeed, without a date it was impossible to interpret a note or a memo or an idea. This is the meaning of Mead's insistence on not modifying and rewriting texts. The texts themselves have a validity that is contextual, related to a moment in time, and if one starts editing them retrospectively, they are falsified.

We need to bring to the documents of the past the contextual sensitivity of archeologists. The books, properly dated and preserved as written, and the articles are important historical evidence of the development of our thinking and the contributions Mead may have made to it. Similarly, the many letters among her papers in the Library of Congress are valuable data about, for instance, the development of scientific and professional organizations in the United States over the half century of Mead's active career. With ever accelerating rates of change and increased longevity, Mead, unlike many of her critics, provides a useful example of someone seeing her own life and work through a lens of historical relativity.

There is another way in which Mead continues to be useful and important. As an individual, she stands in the public mind for ideas that she played a role in setting loose or establishing in American society. One of the most obvious of these is the concept of culture itself. Anthropologists have argued for more than half a century about what this term means, and every time I run into it in a press report or a piece of popular journalism, I wince a little—and it happens daily. We need to recognize and celebrate the fact that this little word is now indispensable in the encounters between peoples of different origins trying to work out ways of living together in one country. It is becoming even more indispensable as we are involved in more and more interactions with other peoples all over the world. The concept of "culture," as understood by Americans today, is sometimes a code word for class or race. But at the same time it is a way of emphasizing how much of human character and behavior is learned and could be learned differently.

Mead's work is linked to a cluster of key ideas in the fields of education and public policy, and her political views were congruent with her scientific work. We can use her as a vehicle for some of those ideas, especially since we have become cautious and inhibited in talking about them. Not only did she emphasize cultures as learned systems of human adaptation, she was also very clear that many of the associations people make with race and with sex are equally learned and that we can move forward from them. Aside from her career and the public success that made her a symbol of possible achievement for many young women, Mead's was a voice for feminism in an

early stage, before we had the vocabulary of social constructionism and the distinction between sex and gender. Mead's work also represents an affirmation of the way in which knowledge of other cultural traditions allows us to make positive choices for the future (see also Stover, this volume).

The last idea that I think we should associate with Mead and with other anthropologists of her generation—which we in anthropology seem to have lost—is the vision of anthropology as a holistic discipline. Back in those days, in the climate of salvage anthropology, when you went into a village as an ethnographer, you did not go as a specialist in medical anthropology, or in kinship systems, or in ceramics, or in house building, or in religion; you tried to record as much about every one of those subjects as possible. You often also wrote a grammar of the language, compiled a dictionary, and recorded myths and other texts because you might be the only person available to record them before they were lost. Now, all of this has changed. Anthropologists have gone back to the field and done a variety of restudies, mostly going on these later expeditions with much narrower specializations—having read the previous work, using the dictionary, the grammar, the maps, and the censuses—to look at particular questions. Mead's generation saw connections between things that we, in our more specialized mode, may miss. When I became involved in thinking about the Mead centennial, what I thought we most needed to use her for within the profession was as a reminder of anthropology as a holistic discipline. Her willingness to comment on virtually every aspect of American culture came out of the holistic curiosity of her fieldwork. In a compartmentalized and specialized society, this is a corrective badly needed. Whether through photography or systems theory or writing in an evocative literary style, Mead struggled for ways of showing and recording a fuller image of life than we are usually able to capture. We need to work on contemporary equivalents, framed in a reflexive mode, because change continues and much is lost.

That leads me to my final topic: the challenges for the future that await us in her work. The first of these tasks has to do with primary data, using hers, preserving and sharing our own; if every ethnographer adopted her attitude to field notes, she would be amply memorialized. There are also ideas that have never been picked up in the profession. We speak of Mead as a pioneer of visual anthropology. Yet, no one, as far as I know, has adopted the methodology developed in Bali and Iatmul of intensive photography (some fifty thousand photographs taken in Bali) as primary data that could support a new kind of detailed analysis (Bateson and Mead 1942; see also Sullivan 1999).

Another area where Mead developed original methods was in her work on "contemporary cultures," by which she meant those of literate, diverse,

industrialized societies. One of the two books that I felt most strongly about bringing back into circulation is *The Study of Culture at a Distance* (Mead and Metraux [1953] 2000). This volume was put together as a manual for the research on contemporary cultures that grew out of Benedict's and Mead's work during World War II, work that Mead continued and elaborated after Benedict's death.

Today the notion of doing anthropological research in the United States or other large industrialized nations is a commonplace, but anthropologists still tend to study enclaves within those larger wholes—we are not, after all, interested in statistics so much as in direct observation and face-to-face contact. The methodologies developed to study the Axis powers and the countries occupied by them during World War II, countries that were inaccessible for research, still offer an approach to characterizing common cultural themes in nation-states with huge urban populations behind doors and walls, "at a distance" from the ethnographer. Following this interpretation of "distance," I organized a discussion group of Iranian and American social scientists working together, collecting and sharing interviews and life histories, drawing on personal experiences, going together to look at popular films, or discussing short stories or newspapers, and combining different angles of view. We were actually in Tehran but were using the techniques to think about a whole that was too complex and too inaccessible for any of us to tackle (M. C. Bateson et al. 1976). Interestingly enough, the methods we were using, which were developed during World War II, are echoed in what is now called cultural studies (Beeman 2000).

Mead had not one voice but many, and she expressed herself in different genres, sometimes shifting voices from chapter to chapter, as in *Coming of Age in Samoa*. There has been a call in the last few years for more anthropologists willing to address the public, as Mead did for so long, but here too we tend to polarize and oversimplify, as if writing well meant abandoning scholarship. Recently, I asked the campus audience of an all-day conference on Mead how many had read through at least one of her books. Virtually everyone had, which is already notable in our day of excerpts, CliffsNotes, and photocopying. Then I asked how many had read more than two, and the number dropped to a small fraction. Even among professional anthropologists (even, I am afraid, a few Oceanists), many seem to have read only Mead's trade books, skipping her technical monographs, such as the multivolume study *The Mountain Arapesh* (Mead [1938–1949] 2002); see also McDowell and Shankman, this volume). In order to reach the general public, it is important to master more than one style and to speak with an understanding of multiple contexts, for effective communication depends on ethnographic knowledge. Mead ([1942] 2001) saw all forms of participation

as opportunities for observation, including public speaking. Addressing these different audiences is a responsibility that, in a sense, the discipline was able to avoid for a great many years—the period from Benedict's death in 1948 until Mead's death in 1978. This withdrawal from speaking out on public issues was also affected by the beginning of the Cold War and the rise of McCarthyism.

Mead's public voice depended on the conviction that anthropology is a science, although it must function without the rituals of the laboratory, and that we must distinguish what we know as scientists from our opinions as citizens. She gave a lot of thought over time to the relationship between science and public advocacy against the background of changing political trends. She was aware that it was only because she spent most of the 1930s in the field that she had not become heavily involved in the leftist politics of that era as her friends had. Joining advocacy groups or signing petitions could have reduced her effectiveness and made her a target in the McCarthy era, so she remained cautious about what she joined or signed. She criticized American Cold War policies when she felt her reasoning was grounded in specific research—arguing against the policy of containment, for instance, on the basis of research on Russia (Mead 1951; Beeman 2001). When anthropologists began to speak up again about public issues in the 1960s and 1970s, they tended to blur their activism and their professional experience. In contrast, Mead worked on the creation of the Scientists' Institute for Public Information (now defunct) to enable scientists to express their expertise—as distinct from their opinions as citizens—about such topics as atmospheric testing and fusion technology. Thus she opposed the passing of general resolutions against the Vietnam War by the American Anthropological Association (AAA), earning considerable hostility (di Leonardo 2001), for although she opposed the war as a citizen, she, like the majority of AAA members, could claim no particular expertise on the area. As for protest demonstrations, she never walked when she could sit—at a typewriter. She supported Jimmy Carter more by advice than by name recognition. On political issues, she thought like an applied anthropologist, approaching her audience in terms of their values instead of challenging them as simply wrong (see, for example, Mead [1942] 2001).

We are now at one of those moments, as in the mid- and late 1930s, when the climate of world opinion tilts in the direction of biological determinism and away from learned behavior. Mead quite deliberately emphasized the role of culture over biological givens in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* ([1935] 1963:xiii), although the biological givens survived in the title, because she did not want her work misread to reinforce racism. The new tilt toward biological determinism in our day, stimulated

by the Human Genome Project and a whole range of biomedical advances, should once again be a matter of concern for anthropologists, a moment for speaking out about what we know, not only about what we passionately believe. Mead has been vilified both by conservatives and by advocates of sociobiology. We are once again in a period where we have to remind our fellow citizens of the extraordinary and precious human capacity to learn. We have to remind them with all the evidence and eloquence we have lest there come a time when we become neglectful of the professional responsibility we have to teach—a responsibility fundamental to our understanding of what it is to be human.

NOTES

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