QUEST FOR THE REAL SAMOA

The Mead/Freeman Controversy & Beyond

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Assessing Margaret Mead

Although I differ with Mead on several issues, I would like to make it clear that, despite the greater possibilities for error in a pioneering scientific study, her tender age (twenty-three), and her inexperience, I find that the validity of her Samoan research is remarkably high. Differences between the findings of Mead and myself that cannot be attributed to cultural change are relatively minor, and in most cases involve not differences in data but in interpretation. The most important thing to emphasize, however, is that I confirm Mead's conclusion that it was undoubtedly easier to come of age in Samoa than in the United States in 1925. This involved not only analysis of the Samoan material, but an investigation of what life was like in the United States in 1925. This is a small detail Derek Freeman has overlooked.

What I did find in an exhaustive review of Mead's writings on Samoa was that the culture was not quite as simple as she would have had us believe. In other words, she often over-generalized, a common failing among novice fieldworkers. I could not agree with Mead on the degree of sexual freedom supposedly enjoyed by young people on Ta'u, but I am sure that she had greater rapport with teenagers than I (and probably Freeman) did. However, there was considerable evidence in the form of illegitimate children and divorces with adultery as a ground to indicate that a fair amount of premarital and extramarital sexuality existed.

I also saw the culture as considerably more competitive than Mead did. I sensed a great preoccupation with status, power, and prestige, and on more than one occasion I observed very competitive verbal contests between Talking Chiefs for the purpose of enhancing their own or their village's prestige. I felt that Samoans loved to display their abilities, but in general one was respected more for modesty than for conceit, and it was better to have someone else praise one's abilities than to do it one's self. I also observed that in interpersonal relations, particularly in romantic alliances, Samoans played for somewhat higher stakes than Mead indicated. I never saw the society as inflexible nor the Samoans as aggressive as Freeman characterizes them. Actually, I saw the society as one in which people went to extremes to avoid conflict and to arrive at compromises. Village council decisions always had to be unanimous, and village

council meetings sometimes went on for days until a decision satisfactory to all was reached.

Turning specifically to the problem that Mead was concerned with, salient characteristics of Samoan culture (particularly in Ta'u) which contributed to a more tranquil passage through adolescence than was characteristic of the U.S. in 1925 are:

1. The structure of the household is such that there are a number of adults who may both discipline and reward the children in that residence unit. This results in a diffusion of authority *and* affection, making individual parent-child relationships less intense and stressful. Where a child identifies with a number of "parents," personal attachments do not become so strong that psychological disturbances accompany the death or divorce of a given parent. In matters of discipline it is difficult for a child to direct resentment against any single individual, since a number of people punish him when he misbehaves. Because of this lack of strong personal attachment with certain individuals, the child is more flexible in his adjustment to new situations. A perfect example is the widespread custom of adoption. Here children often leave the home of their biological parents and go to live with family friends or relatives. They do so without apparent difficulty and they function as regular members of the new household. Another significant feature of the Samoan family situation is the large number of children found in any residential unit. Contrary to the condition encountered in most European families there is a complete absence of complications arising from sibling order and onlychild situations.

2. Age segregation is almost completely absent in the household, and this facilitates greater communication across generations.

3. Children are more readily exposed to the facts of life in regard to sex, death, childbirth, and family leadership responsibilities, and this knowledge prepares young people for adult experiences, roles, and obligations.

4. There is no dichotomy between a child's world and an adult world. Coming of age involves assuming family chores and responsibility whenever the child is physically and mentally able. Full responsibility for caring for siblings often begins as early as five or six years of age, and many adolescents are functioning as adults in agricultural work, fishing activities, and household tasks long before such weighty responsibilities would be thrust upon an American child. While some observers emphasize the oppressive work loads forced upon teenagers, in this relatively bountiful environment few put in a forty-hour week or are required to work beyond his or her capacity.

5. Flexible residence patterns permit young people to flee to households of kinsmen when difficulties in parent-child relations develop. While Freeman maintains that this does not happen in Samoa (1983:204), I have known several such cases in Ta'u village.

6. Life is simpler, and there are fewer decision-making dilemmas in Samoa than in the United States. Samoa in 1954, and therefore certainly in 1925, presented fewer careers among which to choose, fewer alternative life-styles, and fewer conflicting moral and ethical codes. In Mead's Samoa nearly all young persons grew up knowing that they would spend their lifetimes as farmers or farmer's wives; most men knew if they worked hard for their family and their village that someday they would acquire a chief's title and be responsible for a village household unit. In all Ta'u island villages there was but one sanctioned denomination (London Missionary Society), and church membership and attendance was nearly compulsory because of social pressure. However, Manu'an culture, as observed in 1954, was not completely free of conflicting doctrines, ideals, or Western influences. The factor of European education had complicated the picture, and young people found themselves confronted with the choice of remaining within the society and following traditional custom, or leaving Manu'a to find work in the urban areas of Samoa, Hawaii, or the United States where they could utilize their education. This trend was observed as early as 1930:

> The finished human products of Malifa and Poyer (missionary schools) must be pictured as facing not a world of economic and social life in which they win or lose by their own striving, but either a Samoan society of devious or traditional paths in which they must traverse to gain ultimate honour and prestige,or a white and mixed-bood society in which they have the status (and in large measure the stigma) of "semi-educated native," "Europeanised Samoan." Only by going overseas is there escape, and freedom of opportunity, but so far this has involved a lonely venture, experiences of racial discrimination, a hard economic struggle, unfamiliar climatic conditions, and a sense of exile that almost inevitably leads to a return and a surrender to Samoan circumstances. [Keesing 1934:436-447]

7. While young children were punished for misbehavior, and often severely, but for relatively few offenses—usually for making noise or standing up in the

but for relatively few offenses—usually for making noise or standing up in the house when chiefs were seated—no Samoan child was ever forced, as a child might be in America, to finish dinner, to go to bed at a particular time, or to keep from fighting with siblings. Most punishment is directed toward smaller children with the idea that it will make them learn proper behavior. I have never seen an adolescent struck by a parent nor even severely lectured for misbehavior. Expectations in intergenerational relations are clear, and there is little in the way of challenges to authority. By adolescence, Samoans have learned to regulate their own conduct, and there is little testing of the limits of sanctioned behavior. If limits are violated, punishment is expected and not resented. Even then the offender seldom feels the brunt of the full penalty for this violation. As in all other corporate decisions compromise takes place so that the punishment is softened. As Bradd Shore has noted, "There is among Samoans a stress on the maintenance of interpersonal harmony, at least in its external manifestations" (1982:117).

8. The amount of sexual freedom allowed Manu'an girls also may contribute to the lack of trauma in adolescence. Premarital relations were tolerated by the elders and an unwed mother faced only the short-lived anger of her parents and brothers. As Mead says, "Sex activity is regarded as play; as long as it remains informal, casual, meaningless, society smiles" (1930:84). The fact of being an illegitimate child was soon forgotten by the village, and the child took its place in the household with all the advantages and opportunities of the legitimate children. On the other hand, in American culture, which denies normal heterosexual outlets, young people may be forced, through anxiety during the dozen odd years between puberty and marriage, into less preferred patterns of sexual behavior.

SAMOAN-AMERICAN COMPARISONS

Ta'u village is extremely isolated. In 1954 it represented something of an untouched, traditional environment, thereby making growing up somewhat easier to accomplish than in the more acculturated villages like Pago Pago or Leone on the island of Tutuila. George Irwin, a teacher in Western Samoa during the 1940s and early 1950s, reports a coming of age situation much like that which I (and Margaret Mead) observed in Manu'a. He writes in *Samoa—A Teacher's Tale* as follows:

> In their treatment of children the Samoans anticipated by centuries the teachings of modern psychology. There are no problem children in their Islands because every child is

> accepted by his village for what he is. He may be good at singing, finding things, telling lies, throwing stones, or nothing in particular. It makes no difference, he is accepted; his opinion is considered. He may even make momentous decisions for himself. If he is unhappy at home, custom permits him to take his little bundle of mats to his cousins' *fale* and live with them. Perhaps it is because of their uninhibited childhood, the love and security they share as children, that the Samoans are such gay, singing people.
>
> There are no restrictions on the free development of personality, no insistence on conformity, yet the children delight to conform. They take pleasure in being one of a group, especially a uniformed group, and saying multiplication tables, singing, dancing, eating, and praying together. [1965:89]

Compare this tranquil milieu with the U.S. culture that Margaret Mead was familiar with. Joseph Folsom's book *The Family*, published in 1934 (and undoubtedly researched about the time Margaret Mead was observing and writing about adolescent behavior in the South Seas) describes American patterns of discipline as follows:

> Children are disciplined and trained with the ideal of absolute obedience to parents. Corporal punishment is used, ideally in cold blood. [1934:21]

And in regard to adolescent and young adult sexual behavior he writes:

> All sexual behavior on the part of children is prevented by all means at the parents' disposal . . . For the sake of prevention it has been usual to cultivate in the child, especially the girl, an attitude of horror or disgust toward all aspects of sex. [ibid.:23]
>
> Premarital intercourse is immoral though not abhorrent. . . . Violations are supposedly prevented by the supervision of the girl's parents. [ibid:25]

> Illegitimate children are socially stigmatized. . . . The chief stigma falls upon the unmarried mother, because she has broken an important sex taboo. [ibid.:10]

Willystine Goodsell, in her book *Problems of the Family*, portrayed the stigma of illegitimacy in 1928 America as follows:

> Harsh and condemnatory as the traditional attitude of society to the unmarried mother has been, it has not been so crushing as the treatment meted out to the illegitimate child by its parents and by society. ... He is frequently deprived of a mother's care as well as of the care and support of his father; . . . He labors under hampering legal and social disadvantages. In most states, the illegitimate child can inherit from the mother, but not from the father; ... his birth record discloses the fact of his illegitimate birth, if not specifically, yet by implication; and since this record is more often than not open to public inspection it may be maliciously used against him. [1928:254]

Goodsell not only faults the hardness of the American code of morality but points to the inadequacies of the American family in 1928 and to the less than satisfactory physical circumstances associated with this society making a hasty and somewhat inadequate adjustment to urban living. Of the family milieu she writes:

> That the home is not successfully meeting either the demands of society or the deepest needs of its members is evidenced by the prevalence of juvenile delinquency and crime, by outbursts of suicidal mania among youth, by the establishment and spread of child guidance clinics, juvenile courts and the probation system. Unsuccessful functioning of the family is further revealed by the alarming growth of mental and nervous diseases, culminating in nervous breakdowns. [1928:420]

Regarding the difficult physical environment in which American adolescents were force to come of age, Goodsell adds:

> The conditions of modern life in our huge urban centers

> are so complex that both the child and his parents find difficulty in adjusting to them. Homes consist of a few or many rooms on "shelves" of tall apartment houses. They bear not the remotest resemblance to the original homes of man—simple huts in the open, with wide stretches of earth, air, lake and river around them. Although life was laborious in some early societies, it was simple and relatively without strain. At present, both adults and children in our large cities live under conditions of hurry, noise, competition and nervous tension, [ibid.]

PORTRAIT OF A VILLAGE

One source of difference between Mead's publications and the restudy concerns the presentation of data concerning village life in the chapter "A Day in Samoa" in *Coming of Age in Samoa.* Mead's picture of a noisy, busy village with young men shouting to one another as they go to and from the plantations was not observed by me, nor do such actions on the part of young men seem characteristic of a Samoan village, where part of the respect shown to chiefs includes not disturbing them with undue noise. Prohibitions against such noise in the village are well-documented by Kramer (1941:101-102). Nor were Mead's descriptions of the awakening village muting the sound of the breaking surf confirmed by this research. In the morning the village was deathly quiet, and people moved about like shadows, performing their morning tasks. Many times on awakening, the Samoan members of our household were found to have completed many of their chores.

While nearly all of the activities described in Mead's "A Day in Samoa" were witnessed during my five-month stay in Manu'a, not all of them are typical of a single day. Although the compression of typical activities into a typical day is an accepted literary device, it tends to distort perspective on the tempo of village life. After having been immersed in Mead's account, it came as a surprise to find Ta'u not a bustling village, but one almost deserted during the daytime. People went off one by one to their occupations by way of the rear path of the village. One or two girls were observed fishing on the reef, unless the tide was very low, when perhaps a dozen women engaged in the task. Only one house was begun during five months of this research; the bonito boats did not go out a single time; the society of untitled men *(aumaga)* danced for visiting maidens only two or three times; and pigs were cooked only on infrequent ceremonial occasions. Mead's typical day, therefore, presents a composite picture, but one which is not

representative of actual conditions to be encountered on any given day.[2]

THE LIFE CYCLE

In 1930 Keesing recorded that "matters connected with childbirth remain almost entirely in native hands. There are many Samoan woman skilled in midwifery by Samoan methods, though on the whole these are crude and responsible for no small proportion of the mortality among infants and women" (1934:390). In 1954 childbirth took place almost exclusively in either of the two Manu'an dispensaries, where mothers were attended by trained Samoan medical practitioners and nurses. In isolated villages such as Fitiuta, trained nurses delivered children. In rare cases, deliveries were made by midwives who had been authorized for such service by government medical personnel. This development in public health services has without doubt been responsible for the reduction in infant mortality. Government records establish a 100 percent increase in survival of young children in 1954 over 1925-26. Mead wrote that "actual age can never be determined in Samoa" (1928a:263); however, complete records of Manu'an births dating back to 1904 were discovered in the government archives in 1954 and have been utilized here.

In 1925 Mead recorded: "For the birth ... of a baby of high rank, a great feast will be held, and much property given away" (1928a:20). In 1954 the pattern had changed to include feasts for children of untitled fathers, and informants maintained that while a feast was traditionally given for only the first child, the births of all children were celebrated.

Mead reported that the umbilical cord was traditionally buried "under a mulberry tree to ensure her growing up to be industrious at household tasks" (in the case of a girl) or was "thrown into the sea that he [a boy] may be a skilled fisherman" (ibid.). The 1954 practice was to bury the cord near the church to ensure pious qualities in the child.

There has been increasing disregard for the traditional pattern of birthing in the mother's village—government birth records show that in 1926, 77.8 percent of children were born in the village of the mother's family; in 1954 the percentage of matrilocal births had fallen to 56.2 percent indicating that the custom had nearly ceased to exist.

The duration of infant nursing was recorded by Mead to be as long as two or three years, but it was found by others to be approximately one year, and Susan Holmes (1951:14) sets the maximum at twenty months. In *Coming of Age in Samoa,* Mead reported that "food is . . . masticated by the mother and then put

into the baby's mouth on her finger" (1928a:21). This practice was not observed in this restudy, and there is reason to believe that premastication has disappeared in most of Samoa. Susan Holmes records that on the rather isolated island of Manono this type of infant feeding was strongly disparaged by district nurses and had been given up by most Samoan mothers.

Another aspect of child care described by Mead which was not corroborated by this restudy concerns the use of wild orange juice for bathing babies. Mead states that infants were "bathed frequently with the juice of a wild orange and rubbed with cocoanut oil until their skins glisten" (1928a:22). The application of coconut oil is common even today, but the use of juice of the wild orange for bathing was not observed, and informants, when questioned, knew nothing of its use.

Observation of the activities of older children revealed other differences between Mead's account and the restudy. In regard to play activities Mead writes that Samoan children "never make toy houses, nor play house, nor sail toy boats" (ibid.:230). Children were repeatedly observed sailing self-manufactured boats, and Brown records that children constructed toy houses in their play activities (1910:59). In response to my observations about playtime activities Mead wrote

My statement (quoted by Holmes, 1957, p. 219) that: "Samoan children never make toy houses, nor play house nor sail toy boats" was an accurate statement of my very elaborate and careful observations on Ta'u in 1925-1926. I had stated the time and place of observation, but I did use the word Samoan where, of course, Manu'an would have been more accurate. The fact that children constructed toy boats in 1954 is a valuable point, possibly of social change. But after the experience of three restudies of the Manus village of Pere (in 1953,1964, and 1965) I would never again use a negative of this sort. Dr. Schwartz and I have estimated that it might take continuous observation over thirty years to exhaust a repertoire of small, sporadically used customs, many items of which informants would completely disown for most of that period. Only comparative work over a very long period, in different villages, makes it possible to establish even the knowledge, to say nothing of the practice of episodic activities like children's games. [1969:225] Shortly before puberty the Samoan boy submits himself to circumcision. Although Mead's accounts maintain that "always an even number of boys went together to be circumcised" (1930:41), Turner states "two or three would unite and go" (1884:81), and Kramer records that the number can be five (1941:104). While Kramer and Turner deal mostly with Western Samoa, Manu'an informants consulted also failed to confirm Mead's statement.

In the discussion of adolescent sex activity and courtship, Mead reports that a girl's first partner in sexual relations was usually a much older man (1928a:88). Impressions gained in this restudy pointed rather to school mates and boys of the girl's own age as initial partners in sexual activity. Mead further states that the conventionalized designation for clandestine meetings of young people after dark is "under the palm trees" (ibid.:92), but informants consulted in the restudy never had heard of this and maintained that the correct phrase was "go to meet the girl" *(alu i le teine).*[3]

The intermediary is an important figure in all courtship activities. Mead records that "if marriage results from his ambassadorship, he receives a specially fine present from the bridegroom (ibid.:90). Informants stated that this was not the custom, and was not observed during the restudy.

LANGUAGE

Differences were also found in the use of greetings or salutations. Mead describes Ta'u villagers going to the beach in the morning shouting *Talofa! Talofa!* to one another (1928a:14). The greeting *Talofa,* which means "hello" in Samoan, was never used in greeting a member of the same village. It was rather used for strangers or Europeans, while fellow-villagers used other forms of greeting among themselves. If they did exchange greetings, all Ta'u women and untitled men would say *ua e sau* (you are coming) while titled men would greet each other in the morning with *sautia mai* (you come with the dew).

The accounts of Mead and the restudy also vary in regard to the recording of a number of proper names and terms, notably the follow

ing:

Mead	*Restudy*	*Meaning*	*Corroboration of restudy found in*
Lapui	La'apui	'Fitiuta Chief'	Kramer (1941)
Sae	Sai	'Ofu chief'	Kramer
Tuleisu	Tuileisu	'supernatural channel guardian'	Kramer
Malemu	Malemo	'Olosega chief'	Kramer
Talolo	Ta'alolo	'food giving ceremony'	Grattan (1948) & Pratt (1862)
Laloga	Lalaga	'to weave'	Pratt
Mapu	Maupu	'division of Fitiuta chiefs'	Churchill (n.d.)
Vaitoilau	Vaito'elau	'west wind' or name of fono	Kramer
Ali	Ale	'Fitiuta chief'	Churchill
Taapi	Ta'ape	'Olosega chief	Churchill
Salaese	Salelesi	'Upolu jester'	Kramer
Fa'ava	Faiava	'to marry'	Pratt

While I am certain that Margaret Mead had some competence in using the Samoan language some of the above may be due to an unfamiliarity with nuances in the language such as her ignoring the glottal stop in La'apui and Ta'aTolo (which is not always easy to hear in conversation) or it may be due to carelessness in recording. The dedication in Mead's book *Coming of Age in Samoa* is to the girls of Ta'u village and is in Samoan but unfortunately it contains numerous language errors. While Mead may not have been completely fluent in the language, I know that she could communicate effectively since I have heard her use the language in conversations with Samoan speakers.

KINSHIP

Considerations of social organization reveal that Mead's section on kinship terminology in *Social Organization ofManua* records that *tamasa* (sacred child), designating sister's child, was "known in Manu'a but not in use" (1930:131). I found *tamasa* the most common term used to designate this relationship. Other differences between Mead's and my own presentation of kinship terminology results primarily from the greater number of kinship terms and reciprocals recorded in the restudy.

There is an informal and formal set of kinship terms used in reference, the former used within the family, being classificatory; the latter, used to make relationships precise to outsiders, descriptive. In direct address only personal names are used, except for a *matai* who is always referred to by his titled name,

his personal name being used only to distinguish one title holder from another.

Classificatory

Within the family the following set of terms is used when referring to family members. Ego refers to all men of his father's or grandfather's generation as *tama* (father), and to all women of his mother's or grandmother's generation as *tina* (mother). All men and women of the father's generation refer to ego as either *atali'i* (son) or *afafine* (daughter). All males of male ego's generation are referred to as *uso* (sibling of the same sex), and all females as *tuafafine* (sibling of the opposite sex, male speaking). All females of female ego's generation are referred to as *uso* (sibling of the same sex), and all males are referred to as *tuagane* (sibling of the opposite sex, female speaking).

Descriptive

The following is a list of the more formal terms used to make relationship references prescise when speaking with persons outside the family (m.s. = man speaking, and w.s. = woman speaking). Terms which corroborate those recorded by Margaret Mead in *Social Organization of Manua* are indicated by an asterisk. Discrepancies are footnoted. Mead's list was somewhat incomplete.

1. *tamā moni*—blood father (m.s. and w.s.).*
2. *tama moni*—own child (m.s. and w.s.).*
3. *atali'i*—son (m.s.).
4. *afafine*—daughter (m.s.).
5. *tamā fai*—adopted father (m.s. and w.s.).*

6. *tama fai*—adopted child (m.s. and w.s).*
7. *atali'i fai*—adopted son (m.s.).
8. *afafine fai*—adopted daughter (m.s.).
9. *tinā moni*—blood mother (m.s. and w.s.).*
10. *tamatama*—son (w.s.).[1]
11. *tama teine*—daughter (w.s.).[2]
12. *tinā fai*—adopted mother (m.s. and w.s).*
13. *tamatama fai*—adopted son (w.s.).
14. *tama teine fai*—adopted daughter (w.s.).
15. *uso*—brother (m.s.).*
16. *tuagane*—brother (w.s.).*
17. *tuafafine*—sister (m.s.).*
18. *uso*—sister (w.s.).*
19. *'o lo'u uso matua*—older brother (m.s.).*
20. *'o lo'u tuagane matua*—older brother (w.s.).*
21. *'o lo'u tuafafine matua*—older sister (m.s.).
22. *'o lo'u uso matua*—older sister (w.s.).
23. *'o lo'u uso laititi*—younger brother (m.s.).*
24. *'o lo'u uso laititi*—younger sister (w.s.).*
25. *usa tinā*—much older sister (w.s.).*
26. *tamā o lo'u tamā*—father's father (m.s. and w.s.).
27. *atali'i o lo'u atali'i*—son's son (m.s.).*
28. *afafine o lo'u atali'i*—son's daughter (m.s.).*
29. *tinā o lo'u tamā*—father's mother (m.s. and w.s.).
30. *o le atali'i a la'u tama*—son's son (w.s.).
31. *o le afafine a la'u tama*—son's daughter (w.s.).
32. *tamā o lo'u tinā*—mother's father (m.s. and w.s.).
33. *tama a lo'u afafine*—daughter's son (m.s.).*
34. *tama a lo'u afafine*—daughter's daughter (m.s.).*
35. *tinā o lo'u tinā*—mother's mother (m.s. and w.s.).
36. *tama a la'u tama*—daughter's son or daughter (w.s.).[3]
37. *tamāfai*—father's brother (m.s. and w.s.).
38. *atali'ifai*—brother's son (m.s.).
39. *afafinefai*—brother's daughter (m.s.).
40. *tamāfai*—mother's brother (m.s. and w.s.).
41. *atali'ifai*—sister's son (m.s.).
42. *afafinefai*—sister's daughter (m.s.).
43. *usotinā*—mother's sister (m.s. and w.s.).
44. *tei*—sister's son (w.s.).
45. *tuafafinetamā*—father's sister (m.s. and w.s.).
46. *tei*—brother's son (w.s.).
47. *tei*—brother's daughter (w.s.).
48. *atali'i o le uso o lo'u tamā*—father's brother's son (m.s. and w.s.).*
49. *afafine o le uso o lo'u tamā*—father's brother's daughter (m.s. and w.s.).*
50. *atali'i o le tuagane o lo'u tinā*—mother's brother's son (m.s. and w.s.).
51. *afafine o le tuagane o lo'u tinā*—mother's brother's daughter (m.s. and w.s.).
52. *toalua*—spouse (m.s. and w.s.).*
53. *tane*—husband.
54. *avā*—wife.
55. *to'alua a le uso a lo'u tamā*—father's brother's wife (m.s. and w.s.).
56. *atali'i o le uso o lo'u to'alua*—husband's brother's son (w.s.).
57. *afafine o le uso o lo'u to'alua*—husband's brother's daughter (w.s.).
58. *tane a le tuafafine o lo'u tamā*—father's sister's husband (m.s. and w.s.).

59. *afafine o le tuagane o lo'u to'alua*—wife's brother's daughter (m.s.).
60. *atali'i o le tuagane o lo'u to'alua*—wife's brother's son (m.s.).
61. *to'alua o le tuagane o lo'u tinā*—mother's brother's wife (m.s. and w.s.).
62. *tama a le tuafafine a la'u tane*—husband's sister's son (w.s.).
63. *tama a le tuafafine a la'u tane*—husband's sister's daughter (w.s.).
64. *'o le tamā o la'u tane*—father-in-law (w.s.).*
65. *'o le tamā o la'u avā*—father-in-law (m.s.).*
66. *'o le tinā o la'u tane*—mother-in-law (w.s.).*
67. *'o le tinā o la'u avā*—mother-in-law (m.s.).*
68. *tuagane o lo'u to'alua*—wife's brother (m.s.).
69. *tane a lo'u tuafafine*—sister's husband (m.s.).
70. *uso o lo'u to'alua*—wife's sister (m.s.).
71. *tane a lo'u uso*—sister's husband (w.s.).
72. *uso o la'u tane*—husband's brother (w.s.).
73. *to'alua o lo'u uso*—brother's wife (m.s.).
74. *tuafafine o la'u tane*—husband's sister (w.s.).
75. *to'alua o lo'u tuagane*—brother's wife (w.s.).

76. *to'alua o le uso o la'u tane*—
husband's brother's wife (w.s.).

77. *to'alua o le tuagane o lo'u to'alua*—
wife's brother's wife (m.s.).

78. *tane a le tuafafine a la'u tane*— husband's sister's husband (w.s.).

79. *tane a le uso o lo'u to'alua*—wife's sister's husband (m.s.).

80. *tane a le tuafafine a la'u tane*— husband's sister's husband (w.s.).

81. *tane a le uso o lo'u to'alua*—wife's sister's husband (m.s.).

General Kinship Terms

82. ulu matua—oldest son.[4]

83. *tausoga*—half brothers or sisters.[5]

A brother refers to a brother with a different mother but the same father as *usoilama* or *tausogaitama.*

A brother refers to a sister with a different mother but the same father as *tuafafineitama* or *tausogaitama.*

84. *ga'au*—all the children of a union.[6]

[1] Mead recorded *tama tane*

[2] Mead recorded *tama fafine*

[3] Mead recorded *'o le tama o si'au tama* [4]Mead and Kramer recorded "first born." [5]Mead and Pratt recorded *uso taufeagai*

[6]Mead recorded "only child."

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

A large share of the differences between Mead's accounts and those of my restudy which are not readily attributed to change are factual inaccuracies on Mead's part in the sphere of political organization, particularly those having to do with political alignments and relative statuses of chiefs.

The twin villages of Si'ufaga and Luma, collectively known as Ta'u, boast two sets of High Chiefs, the "cluster of chiefs" *(-pupuali'i)* and the "brother chiefs" *(usoali'i).* The former, located in Si'ufaga, look to Lefiti as their paramount chief, while the latter, located in Luma, claim Soatoa as its highest chief. Concerning

the personnel of these groups, Mead states that Lefiti is no longer an *usoali'i*, but detailed investigation of this point shows that he never was an *usoali'i.* Tradition has it that the "cluster of chiefs" *(pupuali'i)* division and the Lefiti title as its head was established by Tuimanu'a Salofi, the twenty-fifth Tuimanu'a. Calculating on the basis of the usual twenty-five years per generation, the genealogy of Manu'an kings places Salofi's reign at about 1650. Accordingly, Lefiti had been a member of the "cluster of chiefs" for about three hundred years when the title was first created. Six titles are recognized to be members of this "cluster of chiefs": Lefiti, Moliga, Fua, Fasua, Leasau, and Nua. Although Mead states (1930:194) that the title Fua had been dropped from the list, all informants consulted gave six titles as comprising the group. The title Fua (or Ali'ifua) was not occupied in 1954, but it is officially recorded with the government, and the man who last held it died in approximately 1947.

Mead reports that the "brother chiefs" *(usoali'i)* of Ta'u village are a group of lesser officials who sat in the "unnamed, undistinguished section" (ibid.) of the *fono.* Elderly informants who served under the Tuimanu'a regime maintain that the posts on the right of the King were those of the "brother chiefs," and those on the left, those of the "cluster of chiefs." Distinguishing one group as superior does not seem justified from observations of the council in session, or by the fact that the post of the King is today occupied by either Lefiti or Soatoa. Each of the two groups is honored in its own section of Ta'u village, and there is no indication of one being superior to the other when they meet in the village councils.

Mead also says that two of the "brother chiefs," Levao and Faaee, had the right to function as both High Chiefs and Talking Chiefs *(tulafale ali'i)* (ibid.). Informants Soatoa, Su'afo'a, and Hi insisted that the title Levao did not carry that power, and none of the chiefs of Ta'u village had ever heard of any such title as Faaee. A subsequent perusal of government records, where all recognized titles must be recorded, revealed that there had never been such a title in Ta'u village during the period that registry of titles was required, 19081954. It was generally agreed that the only High Chief-Talking Chief *(tulafale ali'i)* who has ever functioned in the Ta'u council was Asoao, a High Chief of Faleasao, an adjacent village which occasionally met with the Ta'u village council.

Mead's section on Ta'u village organization lists official *taupou* and *manaia* titles for the Lefiti and Soatoa families which are different from the traditionally recognized Ta'u titles of Samalaulu and Silia. Although no *manaia* title except Silia appears in any of the early literature, Mead reports the *manaia* of Lefiti to

be Timale and that of Soatoa to be Vaimagalo. Extensive discussion of this point with village chiefs established that Timale was never a Si'ufaga *manaia* title, but rather the personal name of a boy of the Lefiti family who in the 1920s headed the village *aumaga* by virtue of his family head's paramount title; as *aumaga* leader he was referred to ceremonially as Silia. The title Vaimagalo is an honorific one shared by Soatoa himself and Galea'i of Fitiuta and refers to their function as peacemakers between the villages of Ta'u and Fitiuta. Mead further states that the title Vaimagalo was shared by Lefiti. However, the sanctions supporting the Vaimagalo relationship concern the myth describing the stealing of the Tuimanu'a crown from Fituita and the establishment of the throne of Manu'a in Ta'u village, and thus reach back into Manu'an oral history to a period when the title Lefiti had not yet been created.

In describing the paramountcy of the Tufele title Mead holds that the term *Afioga* was used before Tufele's name, *Afioga* is a courtesy term corresponding to "His Majesty," and should be used only for a very high chief or King. While "Afioga Tufele" appears in Mead's version of the Fitiuta courtesy titles, it is not found in Kramer's version of these titles recorded in 1902. In Kramer's accounts the term *Afioga* appears only in connection with the King of Manu'a (Tuimanu'a), and Churchill writes, ". . . in Manu'a there is but one *Afioga* and this is Tuimanu'a" (Churchill n.d.:1020).

Fitiuta

The relative status of the two top High Chiefs in the village of Fitiuta was a very controversial subject in 1954, and I believe that Mead's data in regard to this situation are open to question. Since the removal of High Chief Tufele from the Manu'an District governorship in 1948 there has been a decline in the prestige of the once paramount Tufele title and a corresponding rise in that of the Galea'i title. This was prompted by Tufele's fall from power, coupled with the strong personality of Galea'i who held the important government position of Manu'a copra agent in 1954.

Although Mead records that there has been "an unquestioning acceptance of the Tufele title as having been the high title of Fitiuta for hundreds of years" (1930:197), there is reason to believe that the Galea'i title is traditionally one of the highest on the island of Ta'u (Williamson 1924:49), and very likely the highest in Fitiuta. But due to various circumstances his prestige has long been overshadowed by that of Tufele. After the removal of Tufele from the district governorship the position was awarded to Lefiti, now the paramount chief of Ta'u village, but because of his lack of leadership qualities he has never attained

the status of the Tufele title holders.

It is only fair to reveal, however, that Mead, after reading statements in my restudy concerning relative ranks of chiefs, responded as follows:

> Reliance on Samoan informants, either in the 19th century or the 20th century to establish such matters as relative rank of titles and the various prerequisites and prerogatives of rank, seems to me, in the light of all the Samoan materials, unjustified. In 1926 informants did not even agree when they were selected from different neighboring villages, and inquiries on Tutuila provided quite different *fa'alupega* for Manu'a from those provided by contemporary Manu'ans. [1969:224]

Other Political Issues

Mead reports that one family head had his title taken from him because he was too old, but informants insisted in 1954 that titles are never taken from an individual because of old age. A thorough investigation of this point was made, but informants maintained that families could remove a title only if its holder was excessively cruel or if he was absent from the family for an extended period. Court files of title disputes confirmed their statements.

Considerations of the society of untitled men *(aumaga)* also illuminated differences in the two accounts. According to Mead, "When a boy is old enough to enter the *aumaga,* the head of his household either sends a present of food to the group, announcing the addition of the boy to the number, or takes him to a house where they are meeting and lays down a great kava root as a present" (1928:76). It was found that chiefs seldom visit meetings of the untitled men's society, and that although a young man must bring a present of food to his initial *aumaga* meeting, it is his own gift and not that of the *matai,* and that the presentation of the kava root is made to the village council rather than to the untitled men's society. The *matai* accompanies the boy to the village council and presents the kava root so that his son will have village recognition when he joins the group of untitled men. Kava is recognized as a chief's drink only, and kava drinking in groups of untitled men is rare. It is not surprising, however, that such minor inaccuracies appear in Mead's account, as the group excludes women from its regular sessions, and information of this type would have to be obtained exclusively from interview.

Discrepancies between what I found and what Mead recorded in regard to village political structure and relative ranks of chiefs indicate, I believe, the great difficulty Mead encountered in trying to establish rapport with the titled ranks. Because she was a young woman, she was not permitted to attend official village council meetings, and judging from my own difficulties in gathering traditional data of a political nature, the chiefs probably did not consider it worth their time to reveal relatively esoteric and complicated information to a young woman who was spending most of her time associating with teenage Samoan girls. While I was perceived as a person of chiefly status because of my university affiliation, my marital status (married with a child) and the fact that I was male, I still found investigation of political matters laden with pitfalls. I had the advantage, of course, of being in a position of checking on an earlier investigator and therefore being able to immediately identify problem areas by the different facts that were presented to me, and this signaled a need for more intensive investigation utilizing many informants or even government records if possible. It is also only fair to remind the reader that Franz Boas specifically recommended that Mead not produce a general ethnography of Samoa but to investigate a specific problem area—the trauma (or lack of it) associated with adolescence. *Social Organization of Manua* is therefore by Mead's own admission a "by-product, an extra dividend" (1969:228) of her Samoan experience. This is the only work in which she describes particular village structures and hierarchies.

ETHOS

While my restudy tends to confirm Mead's general thesis that it was (in 1925-26) easier to come of age in Samoa than in the United States and that the difference could be explained in terms of different cultural environments, there were also some interpretations by Mead that I could not support. These areas of disagreement might best be labeled quarrels over ethos, i.e., value dispositions.

Those aspects of Samoan behavior and ideology that Mead and I interpret differently are:

1. Amount of "specialized feeling" in Samoan human relations
2. Degree of crisis in human relations
3. Competitive spirit
4. Sex activity data
5. The *mafaufau* concept

Mead's statements concerning a relative "lack of specialized feeling" which

results from "diffusion of affection in the household" (1928a:210) were confirmed in parent-child relations and have previously been cited as a factor in the lack of psychological disturbance in adolescents. While this is valid with regard to parent-child relationships, Mead's extension of the "lack of specialized feeling" to relationships between lovers and between spouses was not confirmed by personal observation. Such statements as "The Samoan girl never tastes the rewards of romantic love as we know it" (I928a:211), "Marriage was regarded as a social-economic matter, seldom grounded upon special affection" (1930:44), or "casual sex relations carry no onus of strong attachment, . . . the marriage of convenience dictated by economic and social considerations is easily born and casually broken without strong emotion" (1928:210), seem to be generalizations which overlook many important exceptions.

Custom dictates that displays of affection between spouses and between lovers not take place in public, but expressions of love and affection were often observed in the families of informants, and many of these same people spoke of feelings for their wives that involved much more emotional depth than mere compatibility or economic convenience. The folklore of Manu'a contains notable examples of fidelity and expressions of deep emotional attachment between spouses and between lovers. One example is found in the saying *0 k ua na fua mai i Manu'a* (The rain comes from Manu'a') which explains the ubiquitous rain clouds over Manu'a as the tears of a wife forcibly separated from her husband.

Mead's statement that romantic love does not exist in Samoa (ibid. :211) overlooks those cases of extreme attachment for a particular husband, wife or sweetheart which end in suicide. Informants reported that in about 1951 a girl of the Tauala family of Ta'u ate poisonous seaweed *(matamalu)* because she could not marry the man she desired. Copp presents a similar incident. His principal character in *Samoan Dance of Life* recounts,

> My Auntie died because she ate some *matamalu.* This is like a red jelly and it spreads across some of the coral under the water . . . We think she did it because she was jealous. We heard stories that her husband was making sexes with village girls. 11950:30]

Another instance of this was encountered in Tutuila in September 1954, when a young woman, formerly of Manu'a, was brought into the hospital after having eaten *matamalu.* She informed the attending staff that she had attempted suicide because she had heard that her husband was unfaithful to her, and she did not

care to live under such conditions.[4]

Closely related to her concept of "lack of specialized feeling" in human relationships are Mead's statements concerning the lack of crisis and deep conviction in Manu'an culture. In *Coming of Age in Samoa* Mead writes "Samoa is a place where no one plays for very high stakes, no one pays very heavy prices, no one suffers for his convictions or fights to the death for special ends" (1928a:198). Many family problems, of course may be worked out simply—a child can run to the home of another relative; a quarreling husband and wife can separate—but not all Samoan problems are so easily solved. The records of suicides because of an unfaithful spouse or unrequited love, and instances of violence arising from religious intolerance do not quite confirm Mead's view.

An incident that occurred in Manu'a in October 1954 illustrates the Samoan capacity for strong feeling. A man trying to take his child out of the home of his estranged wife and back to Tutuila was driven off by the woman with drawn knives and a gun. Serious conflicts between villages are infrequent but not unusual. Government anthropologists in Tutuila have been summoned in the middle of the night to settle differences between two outlying villages before violence begins.

Mead's statement that "To go faster than one's age mates or one's fellows of equal rank, is unforgivable" could not be confirmed. Ability in formal education is always acclaimed, and the educational achievements of a child are celebrated on a small scale within the family. As early as 1934, Keesing recorded, "Still another typical characteristic emerging in schooling is the competitive spirit" (1934:436). This spirit of competition in educational affairs is definitely subject to change, but competitive behavior and efforts to gain praise through excelling one's peers is believed to be one of the traditional aspects of Samoan culture.

It was a common experience to have the best carpenter, the best coxswain, and the best dancer pointed out and praised for their ability. Mead herself says that in learning to dance "The little children are put out upon the floor with a minimum of preliminary instruction. The child who performed best at the last party is hauled forward at the next. This tendency to give the talented child another and another chance is affected somewhat by rivalry between relatives who wish to thrust their little ones forward" (1928a:112).

Moreover, the whole pattern of oratory is based upon a competition between Talking Chiefs in order to win prestige both for the orator and for the village or family he represents. Very early in this restudy, informants of the village of Ta'u

pointed out a young man who, despite his youth, was the best orator in the village. Several of his stirring orations were later heard. Because of his brilliance in oratory, this young man, although only a third rank Talking Chief, represented his village in place of the High Talking Chief in all matters of high ceremony. According to Mead's interpretation such a man should have been labeled *tautala* (presuming above one's age). However, the phrase is only used to describe an individual who represents himself as capable of something that is beyond his ability.

As noted earlier, rank is of utmost importance, and many chiefs twist and fabricate legends in order to raise their position within the hierarchy of chiefs. In view of Mead's long discussions of competitiveness in the village political organization of Manu'a, it is surprising to find that she characterizes Manu'an culture as one where competition is disparaged and played down. Rank and prestige constitute the focal point of Samoan culture, to which all other aspects of life are secondary in importance. Every installation, wedding, and funeral of a chief affords an opportunity to gain prestige and raise one's relative position within the village through the display of wealth.

While I became aware that there were some angry parents and *matai* when a female relative became pregnant out of wedlock, I also was aware that there was a goodly number of illegitimate children in the village who suffered no stigma because of their birth status. I knew that *matai* were often fined by the village council when an unmarried family member delivered a child, but I also had been present at beach gatherings of young people and had observed them slipping off two by two to enjoy the romance of a moonlit night under the palm trees. In comparison to other Polynesian peoples I found Samoans very conservative in regard to sex—at least in regard to talking about it. While I had trouble getting my Samoan informants—even close friends—to talk about sex my colleagues who have worked in Eastern Polynesia maintain they had trouble getting informants to stop talking about sex. While Samoan society certainly did not sanction sex outside of marriage, I did not find Samoan young people puritanical or sexually inhibited.

Finally, because of the importance Mead places upon the concept of *mafaufau,* the meaning of this term was thoroughly investigated. She states,

> Individuals are said to have *mafaufau* (judgment) or lack of it. Judgment is a quality which Samoans conceive to develop just as skill in swimming or facility with oratorical

> phrases must be developed. The child is born without it and as the social pattern impinges more and more upon its developing consciousness, it acquires judgment—judgment about etiquette about matters of sex, about participation in group activities. [1930:81]

Informants with whom this term was discussed did not consider it an overly important aspect of individual behavior, and their answers concerning it were hazy, and not specific. Many were not certain that *mafaufau* should be translated "judgment" at all, replying that it meant merely "to think." This is the translation that appears in Downs' (1942) dictionary *Everyday Samoan.* The Samoan Bible, which serves as perhaps as good a Samoan dictionary as can be found, equates the word with "to meditate" and in II Chronicles 30:22, with "skill."[5]

"Judgment" in the passage "teach me good judgment and knowledge" *(Psalms* 119:66) is translated as *fa'autauta.* Actually, *mafaufau* is a verb rather than a noun.

MEAD'S RESPONSE

When my dissertation was completed and I had received my doctorate in anthropology from Northwestern University, I sent Mead a copy of the paper I had developed for presentation at an annual professional meeting. This paper, based on my dissertation, summarized the discrepancies and confirmation I had arrived at in my restudy of Samoan behavior and ethos. The paper also included statements that I believed explained many of our differences. I had long considered Oscar Lewis's criticism of Robert Redfield's work (after Redfield's death) unethical and counterproductive, and I did not want to be accused of the same kind of behavior in regard to Mead's work. After digesting the discussions of the methodology and the differences in data and their interpretation which constituted the restudy, Mead was at first extremely hostile. But in time she tempered her opinion and on several occasions we conferred at some length about Samoan culture at annual professional meetings and at a daylong session at Wichita State University during the early 1960s. Her general attitude toward my study and toward restudies in general was clearly spelled out in a letter to George N. Appell (a student of Derek Freeman's) in 1968 and in a special chapter titled "Conclusion 1969" which was appended to the second edition of *Social Organization of Manua* published by the Bernice R Bishop Museum in 1969. The letter to Appell, a copy of which was sent to me, read as follows:

> I would say that the best person to do a restudy—where the aim is to add scientific knowledge of a culture—is the person who did the original study. No restudy is any better than the original study—in its restudy aspects.
>
> I believe that if the main aim is method, rather than ethnographic content—and I am not sure that devoting a whole field trip to the criticism of inevitably outgrown methods is worth it—then it should be done entirely blind, but with a courteous letter to the original field worker stating the new field worker's intention. This should not be complicated by requests for help, unless a new design is made. I consider Lowell Holmes' restudy design, taking the older material on Ta'u, Samoa and his own and bracketing my field work in between, was a most ingenious one, and one that might well be replicated.
>
> I consider the sort of thing that Oscar Lewis did in Tepoztlan in criticism of Redfield's work, was wasteful, breaking the first requirement that a restudy should be based on what the original field worker did do, not on what he didn't.
>
> Anthropologists should be trained to be able to resist mythology, white folklore and nativistic vilification of their colleagues who have worked in the same field in the past. This is becoming a more important issue all the time.
>
> I have had no direct contact with Derek Freeman's work as he seems to regard statements made 44 years after an event as more accurate than mine—using the fact that I deliberately altered details to give anonymity as an indication of inaccuracy.

Margaret Mead's final chapter in the reissue of *Social Organization of Manua* in 1969 was essentially a set of "reflections" on later theoretical work on the Samoans by Derek Freeman, Melvin Ember, Gloria Cooper, and me. Her responses to my restudy include the following statements:

> Since Lowell Holmes constructed his doctoral dissertation

> (1957) as a restudy of work done by Buck and myself, it would be churlish not to comment upon it. His methodology device was ingenious; the search of the literature and old government documents to establish a 19th century base, his own observations and inquiries in 1954, informed, of course, by both the 19th century materials and the materials of the 1920's, with the degree of agreement between his observations and the 19th century records serving as a test of reliability of observations made in between. Ingenious as this method was, reliance on Samoan informants, either in the 19th century or the 20th century to establish such matters as relative rank of titles and the various prerequisites and prerogatives of rank, seems to me, in the light of all the Samoan materials, unjustified. [1969: 233-224]

In regard to the personal equation, i.e., the status of the observer and its effect on rapport, Mead commented:

> Holmes also comments on the disadvantages of a woman's attempting to study Samoan political organization and on the fact that I must have relied on informants. I did, of course, completely rely on informants; I have repeatedly documented my disapproval of members of either sex altering their sex role in studying a culture. What I assembled was the formal ethnography which could be obtained from informants—who often gave constructs of what should have been the case without even any reference to what was claimed by other informants—plus the observations on the ethos of formal gatherings to which I had access, in visiting other villages, I had the status of a visiting *taupou*, a status which by definition, I never could have in Ta'u. [1969:224-225]

In regard to the matter of Samoan mildness and the manner in which Samoans responded to insults and interpersonal crises, Mead commented:

> Holmes' questions about ethos raise a question about Samoan character which I have found to be least well ac-

> counted for by any of my Manu'an field research; this is the violence with which Samoans respond to certain kinds of insult. Holmes discusses the suicide of a girl who was not permitted to marry the man she desired as a matter of romantic love and also cites Copp's book (1950) which I felt, when I read it, was out of key with the material I had collected. . . . There was also the whole question of the virginity of the *taupou* and other girls of rank, and the savagery with which earlier reports said delinquents had been punished. The kind of absolutism which severely punished a girl who was revealed at her defloration ceremony not to be a virgin seemed incompatible with the mildness and low affect of the people as I knew them.
>
> There is a serious problem of reconciling these contradictions between the mildness, the willingness to gloss over and compromise, which I found in Manu'a and other records of historical and contemporary behavior. I see, at present, only two possibilities. Manu'a in 1925 might have represented a special variation on the Samoan pattern, a temporary felicitous relaxation of the quarrels and rivalries, the sensitivity to slight and insults, and the use of girls as pawns in male rivalries.
>
> The other possibility is that to the young girl, herself either a virgin but not a *taupou*, or experimenting quietly with lovers of her own choosing, uninvolved in the rivalries that were related to rank and prestige, moving gently, unhurriedly toward adulthood, the preoccupations of the whole society may have seemed more remote than they would have appeared from any other vantage point. And this is the vantage point from which I saw it. [1969:226-228]

Recalling the strong identification she made with the adolescent girls of her study, the fact that she was alone and therefore highly dependent on their friendship and the fact that she was about their size and looked about their age, Margaret Mead suggests that perhaps her close rapport with her subjects distorted her perspective on the greater society—particularly certain aspects of its overall ethos. She concludes the chapter with the challenge that ironically

sent me to study her work in the first place. She writes, "We have too few cases where we can compare the consequences of sex, age, and temperament in the observation stance of any observer" (1969:228). Stating that *Social Organization of Manua* was really a byproduct of her adolescent girl study, Mead labels it "an extra dividend" which "after forty years makes it possible to read new materials on Samoa with enthusiastic interest." "Hopefully," she writes, "we will soon have some sophisticated microcultural studies: Gloria Cooper's on paralinguistics [which has never been published]; and Derek Freeman's proposed intensive attention to early experience" (1969:228).

But of course we now know that Freeman did not go to Samoa to study "early experience" of Samoan children but to study the competency of Margaret Mead as a fieldworker and as a theorist whose "absolute cultural determinism" would render, for his purposes, her conclusions unacceptable.

NINE

Psychometric Assessment

In a paper in Francis Hsu's *Psychological Anthropology* (1972), Donald Campbell writes about my restudy of Margaret Mead's Samoan research:

> [It] is quite conceivable that there are some aspects of culture, including its overall pattern or ethos, that are so abstract or indirectly inferred that intersubjective verifiability is lost. If this is so, then until corrected, these aspects cannot become a part of science, and we, as scientists, should concentrate on those aspects upon which we can get agreement ... If, as Mead has said, "in the matter of ethos, the surest and most perfect instrument of understanding is our own emotional response" (Mead and McGregor 1951:300), and if agreement in such emotional response is lacking, or can be disparaged as merely a shared ethnocentric reaction to a novel culture, then ethos may indeed be beyond the realm of scientific study. This lack of intersubjective verifiability is not inevitable however. Its presence or absence should be studied in Mead's own terms, with the precaution of involving observing anthropologists from differing cultures. It is also possible that science can make explicit the existence of abstract general themes in culture through formal combinatorial analysis of more concrete data. [1972:444]

Much of the difficulty concerning the "true" or "real" character and ethos of Samoan society involves a somewhat subjective analysis of situational behavior as observed or as it is described in the literature. With no scientifically reliable methods for measurement or observation as might be found in the hard sciences, ethnocentrism and personal bias are highly likely to influence the observer's descriptions of temperament and normative behavior.

Keesing (1934) describes the ethnocentrism which has dominated the white man's perceptions of Samoan character from the very beginning. He writes:

> The records give many frank statements of what different

> The records give many frank statements of what different whites think of the Samoan faults. . . . These, however, are always evaluations made according to white standards which are very different from those of the Samoan. . . . The Samoan, it is said, is not straightforward; he indulges in "diplomacy" and "intrigue;" he is "cunning" and "ungrateful," and with few exceptions cannot be trusted; he tells what he thinks his hearers want, always willing to please; he deceives freely and cheerfully, making truth or falsehood subject to expediency; ... he is mentally "child-like," yet his savagery is just under the surface and violent passions are easily aroused; he is assertive and boastful, yet a coward except in a crowd; . . . Among outstanding traits, these critics say are the selfishness and jealousy of the Samoans among themselves. [1934:27-28]

It is interesting to note, in the light of the Keesing discussion, that characterizations of Samoans by Derek Freeman in his book *Margaret Mead and Samoa* do not vary a great deal from those of earlier observers whose impressions were highly subjective and markedly different from later more professional observers. Freeman, who admittedly rejects relativistic thought as either a philosophy or as a tool of research, finds Samoans "jealous" (1983:149,156,243), subject to volatile and "uncontrollable anger" (ibid.:219), "ungovernably proud" (ibid.: 156), "maladjusted" and subject to "psychopathological states, suicides, and other violent acts" (ibid.:216), "stubborn" (ibid.:222), extremely competitive, to the point of physical violence (ibid.: 149), prone to lying (ibid.:223, 290), undemocratic (ibid.:274), and obsessed with a desire to demonstrate masculinity through surreptitious *(moetotolo)* or forcible rape (ibid.:245).

Ronald Rose, author of *South Seas Magic* (a book that Freeman selectively quotes from to substantiate his own view of Samoan personality), also notes the ubiquitous conflict between cultural systems and how it affects descriptions and interpretations of indigenous behavior. He writes

> Anthropologists are fond of telling the story of the government official who was asked to report briefly on the manners and customs of the native people in his area. His report said simply: "Manners none, customs beastly."
>
> He, of course, was applying his own standards to the

> He, of course, was applying his own standards to the native people. (If he could have known their judgment of him by their standards he might not have been so supercilious). The trained and experienced field worker suffers the same faults as this administrator—the difference is in degree only, not in kind. No matter how firmly we attempt to discipline ourselves in making judgments on a different culture, our own culture remains as a sort of final determinant. We take over a frame of reference: this is inevitable. We cannot assess people or things without making comparisons.

What we need to realize is that our standard is not necessarily the ideal, that it is, like the many others that exist, a working compromise with life. It is not final and it is not always good. [1959:82]

Descriptions of modal personality traits may also be influenced by the personality of the observer as well as the nature of the cultural system from which he or she comes. It is understandable that some of the anthropologists who have reviewed the Freeman book have stated that they think it tells us more about Freeman than about Samoa, and one wonders if the following statement by Felix and Marie Keesing might explain the great discrepancy between the interpretations of Freeman, a New Zealander now living in Australia, and those of the American observers such as Mead, myself, Bradd Shore, Paul Shankman, Melvin Ember and Martin Orans. The Keesings observe:

> The New Zealander correspondingly tends to be critical of the image which Samoan traits convey to him e.g., the stress on hierarchy, the flair for dramatic display, ceremoniousness, and circumlocution, the emphasis on group-responsibility, with externalized shame-sanction, and suppressive (group-regulating) controls. [1956:305-306]

The Keesings also remind us that the New Zealand administration in Western Samoa has never permitted any Samoan government employee to wear trousers and that "most New Zealanders avoid easy comradely behavior with Samoans, both in and out of government, and keep a considerable social distance" (1956:193). Americans, on the other hand, are described by the Keesings as having less of a colonial mentality. They suggest that the American-Samoan relationships are marked less by a concept of "social distance," and more by a "colleague" relationship.

Given the problem of ethnocentrism, the possibility of varying national attitudes between people like Freeman and American researchers, personal bias, and less-than-precise methods of documentation, a number of interested scientists have turned to psychometric analysis to provide a more scientifically valid and reliable profile of Samoan character.

PERSONALITY STUDIES

Although generally unrecognized, an impressive volume of research in recent years has been devoted to Samoan personality and culture. As a result, it is possible to establish a psychological profile of the Samoan people that is without parallel in Oceania.

At least fifteen "students of personality" have directed their attention to the Samoan culture. They have utilized a broad range of methods: folklore and literature analysis; projective, verbal, and nonverbal testing; observation and interview; controlled laboratory observation; personality inventories; value schedule analysis, among others. The following is a survey of several studies that together, it is hoped, will establish a Samoan personality profile, and throw some light on the Mead/Freeman controversy.

Mead

The earliest anthropological analysis of culture and personality in Samoa, and probably in the whole world, was Mead's problem-oriented study of 30 adolescent girls carried out in Ta'u village, American Samoa, in 1925. Her study involved no psychological testing, although several intelligence tests (color naming, rote memory for digits, digit symbol substitution, word opposites, and ball and field) were administered. Depending mainly on participant observation and interview (including collection of life histories), Mead noted the following as salient influences shaping Samoan juvenile behavior: (1) a lack of deep feeling or involvement between relatives or peers; (2) a liberal attitude toward sex and education; (3) a lack of conflicting alternatives regarding ideology, political doctrine, morality, and occupational choice; and (4) a lack of emphasis on individuality. The Samoan female adolescent was relatively free from tension, emotional conflict, or rebellion; values were strongly situational rather than individualistic. Mead saw Samoans as apathetic and submissive to the aggression of others, unwilling to invest heavily of themselves in any interpersonal relationship, and general casual in their attitude toward life.

Mead discovered that numerous fixed relationships exist (associated with age,

sex, and status) and that these are defined by the social structure. In all these relationships there was an elaborate pattern of appropriate behavior, with little freedom of choice. What choice was possible seemed to be the freedom to reduce interpersonal conflict by fleeing it. Thus, Mead states

> Choice is possible among homes, among teachers, among lovers; but the consciousness of personality, the attitudes necessary to make such choices significant, are lacking. So that the freedom in personal choices operates mainly in reducing the poignancy of personal relations, the elements of conflict, the need for making painful choices. . . . The individual need commit no murder, need not even muster up a fine rage to escape from a disagreeable situation—he simply slips out of it into the house next door. Such a setting does not produce violent, strikingly marked personalities; it is kind to all and does not make sufficient demands upon any. [1928a:494]

Torrance and Johnson

Creativity and original thought was the topic of research conducted by educational psychologists E. Paul Torrance and R. T. Johnson in 1962. Testing the hypothesis that original thinking is associated with cultural discontinuities (in education, sex roles, and independence), the researchers used three verbal and three nonverbal tests (Picture Construction Test, Incomplete Figures Test, and the Circle Test) with a sample of 1000 Western Samoan school children; comparisons were made with similar samples from Australia, Germany, India, and the State of Georgia in the U.S. All samples showed a continuous growth in creativity from the first grade through the sixth, but Samoan children ranked lowest in original thought at all levels. In an effort to explain low creativity scores in Samoa, the investigators pinpointed the following societal values as determinants of Samoan behavior: (1) the emphasis on remembering well; (2) acceptance of authority hierarchies; (3) submission to authority; and (4) doing nothing until told to do so.

Torrance and Johnson's general conclusion was that, to increase Samoan originality, cultural discontinuity must be introduced, but this would have to be done at the risk of producing undue personality conflicts, and making coming of age in Samoa a somewhat more traumatic phenomenon.

Gardner

Louise Gardner (1965) approached Samoan character through interview, observation, and analysis of responses to a modified *Kluckhohn Value Schedule,* and a projective picture test of her own design. Working with 30 children and 30 adults in the Western Samoan village of Gautavai in 1962, she focused particularly on enculturative influences, attempting to understand what attitudes and values were held in common by both children and adults and what values would be likely to change as Samoan children matured. Results of her study were reported in terms of the Florence Kluckhohn categories of Relational, Activity, Time, Man-Nature, and Human Nature orientations.

The Samoan personality profile drawn from her data reveals a people who are present- or future-oriented, prone to see themselves in subjugation to, or in harmony with, nature, and viewing societal members as "good" or "neutral," while seeing outsiders as potentially "evil." Orientations were toward achieving familial (both lineal and collateral) goals and well-being rather than individual satisfaction, and toward "doing" (i.e., accomplishing goals measurable by societal standards) rather than "being" (i.e., spontaneous expression of impulses and desires).

Garsee

Jarrell W. Garsee, a missionary to American Samoa turned social scientist, tested observational generalizations about the nature of Samoan values and behavior with the help of Gordon's Survey of Interpersonal Values, assessing what he considered to be a particularly relevant dimension of Samoan personality—Conformity, Recognition, Independence, and Benevolence. It was Garsee's hypothesis that Samoans would score high on Conformity and Benevolence and low on Recognition and Independence. One hundred thirty-one students (85 boys and 46 girls) in the senior class at the High School of American Samoa were tested in 1965, and tests were compared with respect to differences in sex, academic program (i.e., academic, commercial, or technical), and test language (whether they took an English or a Samoan version).

Garsee contended that the results confirmed his own observations as well as those of a number of other anthropologists. The tests showed Conformity and Benevolence to be most valued, with Recognition valued the least. Comparison with norms for a Japanese college student sample showed Samoans to be relatively similar to them on Recognition, Independence, and Leadership, while comparison with American norms revealed that these are precisely the areas where Samoans and Americans are farthest apart.

Holmes and Blazer

In 1962 I tested 68 senior students (29 female and 39 male) at the High School of American Samoa. The instruments used were the California Test of Personality, the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, and the Rogers Test of Personality Adjustment. The tests were translated into the Samoan language and altered slightly to make them more relevant to Samoan culture. The tests were administered by a Samoan teacher who also provided personal and attitudinal information on each of the subjects. I was aided in the analysis by Leland K.Blazer, who used the material as the basis of a Master's thesis in 1968. Of the three tests, the Edwards test presented a profile which most nearly squared with my impressions gained through long-term participant observation in the culture. All three tests produced data compatible with the view of Samoan personality as summarized by the following characteristics: *Strong tendencies* toward (1) Deference, i.e., doing what is expected and accepting others' leadership; (2) Order, i.e., enjoying organization; (3) Abasement, i.e., being timid in the presence of superiors; and (4) Endurance, i.e., keeping at a job until finished. On the other hand, comparison with American norms revealed Samoans to be *weak in tendencies* toward (1) Autonomy, i.e., being independent of others in decision making, (2) Dominance, i.e., directing the actions of others, (3) Exhibition, i.e., being the center of attention, (4) Aggression, i.e., getting angry or disagreeing with others, (5) Achievement, i.e., doing one's best to be successful, and (6) Heterosexuality, i.e., relating socially and sexually to the opposite sex.

Vinacke

William Vinacke, a psychologist, consulted Mead's publications resulting from her 1925-26 research, Cook's Samoan Rorschach studies, Copp's novel, *Samoan Dance of Life,* Samoan proverbs and folktales, and a number of biased and questionable missionary accounts, in order to arrive at an armchair analysis of Samoan personality. His conclusions, often highly subjective and ethnocentric, were that, by and large, Samoan character is a "remarkably tempered organization" with "few dominant or extreme characteristics" (1968:32).

Hypotheses, which folklore analysis proved "more often correct than erroneous," were that dominant motivation themes in Samoan culture include sex, avoidance of humiliation, abasement, affiliation, deference, succorance, and play. Pronouncing Samoan personality to be essentially flaccid, Vinacke credited three main cultural features as influential: (1) mild pressures and demands imposed upon individuals during development; (2) influences operating at one stage usually being mitigated at another stage of development; and (3) a relatively strong guarantee that needs will be satisfied. He also states that there is

relatively strong guarantee that needs will be satisfied. He also states that there is "little evidence of deep hostility, strong aggressiveness, tearfulness, or anxiety in relations with other persons" (ibid.:21).

Maxwell

Robert J. Maxwell (1969) carried out a twenty-two month research project, inspired by the theories of Hans Eysenck, in the village of Vaitogi, American Samoa, in 1965-66. With a sample of 52 male Samoans he tested, for the first time in a nonindustrial setting, Eysenck's theories concerning extroversion-introversion behavior.

Believing that Samoans are extremely extroverted, but uncertain whether or not extroversion takes the same form in Samoa that it does in other societies, Maxwell's sample was studied for extrovert-introvert characteristics through (1) fellow villager rating, (2) objective tests, e.g., Spiral Aftereffect, Block Sort, and Vigilance Test; (3) questionnaires; (4) projective tests, e.g., "crisis-scene ink drawings"; (5) life-record data; and (6) participant observation.

While Maxwell's Samoan data do not tend to support Eysenck's theories about extrovert-introvert behavior, Maxwell believes his study does support two propositions: (1) that Samoans are, on the whole, an extroverted population; and (2) that Eysenck's theory has cross-cultural generality.

Maxwell acknowledged major methodological errors. These included using questionnaires in a culture where the investigator claims there is a great tendency for prevarication; use of tests of dubious validity; and the lack of controlled conditions, which probably would have been insisted upon in a test of Eysenck's theory in a laboratory. Maxwell characterized the extroverted Samoan (in his opinion, the modal type) as stronger-tempered, more prone to engage in fighting, more sexually active, less temperate, and more likely to steal than introverted Samoans. It was also concluded that extroversion decreases with age.

Holmes and Tollman

The influence of cultural change on Samoan personality (a factor generally ignored by Derek Freeman) may be gleaned from the research of Gary Tallman (a former Wichita State University graduate student) and me. In 1974, high-school students in American Samoa were once again tested with the Edwards and California tests of personality for the purpose of comparison with the 1962 sample (see "Holmes and Blazer" above). The period from 1962 to 1974 had been one of great cultural change. Twenty-six consolidated elementary schools and three high schools were built, and educational and entertainment television was inaugurated at a cost of better than three million dollars. A tourist hotel was

was inaugurated at a cost of better than three million dollars. A tourist hotel was built on the shores of Pago Pago Bay, and airport facilities were improved.

While a tuna fish cannery had been built early in the 1950s, a second cannery was established after 1962, and by 1970 the Samoan labor force processing tuna numbered close to 1,100 people. In addition to this industry, other types of enterprises—a watch factory and a dairy products plant—were drawing more and more Samoans away from subsistence agriculture and into wage labor. By 1970 the wagelabor force in Samoa totaled 4,939, the largest share (3,515) being government employees—teachers, health-service workers, publicworks employees, and clerical workers in a variety of government agencies.

In 1974 the sample consisted of 31 male subjects on the Edwards test and 47 subjects (29 females and 18 males) on the *California* test. The tests were given again in the Samoan language (now a problem for some acculturated Samoans) and administered by a Samoan highschool teacher.

Scores on several of the variables on the Edwards and California tests indicate that the Samoan modal personality was changing in a direction that stressed modern traits more and traditional traits less. In the 1974 sample, the means of the Edwards test variables of *abasement, order, dominance, aggression,* and *heterosexuality* all show independence from the 1962 means, as measured by the *chi-square.* In addition, these and five other variables—*exhibition, autonomy, affiliation, succorance,* and *endurance*—are closer to American norms.

On the California test the variables of *personal adjustment* (a composite score) and *sense of personal worth* show independence between the 1962 and 1974 means, and at the same time are closer to American norms. Eight more —*self-reliance, sense of personal freedom, feeling of belonging, withdrawing tendencies, school relations, nervous symptoms,* and the remaining composite scores, *social adjustment* and *total adjustment*—are closer to the American norms, although there is not an independent difference between the 1962 and 1974 means.

In general, the Samoan scores on the California test have decreased in the area of social relations and increased in the area of personal relations. A similar trend could be inferred from the movement of the Edwards variables. *Abasement* and *order,* traits which were conceivably important in maintaining the traditional society's political and economic processes as mediated through the kinship structure, are lower and closer to the American norms.

Despite this trend toward more Western tendencies, the data also indicate a large degree of persistence of traditional traits in the Samoan personality. While

the aforementioned variables on the Edwards test have moved closer to the American norms, they still remain in nearly the same rank-order of scores. For instance, *abasement* remains the highest score in both the 1962 and 1974 samples, while *dominance* and *aggression* remain in about the same positions at the lower end of the rank order. This is also true of most of the variables on the Edwards test, which we consider the more valid of the two tests. In the case of the *deference* and *nurturance* variables, there is a movement away from the American norms in the 1974 sample.

The Tallman (Holmes, Tallman & Jantz, 1978) analysis established that there had been both change and persistence in the Samoan modal personality in the 12-year period from 1962 to 1974. Change is most likely due to an adaptation to Western influences, since the majority of variables have moved in this direction. The persistence may also be considered a type of adaptation to changing conditions, in which traditional traits have found an increased usefulness in new situations.

The many evaluations of Samoan character, utilizing a great variety of diagnostic tools, produce a profile of Samoans very much at odds with that put forward by Derek Freeman. They are strongly supportive, however, of Margaret Mead's conceptualizations. While there is always the possibility that individual test instruments may not be cross-culturally valid (an objection Freeman has made in personal correspondence with me) it is believed that the personality research described above presents a relatively consistent picture of Samoan behavior and constitutes valuable evidence in establishing a scientific, bias-free representation of Samoan ethos and of Samoan personality proclivities.

Derek Freeman's objections to the lack of cross-cultural validity of the test instruments is amusing in light of his absolutist interpretations of mental illness. In 1962 Freeman strongly criticized M. J. Herskovits when the latter complained that "the terminology of psychopathology has been readily applied to these [West African] states of possession . . . but in these Negro societies the interpretation given behavior under possession—the meaning this experience holds for the people—falls entirely in the realm of understandable, predictable, normal behavior" (1949:67). To this Freeman responded, "To assert . . . that behavior is normal because it is set in a cultural mold, is to say no more than it is shared and accepted by the members of the culture concerned, but dereistic thinking and irrational behavior are not one whit the less dereistic because they happen to be shared and accepted" (1962:273). In other words, one need not take cross-cultural differences in perception into consideration in the interpretation of normal or abnormal behavior. Why then must we reject the findings concerning

personality traits if an instrument developed in one culture is being used to diagnose personality in another?

TEN

Assessing Derek Freeman

THE SAMOAN RESPONSE

While anthropologists usually maintain that the group being studied is perhaps least able to be objective about its own cultural behavior and its motivations, the responses of Samoans to *Margaret Mead and Samoa* are worth consideration. Two weeks after the publication of a review article of Freeman's book in *Newsweek*, Fetaui Mata'afa, wife of the Prime Minister of Western Samoa, responded with a letter to the editor which stated, "Neither Margaret Mead nor Derek Freeman represented our ancient land, its customs or its way of life. Both anthropologists missed the subtlety of behavior in a Samoan. . . .My country is not perfect, but it is neither the permissive society of Margaret Mead nor the polluted populace of Derek Freeman" *(Newsweek,* 28 Feb. 1983). This was followed in the same issue by a letter from Lelei Lelaulu, who bitterly asked: "Are we Samoans now to be known as a nation of sex-starved, suicidal rapists? I much prefer my previous reputation as a free-loving orgiast." He then suggested that anthropologists should come and study the tribal tensions and sexual neuroses on the island where he now lives—Manhattan.

On Febuary 7, 1983 I received a letter from Mulima Afoa of Costa Mesa, California, stating that he had read my book, *Samoan Village* (1974) and Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* and was "delighted" with both, but was "very dismayed and surprised" about what Freeman was saying about Samoans in his new book. He asked how he should go about protesting Freeman's allegations.

Reporters from the *Wall Street Journal* and *Life* magazine apparently convinced their editors that covering the Mead/Freeman controversy required a visit to Ta'u village, and upon arrival they interviewed elderly people who had allegedly been in contact with Mead in 192526. Most of them disagreed with much that Mead had written, although few had actually read *Coming of Age in Samoa.* One man, Napoleone A. Tuiteleapaga, is definitely known to have had close ties with Mead as both informant and interpreter. He is quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* article (14 Apr. 1983) as saying, "Margaret Mead was 100% right in her book." And in an interview in the *Samoa News* (11 Feb. 1983), published in American Samoa, he stated, "She got to know people well and wrote an accurate analysis of what she saw. Why didn't these anthropologists condemn

Mead's book when she was alive? I'll tell you why, they waited until Mead is gone because they knew she knew what she was talking about."

On the other hand, *Life* reporter Elizabeth Owen quotes Le Tagaloa Leota Pita (Western Samoan Parliament member) as stating, "Freeman makes us human, Margaret Mead makes us unreal—angels and puppets" *(Life,* May 1983), and she records United States Congressional Representative Fofo Sunia as saying, "I think Mead went too far— Samoans aren't without troubles—but Freeman is too dark, too simple."

In correspondence with the editor of *Anthropology Newsletter* in April 1984, protesting the treatment his book had received at the business meeting of the annual convention of the American Anthropological Association, Derek Freeman wrote:

> Albert Wendt, the distinguished Samoan scholar, poet and novelist, who is Professor of Pacific Literature in the University of the South Pacific, and whose knowledge of Samoa certainly surpasses that of Professor Holmes, has written *(Pacific Islands Monthly,* April, 1983) that, in his view, my book, is "the most important study" of the Samoans "made this century by a non-Samoan," and has described it as being "a devastating refutation" of the conclusions reached by Margaret Mead in her *Coming of Age in Samoa.*

Wendt, who is generally supportive of the Freeman study, makes what I believe is a very significant comment concerning Freeman's objectivity in relating to Samoans. He writes in *Pacific Islands Monthly:*

> He [Freeman] has a deep love and respect for us. This I think helps to explain his almost obsessive quest to correct what he deems was the wrong Margaret Mead did to us. Perhaps he has not felt at home in his own society, and in understanding us hoped he would find a people to belong to, to champion, to be needed by. The condition of the outsider is one I know well. [1983:12]

Although in the *Anthropology Newsletter* communication Derek Freeman leaves the impression that Wendt is *totally* supportive of his refutation of Mead,

this is not the case. In Wendt's *Pacific Islands Monthly* article, from which Freeman quotes the Samoan novelist as describing *Margaret Mead and Samoa* as the "most important study of Samoans made this century by a non-Samoan," there is also the following observation:

> The easily discernible flaws in Freeman's book stem mainly from its polemical form. To prove Mead wrong, some of his claims tend toward exaggeration and idealisation. (This idealisation is also perhaps the result of his profound trust in us).
>
> For instance, he is correct in stating that we place a great priority on female virginity, we institutionalise it in the *taupou*, we forbid pre-marital and extramarital sex and promiscuity, but institutionalise bravado and machismo.

In sexual matters, Mead erred far too much on the side of free love and promiscuity, while Freeman errs on the side of sexual purity strictness, and abstinence. "Ask the sailors" Freeman says rhetorically. Meaning: sailors know that Samoa is (and was) far from being a promiscuous port. But I know that sailors know that with the right approach and persuasion—the right dollar value—all ports (including Samoa) will open up. Admittedly some ports are easier than others. Even in the 1920s Samoa wasn't anywhere near "all virginity/' as it were. [1983:14]

And in regard to Freeman's statement that Albert Wendt's "knowledge of Samoa certainly surpasses that of Professor Holmes," I would respond that Wendt might very well be more knowledgeable, but perhaps also more biased concerning his own society than someone like myself who has devoted much of his professional career to studying Samoan culture from the perspective of a scientifically trained Outsider. However, the Freeman book is more than just a treatise on Samoa and Samoans; it is a judgment of Mead's methods and of Boasian anthropology in general, and in these areas I believe I exceed both Wendt and Freeman in my knowledge and understanding. In setting up Wendt as an authority Freeman ignores both time and place in believing that a young man born and raised in Western Samoa (who was just finishing his university training in New Zealand a year after my second field trip to Tutuila and Manu'a) has some special knowledge of what happened on the isolated island of Ta'u some 39 years earlier just because he was born a Samoan.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

THE ANTHROPOLOGY COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

Some anthropologists have described the Mead/Freeman controversy as the most important anthropological debate in 100 years. A few have lamented the fact that it has invited indictments of anthropology as a "soft science," while others maintain that it is good for the discipline to review and analyze its theoretical foundations from time to time. The controversy has certainly resulted in considerable heat and perhaps some light. The titles of review articles alone bespeak the amount of ingenuity inspired among anthropologists because of the question. Consider, if you will, the following: "One Man's Mead" *(New York Times Book Review), "A* Controversy on Samoa Comes of Age" *(Science),* "Brouhaha among the Breadfruit" *(Nature),* "The Coming of a Sage to Samoa" *(Natural History),* and "Margaret and the Giant Killer" *(The Sciences).* It is little wonder that anthropologist David Schneider of the University of Chicago, in his review in *Natural History* (June, 1983) writes: "Instead of a scholarly book of significance, the book is now a media event."

It is doubtful if any anthropology book to date has created such a media circus or produced such a media hero. It is also doubtful whether any academic press ever mounted such a campaign of Madison Avenue hype to market its products. Under the circumstances it seems reasonable that David Schneider should muse "I do not know whether the publisher should take the responsibility for this [the manner in which the book has been promoted] or whether the author shares a large part of that responsibility by virtue of the inflammatory statements he has made to the media" (ibid.). And Laura Nader asks, "Why did a university press lend its credibility to a zealous treatise published about 40 years too late with quotes on the dust jacket by well-known men who could not adequately judge the book's content?" (Los *Angeles Times Book Review,* 10 Apr. 1983). To all of this, Joy Pratt, director of publicity at Harvard University Press, responds, "Academics don't understand publishing. We have a responsibility to make money and generate sales for books as well as publish books with something important to say" *(Chronicle of Higher Education,* 11 May 1985). But does that responsibility include such questionable tactics as circulating bound page proof to sympathetic and somewhat biased academics and to media people more than two months before the book's announced publication date? And does that responsibility include flying this book's controversial and quarrelsome author half way around the world to appear on talk shows such as the Studs Turkel Show, the Phil Donahue Show, and the CBS Morning News? It is not surprising that Harvard University Press' actions prompted a special news article in the *New York Times Book Revieio* titled "The Making of a Celebrity" {6 Mar, 1983). It

describes Freeman's trip from Samoa, his whirlwind TV tour of the United States, and contends: "Because Harvard is used to publishing scholars, not celebrities, it hired a New York public relations firm to handle Mr. Freeman's bookings."

After the media circus had subsided somewhat and the reporters, freelance writers, and other assorted groupies had had their say, the reviews that editors had invited from anthropologists (whether they had ever been to Samoa or not) began to appear. While the media response to the book had generally been quite supportive of Freeman, once the anthropologists began evaluating the book the tide took a definite turn.

The first reviews appeared late in March of 1983—iong after every major newspaper had run a feature story on the book—with that by George Marcus of Rice University appearing in the *New York Times Book Review* (27 Mar. 1983) and that by Colin Tumbull of George Washington University appearing in *The New Republic* (28 Mar. 1983).

Marcus' review opened with the somewhat startling declaration: "This is a work of great mischief." The mischief to a large extent is described as involving Freeman's dual aims of "re-establishing the importance of biological factors in explanations of human behavior," and demolishing "the authority of Margaret Mead's knowledge of Samoan society and asserting his own in its stead." According to Marcus, Freeman's characterization of Frank Boas and Mead as "absolute cultural determinists" is a gross distortion, and he points out that "the Boasians—including Margaret Mead—were primarily concerned with the study of cultural variation, which they presumed took place within a context of general biological tendencies in human behavior." Although Freeman intimates that biology has been done a great injustice by anthropology, Marcus counters with the statement that this book does little to rectify the situation. He notes that it has nothing new to say about the relation of biology to culture, and that "Mr. Freeman's occasional efforts to bring biological factors into his account of Samoans are simply embarrassing compared to his masterful presentation of evidence by anecdote and historical example." This "masterful" presentation, however, involves such bad habits as being "quite selective in assembling quotes out of context," and "in the same paragraph combining quotes from works that are years, even decades apart."

Colin Turnbull's review is one of the most critical of the many published. He contends that the "myth" referred to in the book's title is of Freeman's own making, since the nature/nurture issue is not what Mead set out to investigate at all. Turnbull maintains that while Freeman takes great pains to characterize the

all. Turnbull maintains that while Freeman takes great pains to characterize the young Mead as an idiotic, empty-headed, silly girl, without academic ability or perceptivity—and too naive to know that her adolescent informants were duping her—his own research procedures leave something to be desired. Turnbull writes, "Given his own dubious methodology, I doubt if Freeman's book is worth very much either as anthropology or biology. To my mind it deserves review only because it could do harm to anthropology, and particularly to the kind of humanistic anthropology that Margaret Mead preferred to petty academic rivarly."

In her review in the Los *Angeles Times Book Review* (10 Apr. 1983) Laura Nader (University of California, Berkeley) refers to Freeman's nit-picking efforts to discredit Mead as "historical tracking," noting that *Margaret Mead and Samoa* "is not a systematic restudy. Instead, Freeman uses history, early reports of Western missionaries and travelers, government and court records plus his and other people's observations to refute Mead." Although Freeman makes a great point of Mead's Boasian bias, which had the effect of causing her to overemphasize particular aspects of Samoan culture, Nader maintains that "he does what he accuses a 23-year-old inexperienced anthropologist of doing. He draws an extreme picture of the Samoans—the exact opposite of the one Mead drew. While she saw only the lighter side of Samoan life, he saw only the darker side. But if Mead is a cultural determinist, so too is Freeman, because the dispute is over cultural facts."

A review by Paula Brown Glick (SUNY, Stony Brook) in *Nature* (28 Apr. 1983) asks "Why has Freeman not written a monograph on Samoa describing his findings as a result of many years research rather than listing Margaret Mead's errors, one after the other. One can only surmise that his was personal preference for criticism over construction." But Glick also questions the validity of his criticism and points out that the data sources and evidence presented by Mead and Freeman are quite different. She writes, "While Freeman presents much evidence to contradict Mead's statements, he cannot claim to have reproduced her conditions of field work with adolescent girls in Manu'a in 1925. . . . Subsequent research among the same people— in this case an island group with a population of over 150,000—is likely to find differences attributable to local conditions, historical changes and interpretation of emphasis."

Marvin Harris (University of Florida), in "The Sleep-crawling Question," in *Psychology Today* (May 1983) sees Freeman's target as more than Mead and Boas: "He seems to be obsessed with the notion that to discredit Mead's Samoan material is to discredit any social scientist who holds that 'nurture' is a more

important determinant of the differences and similarities in human social life than 'nature.' " While many reviewers of this book have found the chronicling of the nature/ nurture controversy one of the best sections, Harris maintains that Freeman is more confused about this controversy than Mead was confused about Samoa, since his characterization of the Boas position on the biological component in human behavior is so distorted.

Of the early formal reviews written by anthropologists the most negative of all is that by David Schneider (University of Chicago) in *Natural History* (June 1983). He opens his review with: "This is a bad book. It is also a dull book." And he maintains that it falls short of even the loosest standards of scholarship. Since the book, he feels, is more concerned with mounting an attack on Mead than dealing with scholarly questions, he concludes: "This is a commercial enterprise, not a contribution to knowledge." Just because it is published by a press that presents itself as scholarly, writes Schneider, does not necessarily make it a scholarly book. He notes in conclusion that "the current period seems to be one of those times when materialist, biologistic thinking is in some degree of ascendancy. Freeman's book fits into this climate very neatly. ... It is a work that celebrates a particular political climate by denigrating another."

Like most of the anthropologists who have reviewed Freeman's *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth,* I am highly critical of the work and consider it not a scholarly analysis of a culture but a witch hunt whose target is not just Margaret Mead but Franz Boas and American anthropology in general. Some New Zealand and Australian anthropologists have already branded the opposition to this book "nationalistic" but one need not be an American to recognize the unscientific bias, the shoddy methodology, and the lack of professional ethics that characterize the Freeman attempt at refutation of Margaret Mead's work.

Some of my disenchantment with Freeman and his "scientific" refutation of Mead is derived from his statements to the media concerning what he accomplished in his book. An article by Jane Howard in *Smithsonian* records that Freeman believed that, due to his efforts, Margaret Mead's career might "do a 32" (32 feet per second per second being the rate at which falling bodies accelerate through space) and that he "may have written a book that will create the greatest donouement in the history of anthropology so far, not excepting Piltdown Man!" (Howard 1983:67).

Instead of making a contribution to anthropology and Samoan ethnography, I believe that Freeman's enterprise is largely self-serving. Although Derek

Freeman maintains that he is out to refute Mead's "negative instance" and thereby destroy the validity of the Boasian paradigm of "absolute cultural determinism," his attacks on Margaret Mead's writings often draw upon data from others (such as myself) who also follow the Boasian theoretical frame of reference. Why are my data (when they criticize Mead) so sound and Mead's so faulty? I also confirm the position that Ta'u village adolescent behavior represents a "negative instance," but one does not acquire celebrity status by refuting *my* data!

Derek Freeman, on many occasions, has made the charge that I am a "decidedly suspect witness" because I was under pressure from my advisor, Melville J. Herskovits (a classmate of Mead's) to confirm the Mead/Boas paradigm. In correspondence with the editor of the *Anthropology Newsletter* in April 1984, Freeman wrote:

> In the controversy over my book, Professor Holmes, as a principal supporter of Mead's conclusions, is a decidedly suspect witness. In 1967, when I inquired of him how, given the fact of evidence in his PhD thesis markedly at variance with Mead, he could possibly claim that the "reliability" of Mead's account of Samoa was "remarkably high." Holmes replied that while he disagreed with Mead on "many points of interpretation," he did believe that "the majority of her facts were correct." He then went on, however, to state (these being his exact words of August 1, 1967): "I think it is quite true that Margaret finds pretty much what she wants to find. While I was quite critical of many of her ideas and observations I do not believe that a thesis is quite the place to expound them. I was forced by my faculty advisor to soften my criticism." To which he added: "The only tragedy about Mead is that she still refuses to accept the idea that she might have been wrong on her first field trip."

In reply to Freeman's letter (printed in the same issue) I stated:

> It is interesting how Derek Freeman, who is so quick to accuse the American anthropological community of unethical and unprofessional tactics, feels that it is perfectly proper to put his own self-serving interpretations on state-

> ments made by me in personal correspondence. . . . Since my letters to him were written on overseas aerograms, and I therefore have no copies of what I wrote, I can only assume that Dr. Freeman is a gentleman enough to have quoted me accurately. I am particularly upset by Freeman's accusation that my dissertation was censored by my mentor Melville J. Herskovits, who felt obligated to protect the theoretical position of his teacher, Franz Boas. If one were to read my dissertation one would find numerous criticisms of Mead's Samoan research findings concerning ethos, but what is not found is a nit-picking inventory of every misspelled Samoan word and every observed discrepancy in ceremonial detail which marred the first draft of my dissertation. Herskovits maintained that I should deal with substantive issues of interpretation and not engage in witch-hunt tactics. I believe his recommendation was that I should be "icily objective." I will admit that in 1967 I might very well have written Derek Freeman that "she still refuses to accept the idea that she might have been wrong on her first field trip." My relationship'with Margaret Mead was a very stormy one for several years after my restudy of her work. However, the statements I made about Mead "finding pretty much what she started out to find" was not in any way meant to imply that she falsified data. Ultimately Margaret Mead did admit that there might have been some errors in her interpretations of Samoan behavior. This was done in a chapter titled "Conclusions 1969," written for the second edition of her Bishop Museum monograph *Social Organization of Manua(1969).* Here she acknowledges a series of problems in reconciling her interpretations of Samoan ethos with those of later investigators (including Freeman and myself).

Derek Freeman was convinced that I was so intimidated by Mead's reputation and so much under the thumb of Herskovits that I didn't even attempt to challenge the "absolute cultural determinist" conclusions of Mead's Samoan study and instead spent my time doing a study of Samoan acculturation. In *Margaret Mead and Samoa*, Freeman writes:

> Lowell D. Holmes was working on a doctoral dissertation entitled "A Restudy of Manu'an Culture," which he was to submit in 1957 to the department of anthropology at Northwestern University. Holmes had gone to Samoa early in 1954, after preliminary training under Melville Herskovits, who was a follower of Boas, a friend of Mead, and a fervent cultural determinist. Because of the crucial role Mead's writings on Samoa had played in the establishment of the Boasian paradigm, there was, from a scientific point of view every reason to subject her conclusions to detailed testing by further investigations in the field. These conclusions had, however, become so well established in the anthropological departments of Northwestern and other universities as to seem eternally true, and Holmes made their systematic testing no part of his concern. Instead he devoted his energies to an "acculturation study" in which his objectives were the description of contemporary Manu'an culture and the documentation of changes that had "taken place in the course of the history of European contact." [1983:103-10]

Beginning with the word "description," Freeman is quoting directly from the preface of my book *Ta'ii: Stability and Change in a Samoan Village*, which was published by the Polynesian Society in 1958. This was not my dissertation and this was not a critique of Mead's work. That effort, which Freeman says I did not make, is to be found in my 1957 doctoral dissertation entitled *A Restudy of Manu'an Culture: A Problem in Methodology* (available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan). The major conclusions of that volume form the content of chapter 8 of this book, "Assessing Margaret Mead."

OBJECTIVITY IN FREEMAN'S STUDY

My restudy of Mead's Samoan research focused on reliability and validity and how these factors could be influenced by the personal equation. It is a quite natural extension that I am equally interested in Derek Freeman's methodological procedures and personal characteristics and the extent to which they meet the test in regard to accepted canons of objectivity and procedural ethics. The hallmark of science is objectivity. When I was a graduate student, I was taught that the ethnographic literature describing a given culture was valuable but not

necessarily error-free. I was cautioned to go into the field with an open mind and to use cultural relativism both as a philosophical frame of reference and as a methodological tool. When 1 settled down in Ta'u village I had no idea whether Margaret Mead was right or wrong in her pronouncements about Samoan culture and personality. It would have been to my professional advantage if I had been able to prove that this famous anthropologist had been in error on her first field trip, but that had nothing to do with the scientific mission I had accepted. Derek Freeman, from all the evidence I have seen, including his personal correspondence with me, was absolutely convinced that Margaret Mead was wrong and he set out to prove it. Since Freeman has stated, on many occasions, that he rejects cultural relativism as a methodological tool (which basically *demands* going to another culture with an open mind), perhaps he feels that it is also unscientific to approach the work of another investigator with an open mind.

From my correspondence with Freeman in 1966-67, it was obvious that his inquiries concerning my restudy of Mead were mostly directed at finding out my criticisms of Mead. He persistently questioned my claim that Mead's research was remarkably reliable and valid, and he discounted specific statements of mine that corroborated Mead's ideas and concepts. When I told him of the personality testing I had carried out and how I thought the results confirmed Mead's conceptualization of Samoan character, he maintained that such tests (California Test of Personality, Edwards Personality Preference Schedule, and Rogers Test of Personality Adjustment) probably did not have cross-cultural validity. Freeman's letter of April 25, stated, for example:

> I am interested in your 'personality text material' which you are proposing to submit to computer analysis. I presume that these are data derived from the tests given to students of the high school of American Samoa. My own training in psychology and my assessments of Samoan character lead me to have marked reservations about tests handled in this way. As you are probably aware, the Samoans (as a result of their experiences in childhood) are a highly repressed and defensive people, whose behavior is characterized by denial and deceptiveness to a high degree.

THE ISSUE OF RAPPORT

Despite the fact that he was a middle-aged man living with his wife in a Western Samoan village more than 40 years after Mead worked in the Manu'an village of Ta'u in American Samoa, Freeman chooses to believe that any discrepancies between his assessments and Mead's are due only to her inability to use the language properly, her inexperience in field research, naivete, and cultural deterministic bias. According to him, Margaret Mead was duped by her young informants. It is interesting to note that in an earlier debate with Melvin Ember about Samoan culture, Freeman suggested that Ember's work was incorrect because he was "an inexperienced ethnographer, lacking a command of the Samoan language and residing in a village for only a few weeks or months" (1964:555). Also, in the *Anthropology Newsletter* correspondence previously cited, he stated his standards for quality research in Polynesia as "complete fluency in the local language and intensive field research lasting for at least two years continuously. These, I would note, are conditions that Holmes, in his Samoan researches has never met" (Sept. 1984). Apparently some three and one half years in the field over a period of thirty-two years puts me at a disadvantage.

If one were to ask Derek Freeman why he was able to obtain the "truth" about Samoan culture from these people he characterizes as masters of duplicity, he would probably respond, as he has on numerous talk shows, that it is partly because he is a Samoan chief. He is not the first anthropologist, however, to be made a chief. My title, awarded in Ta'u village in 1954, is Tuife'ai (King of Fierce Cannibals), but I have never considered this honor anything more than a friendly gesture (or perhaps a good joke) that is not to be taken seriously by anyone. Since holding a title involves both family responsibility and a certain amount of control over family property, including land, it is hardly something that Samoans grant foreigners *seriously*. Being known as the "King of Fierce Cannibals" has done little for me as an anthropologist other than give me access to *fono* (village council) deliberations.

Continuing with the issue of Freeman's rapport with his Samoan subjects, one must consider the quality of his survey of virginity among 67 females aged 14—19. In a society where the church is very restrictive and where young women, according to Freeman, are accomplished at distorting the truth (thereby completely "duping" Margaret Mead), one might question the extent to which an elderly white man and his wife could establish adequate rapport on such a sensitive subject. Exact knowledge could only be acquired through medical examinations, which as far as I know were not conducted.

I also have grave doubts about the research Freeman conducted on parent-child bonding. He states: "The primary bond between mother and child is very

much a part of the biology of Samoans, as it is of all humans" (1983:203). He then goes on to describe how he and his wife tested the claim by Mead that "filial affection is diffused among a large group of relatives." The Freemans had the women of an extended family household walk away from an infant one at a time and recorded the child's response. Freeman maintains that an agitated reaction was forthcoming from the infant only when the separation involved the biological mother. This is pure ethological nonsense, and I have personally observed that adopted children showed no recognition of a biological mother when the two were temporarily reunited. Considering that Freeman condemns cultural explanations for behavior and calls for greater emphasis on biological interpretations in modern anthropology, it is interesting that this is one of the few places in Freeman's book where any kind of biological interpretation of Samoan behavior is presented.

CONTROLS IN RESTUDY LOCALITY

When one restudies the work of an earlier investigator, great care must be taken so that the data are comparable. Freeman's method of dealing with this problem is interesting. He begins by quoting George Turner (a 19th-century missionary) to the effect that the Samoans have but one dialect and have long maintained free communication from island to island (1961:279). He then cites a statement by Bradd Shore, that "culturally and linguistically, the entire Samoan archipelago reveals a remarkably unified identity and striking homogeneity," (1977:ix) and proceeds to attack Mead's observations of life on Ta'u in 1925 with his own data drawn from Sa'anapu in the 1940s, 1966-67, and 1981. There are, however, just too many uncontrolled variables involved in Freeman's Ta'u-Sa'anapu comparisons to make his case convincing.

It is perfectly correct that Samoans throughout the entire archipelago share a common culture; however, it is not true that Samoans behave in exactly the same way in all villages and on all islands. Just as the people of rural and small-town America, or Australia, think and behave differently in some respects from people in major metropolises, we can expect villages with varying degrees of isolation and with different political and economic histories to shape the lives of their residents in different ways.

When I was working in Ta'u village in 1954 it was physically and culturally much as it had been when Mead was there, and many of the people with whom she had worked were still living. The village was different from others I have studied in subsequent years, and was quite different in its economy, history, and social organization from villages I have observed on the south coast of Upolu

(where Sa'anapu is located). Keesing describes the Manu'a group, where Ta'u is located, as islands which "have tended to retain their historic isolation; with the western end of Savai'i they form strongholds of conservatism" (1934:20).

In 1954 none of the Manu'a islands had a dock, and inter-island vessels called only about once a month. None of the islands had any vehicles, so one traveled between Ta'u village and Fitiuta in exactly the way Mead had done, either by muddy mountain footpath or by long-boat. Ta'u island provided only a handful of salaried jobs (teachers and nurses mostly), and almost everyone was engaged in subsistence agriculture. The only cash crop was copra (which provided a very small income). Schooling was available to the eighth grade; very few people had gone that far. Approximately 95 percent of the housing was of traditional architecture; there were no radios, no electricity, and no sanitary facilities.

Sa'anapu, on the other hand, is in Western Samoa, a country with a colonial history very different from that of Ta'u. Gilson records that Manu'a took no part in the politics of the remainder of Samoa during the nineteenth century (1970:55). Although Sa'anapu is on the opposite side of the island of Upolu from Apia, in 1954 a daily bus was already providing communication with that port town, with its commercial establishments, theatres, nightclubs, libraries, and government buildings. Villagers on all parts of Upolu have for some time been heavily involved in working such cash crops as cocoa, bananas, copra, and coffee. People tired of working in agriculture could also find a fair number of jobs in Apia, which has been a cosmopolitan community with substantial numbers of European inhabitants for over a century. Gilson describes mid-nineteenth-century Apia as follows:

> Each side of the Vaisigano [the river bisecting Apia] also acquired its grog shops, boarding houses, billiard parlours and bowling alleys—'amenities' supported largely by transient trade. In addition, blacksmiths, coopers, mechanics and auctioneers set up at Apia Bay, some independently and others as employees or associates of the mercantile houses. The medical profession was also represented, with two 'surgeons' in practice during the 1850s. And contrary to the hope expressed earlier by the London Missionary Society, there was a large proportion of unskilled labourers among the immigrants. In 1856, about seventy-five foreigners were in more or less permanent residence at Apia Bay, and in 1860, more than one hundred; and these were often outnumbered by visitors and castaways. [1970:178]

often outnumbered by visitors and castaways. [1970:178]

Government census records for 1971 show 1,688 foreigners living in Apia and an additional 662 living in other parts of Upolu. Only 1,350 of the foreigners living on Upolu were Europeans, but in Ta'u the only people of European ancestry who have ever been in even semipermanent residence have been a few U.S. Navy Pharmacist Mates, a handful of anthropologists and a few teachers (the latter only since the establishment of a high school approximately thirteen years ago). To maintain that these environmental differences have not differentially affected the behavioral patterns of the people of Sa'anapu and Ta'u is incorrect.

There is also evidence that Sa'anapu has been for some time culturally more modern than most outlying villages in Western Samoa. J. W. Davidson, who resided in Western Samoa from 1947 to 1967, records the following about Sa'anapu and its village leadership:

> In Sa'anapu, for example, 'Anapu Solofa—the Leader of the Fono of Faipule—had allocated land definitively to the different branches of his *'aiga* and, like Va'ai Kolone, had abandoned many of his claims as a *matai*, in order to encourage his kinsmen to develop their own plantations. In many villages, therefore, Samoans were reorganizing and expanding their agricultural activities and modifying, in varying degrees, the conventions of the Samoan social system. [1967:238]

TIME FRAMES

Not only must an anthropological restudy be made in the same locality as the original, but the time factor must be handled with great care. Although it was apparent to me in 1954 that Samoan culture was extremely conservative, my first consideration in the analysis and evaluation of Mead's materials was to control for the factor of change, reconstructing the culture of the mid-nineteenth century and the 1920-30 period. Freeman, on the other hand, states arbitrarily that

> There is ... no reason to suppose that Samoan society and behavior changed in any fundamental way during the fourteen years between 1926, the year of the completion of Mead's inquiries, and 1940, when I began my own observations of Samoan behavior. [1983:120]

Having established this dubious and undocumented premise, Derek Freeman goes on to state that he will "draw on the evidence of his own research in the 1940s, the years 1965 to 1968, and 1981" (1983: 120). He also uses historical sources, many going back to the late 1700s, as evidence against Mead's interpretations. I once wrote an article about the great stability of traditional Samoan culture (see Holmes 1980), but Freeman deals with the island group as though it has existed in an absolutely static condition despite its long history of contact with explorers, whalers, missionaries, colonial officials and bureaucrats, anthropologists and, more recently, educators with Western curricula and television networks.

USE OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

In *Margaret Mead and Samoa* Derek Freeman writes that his "researches were not completed until 1981, when I finally gained access to the archives of the High Court of American Samoa for the 1920s. Thus my refutation of Mead's depiction of Samoa appears some years after her death" (1983: xvi). It should be noted, however, that the bulk of the attack on Mead's work had already been formalized by 1968 (when Mead was still alive and well) in a privately distributed paper which Freeman titled "On the believing of as many as six impossible things before breakfast; an analysis of the consequences of cathecting assumptions in cultural and social anthropology."

A seminar paper developed in 1978 entitled " 'Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravished me': a critical appreciation of the sexual values and behaviour of the Samoans of Western Polynesia" (sent out to select anthropologists—not me—with "confidential" stamped on the title page), carried many of the ideas which appear in Chapter 16 of *Margaret Mead and Samoa.*

Court records, which Freeman maintains were not open to him until 1981 (although I had complete access to them in 1954), reveal the fact that apparently in American Samoa some fourteen rapes per year occurred from 1975 to 1980. Freeman also states that court records from American Samoa show "numerous cases" of rape recorded for the first three decades of this century. He tells us nothing about where these rapes were committed nor even whether they were committed by Samoans. There has always been a sizeable population of Navy personnel or Department of Interior personnel in the American territory during this century. I know for a fact that there are no records of rapes occuring in Manu'a at the time of Mead's research and none for 1954 when I was doing my restudy of Mead. Rape and other violent crimes tend to be urban phenomena in the Pacific, and R. G. Crocombe has pointed out that "within Western Samoa

the Pacific, and R. G. Crocombe has pointed out that "within Western Samoa, nearly 70 percent of the reported crime is said to be committed among the 18 percent of the population which lives in the capital" (1973:103). The same is true in American Samoa, where the area of Pago Pago Bay is the scene of the kind of crime that Derek Freeman makes so much of. And clearly this results from social disorganization brought on by cultural change and not a biological disposition toward aggression inherent in the Samoan make-up.

Felix Keesing quotes a government official in American Samoa concerning crime and juvenile delinquency in American Samoa in 1930 as follows:

> There are few crimes in the out districts other than acts of violence—assault with a knife, sex matters affecting the old native ideas of right and wrong such as those involving a chief's daughter—while civil cases cover such matters as straying pigs or trespass. Crimes such as breaking and entering, stealing, drunkenness and bootlegging are committed by people from villages around the naval station; nearly all crimes committed by boys and young men that come to our attention are likewise from these villages. [1934:240]

In regard to crimes in Western Samoa, Freeman maintains that government records reveal that in 1977 ten murders were committed which represents for the population of 150,000 a rate of 6.66 per 100,000. Cases of assault "causing bodily injury" that were reported to the police in the years 1964-66 showed a rate of 105.1 per 100,000 population (67 percent higher than the U.S. rate), and in the years 1964-66 the rate of common assault in Western Samoa was 773.35 per 100,000 of population, a rate 5 times that of the United States (1983:163-65). While many of these statistics may be correct, Vaiao and Fay Ala'ilima (noted authors and scholars of Samoan culture) at a conference at California State University, Fullerton in 1984 stated that they had searched the government records in Western Samoa at some length but had been unable to find much of the data which Freeman utilizes to establish that Samoans have an abnormally high incidence of murder, assault and other crimes of passion.

Derek Freeman pins much of his case against Mead's picture of Samoan temperament on government records from American Samoa to which he claims he did not have access until after Margaret Mead's death, but there is reason to question the validity of these data. It has been my experience that Samoans are not very careful record keepers, and I have found great discrepancies in

government records. Apparently, others have also. Michael Hartmann, a United Nations demographer who was involved in the analysis of the 1976 census of Western Samoa, writes:

> The quality of vital registration is substandard because the registration of vital events is seen as a colonial remnant. After all, the registration of births and deaths in many parts of the underdeveloped world was introduced by colonial authorities. Another explanation may be that the reasons for vital registration are vague in the minds of politicians. In the case of Western Samoa it might prove more efficient to delegate the responsibility to the church organizations. [1980:309-310]

In American Samoa the quality of government records may be judged by their data on suicides for the year 1974. The Government of American Samoa Health Coordinating Council publication *American Samoa Plan for Health* (1978) records that "in 1974, there were 10 suicides in American Samoa for a rate of 34/100,000, an unacceptably high rate for an 'island paradise' " [1978:55-56] but the *Annual Report to the Secretary of the Interior* for the fiscal year 1975 records that in the previous year there were five suicides in American Samoa (1975:63). I spent several weeks going through government records both in 1954 and in 1962; in 1954 I discovered the startling fact that in that year the third most common cause of infant mortality was arteriosclerosis (15 deaths).

USE OF THE LITERATURE

Considering the fact that Freeman is often described as a brilliant researcher,[1] one might wonder at his methods for building a case from the anthropological literature. He uses literature selectively to support his position—a technique that is quite distinct from the way most anthropologists were taught to do research. He accepts the authors' statements he agrees with and ignores those he disagrees with and in some cases uses only portions of a quote if the total quote contains parts injurious to his position. While he cites or quotes my work twenty-six times in *Margaret Mead and Samoa* these are almost exclusively my critical statements concerning Mead's work. He either completely ignores or discounts my statements of corroboration. Nor is he particularly prudent in the selection of the sources he quotes. On one occasion he discusses how Mead's informants duped her by fabricating the information they told her in interviews, and the source he quotes, believe it or not, is Nicholas von Hoffman's and Gary

Trudeau's book *Tales from the Margaret Mead Taproom* (1976:97) which is nothing but a spoof on anthropology, Margaret Mead, and Samoa, written almost entirely from "information" gathered in the bar of the Rainmaker Hotel in Pago Pago.

There are other examples of Derek Freeman's questionable use of the literature. He quotes Ronald Rose's assertions that Samoan mannerisms imply aggressive tendencies (which help to build his case against Mead), but completely ignores such statements by Rose as: "If a girl hasn't had a succession of lovers by the time she is seventeen or eighteen she feels she is 'on the shelf,' and becomes the laughing stock amongst her companions" (1959:161). This statement, of course, would hurt Freeman's case against Mead as would the following by Rose: "Mental disturbances, stresses and conflicts occur at puberty but, as might be expected, these are not quite as common as in our society where taboos associated with sex abound" (1959:164). He does not quote this either.

In *Margaret Mead and Samoa* Freeman states that "Campbell observed that with several of the broader aspects of Mead's account of Samoa, such as the lack of competitive spirit and the lack of crisis in human relations, Holmes's findings were in 'complete disagreement'" (1983:105). It should be pointed out that his reference to "complete disagreement" is taken out of context and thereby gives a faulty impression. What Donald Campbell actually was saying is conveyed in the following quote:

> As far as the great bulk of Mead's ethnology, Holmes confirms her findings, stating "the reliability of Mead's account is remarkably high." While he reports some differences in the description of traditional political systems and other matters, on matters of material culture and observable custom, there is general agreement. This extends also to the observed absence of an adolescent disturbance on the part of the girls, and the easy transition from childhood to adult life. But upon several of the broader aspects of ethos, his findings are in complete disagreement, for example, upon the lack of specialized feeling in human relations, the lack of competitive spirit, the lack of crisis in human relations, and the importance of "Mafaufau," or the gift of wise judgment. [1972:444]

It should be noted that Freeman did not mention that my disagreements with Mead were over matters of ethos, an area which Campbell believes is so much a

Mead were over matters of ethos, an area which Campbell believes is so much a matter of emotional response that "ethos may indeed be beyond the realm of scientific study" (Campbell 1961:340).

ON THE MATTER OF SAMOAN AGGRESSION

Much of the refutation of the anthropology of Margaret Mead is based on Freeman's divergent interpretations of Samoan aggression and Samoan sexuality, the two being related in some instances. In regard to Samoan "aggressiveness" and associated behavioral characteristics Freeman makes the following assertions:

1. Samoans are aggressive;
2. Samoans have strong passions;
3. Samoan authoritarianism results in emotional stress and psychopathological behavior;
4. Samoan personality is characterized by ambivalence toward authority figures;

1. *Samoans are aggressive:* Freeman's Chapter 11, titled "Aggressive behavior and warfare," is a detailed challenge to Mead's position that Samoans are unaggressive and "one of the most amiable, least contentious, and most peaceful peoples in the world" (Freeman 1983:157). His first example of their overly aggressive nature pertains to the La Perouse massacre, wherein Samoans on the island of Tutuila attacked and killed a number of the explorer's crew. On the surface this is impressive evidence, but Newton Rowe (who did research in Western Samoa at about the same time as Mead was in Manu'a) presents a different picture. He writes: "To those who know their character it is inconceivable that the Samoans attacked without provocation" (1930:16). Rowe then proceeds to explain that the attack was provoked when French crew members hung a Samoan from the top of a long-boat mast by his thumbs. After presenting the La Perouse example, Freeman states: "It was not, however, until the early 1830s that the bellicosity of the Samoans became firmly established through the observations and inquiries of the pioneer missionary and explorer John Williams" (1983:158). While Williams encountered a certain amount of strife associated with the despotic reign and subsequent assassination of the powerful chief Tamafaiga, he described his departure from the islands after his first visit as follows:

> Many hundred also of the natives crowded round us, by all of whom we were treated with the greatest possible respect, and these rent the air with their affectionate saluta-

> speed, and these rent the air with their affectionate salutations, exclaiming O le alofi i le ali'i, "Great is our affection for you English Chiefs." [1839:302]

It is difficult to undertstand how an investigator seriously studying Samoan character with the aid of historical sources would not include the statement made by the first European explorer actually to make contact (in 1722) with the people of Ta'u. After observing them for two hours on board his ship, Commodore Jacob Roggeveen commented:

> They appeared to be good people, lively in their manner of conversing, gentle in their deportment towards each other, and in their manners nothing was perceived of the savage. ... It must be acknowledged that this was the nation the most civilized and honest of any that we had seen among the Islands of the South Sea. They were charmed with our arrival amongst them, and received us as divinities. And when they saw us preparing to depart, they testified much regret. [Burney 1816:576]

The above would not make good reading in a chapter on the aggressive nature of Samoans and obviously was not included for that reason; perhaps Dr. Freeman is not familiar with much of the Samoan literature.

It is true that the early literature, particularly that produced by explorers, often referred to the hostile nature of Samoan islanders, but R. P. Gilson records in *Samoa 1830 to 1900* that, in the early 1840s, "Lafond de Lurcy, a shipwrecked mariner travelling aboard the vessel [Lloyd], was convinced that the Samoans' bad reputation was a myth kept alive by ships' captains to discourage desertions" (1970:66). Gilson also notes that George Bass, the man who supplied provisions for Botany Bay, might have given one of the more favorable accounts concerning the temperament of Samoans, "for in 1803 he visited Tutuila to trade for fruit and vegetables and found the Samoans he encountered friendly and receptive. Moreover, he found an Englishman there, a man who claimed to have drifted to the island from Tonga several years before and who, when offered his passage back to civilization, elected to remain where he was" (ibid.:67).

Maintaining that "their society is conducive to aggressive behavior" (1983:163), Freeman describes a series of conflicts between villages, districts, and royal factions in Samoan history and prehistory, which leaves the impression that this was characteristically a warlike, violent society. However, I do not

believe that martial conflicts were either as frequent or as brutal as Freeman would have us believe. Missionaries Brown and Turner both tell us that when groups of opposing warriors met they would exchange kava roots and speeches and make plans about the time that battles would begin. John Williams records that impending war took up considerable time in aboriginal Samoa. Meetings were held in a large guest house or on the village green *(malae)* and often went on for ten or twelve months before hostilities commenced (LMS Microfilm:1832). He further maintains that although wars were frequent, they were not very bloody. Five or six deaths were an average. Turner, however, says that the death rate in a war could be anywhere from two to fifty (1861:301). Newton Rowe describes Samoan warfare as involving "a few skirmishes in ambush by land, or at respectable distances in their war-canoes at sea," and that the contest was decided "without much loss of life, until some fresh occasion brought about a similar scene" (1930:70-71).

Ellison maintains that "frequent struggles between rivals for the kingship [of Western Samoa] were not uncommon. Such conflicts took place before the advent of the missionaries in 1830 and again in 1845 and 1869. These wars were not very destructive and often were looked upon as a pleasant diversion, a sort of game, with the prospect of gaining military distinction for the number of heads taken." Whatever predisposition Samoans might have had for engaging in such conflicts was, according to Ellison, greatly exacerbated by the machinations of Europeans. He writes, "The injection of intrigue and domination by the white man increased the susceptability of the native Samoan to the disease of war. First, there was the land question. The natives bitterly resented the loss of their best lands to the foreigners, especially the Germans, whom they accused of acquiring their plantation land through trickery" (Ellison 1953:96). Testimony to this allegation is to be found in *The Story of Lauli'i* wherein Lauli'i Willis records, "What has been the cause of the natives parting with their lands? For purposes of gain, white men in business in Samoa have encouraged and fostered the disputes between the tribes, and then liberally supplied them with arms and ammunition, charging exorbitant prices, and taking in payment the most fertile lands in the country" (Willis 1889:37).

Robert Louis Stevenson, whose sojourn in Samoa from 1890 to 1894 was marred by the dangers of intrasocietal warfare, described the people's "warlike" behavior as follows:

> The religious sentiment of the people is indeed for peace at any price; no pastor can bear arms; and even the layman who does so is denied the sacraments. In the last war the

> who does so is denied the sacraments. In the last war the college of Malua, where the picked youth are prepared for the ministry, lost but a single student; the rest, in the bosom of a bleeding country and deaf to the voices of vanity and honour, peacefully pursued their studies. But if the church looks askance on war, the warrior in no extremity of need or passion forgets his consideration for the church. The houses and gardens of her ministers stand safe in the midst of armies; a way is reserved for themselves along the beach, where they may be seen in their white kilts and jackets openly passing the lines, while not a hundred yards behind the skirmishers will be exchanging the useless volleys of barbaric warfare. Women are also respected; they are not fired upon; and they are suffered to pass between the hostile camps, exchanging gossip, spreading rumours, and divulging to either army the secret councils of the other. This is plainly no savage war; it has all the punctilio of the barbarian, and all his parade; feasts precede battles, fine dresses and songs decorate and enliven the field; and the young soldier comes to camp burning (on the one hand) to distinguish himself by acts of valour, and (on the other) to display his acquaintance with field etiquette. [1892:147-148]

The above, strangely enough, was written by the man who Freeman quotes numerous times in *Margaret Mead and Samoa* and who he describes as "incomparable." This is also the man who in *A Footnote to History* characterized Samoans as "easy, merry, and pleasure loving; the gayest, though by far from either the most capable or the most beautiful of Polynesians" (1892:148). Equally impressed was his stepson Lloyd Osbourne, who described Samoans as "extraordinarily good-looking, with gracious manners and an innate love of what for lack of a better term I will call 'good form.' To fail in any of the little courtesies of life is to write oneself down a boor" (1930:xiv), Yet another testimony on Samoan manners and demeanor is to be found in a letter by one "Dr. Wood," which is reproduced in Willis' book *The Story ofLauli'i.* This European resident of Western Samoa records that

> the Samoans are hospitable, affectionate, honest and courteous, and have well been described as a nation of gentlemen. Towards strangers they display a liberality which

> contrasts greatly with the cruel and blood-thirty customs of the Papuan tribes. The Fijians, for example, do all in their power to repel strangers from their shores, either driving them off, or killing and eating them. The Samoans, on the contrary, welcome strangers, allot to them their best houses, give them the best food and make them feel that they are honored guests.
>
> Courtesy is, among the Samoans reckoned as one of the duties of life. . . . The earlier voyagers have all been struck with the gentle demeanor, perfect honesty, scrupulous cleanliness, graceful costume and polished manner of the Samoans. [1889:180]

2. *Samoans have strong passions:* In *Margaret Mead and Samoa* we are told that "central to Mead's depiction of Samoan character is her claim that among Samoans there are 'no strong emotions.' 'Love, hate, jealousy and revenge, sorrow and bereavement,' we are told, are all matters of weeks; a 'lack of deep feeling' has been 'conventionalized' by Samoans 'until it is the very framework of all their attitudes to life' "... (1983:212).

My own observations of behavior in Ta'u village were that residents seemed to go to extremes to avoid conflict and to arrive at compromises. Village council decisions always had to be unanimous, and council meetings often dragged on for days while the assembled chiefs made minor concessions until everyone was satisfied with the collective decision. Breaches of acceptable conduct or the moral code often involved elaborate ceremonies of apology, called *ifoga*, during which persons, families, or even entire villages publicly humbled themselves, sitting cross-legged with mats over their bowed heads, until forgiven by the offended party. Even murder and manslaughter were handled this way if government authorities permitted it. This nonviolent tradition has long been observed, as George Brown, a nineteenth-century missionary testifies:

> gossiping, tale-bearing, were universally condemned. It is rather singular, by the way, that the term used for backbiting *(tuaupua)* literally means "wordy behind the back." The aged were reverenced, and there are probably no people in the world more polite than the Samoans. Any person acting otherwise is called *utafanua* or *faalevao,* i.e. a man from

inland or a bushman. [1910:264]

Derek Freeman alleges that Samoan temperament results in people being jealous, harboring grudges and acting on impulse, often with violence, but the following events reported by United Press International in 1982 and by *Pacific Islands Monthly* in 1971 present a very different picture of Samoan response to crisis situations.

> 2 WITNESSES FORGIVE KILLER OF RELATIVE
> United Press International
>
> HONOLULU—Two relatives of a murder victim have observed the American Samoan tradition of forgiveness—"ifoga"—which allowed the slayer to plead guilty to a lesser charge of manslaughter.
>
> The two relatives lived by the principle, set in the criminal code of American Samoa, and refused to testify against the defendant. They were the two key witnesses for the prosecution.

Thus, defendant Tonny Williams was allowed to plead guilty to the manslaughter charge last week after a plea bargain with the prosecution.

The relatives were living by the practice of "ifoga" in which a family seeks forgiveness from the aggrieved family so that both may continue to live in harmony.

Williams had been charged with murder in the June 1981 fatal stabbing of Anosau Foutuua in Hawaii.

In the court statement, Williams said he got into a fight with the victim and, "although I do not exactly remember if I stabbed Anosau Foutuua, the evidence indicates that I did."

Rick Reed, administrative assistant to Prosecutor Charles Marsland, said the problem with the case was that there were no witnesses willing to testify.

According to Reed, the two witnesses said "they would go to jail before testifying because it was over (as a result of at least two 'ifogas'). They fully forgave Williams."

Rather than lose the case, the prosecutor's office was forced to accept

Williams' offer to plead guilty to manslaughter, Reed said. [5/31/82]

DRINK AND FA'A SAMOA

Centuries-old Samoan custom and modern United States justice confronted each other in the High Court in Pago Pago towards the end of June. It was a kind of legal-

istic tug-of-war and the prize—a man's freedom. The man, an Australian navyman, went to gaol.

But there was give and take with honour satisfied on both sides. Only the man, and a woman, lost in the end and, because of *Fa'a Samoa* (in the Samoan way), he is due out of gaol in August. He could have been inside for five years.

It all happened this way.

The Royal Australian Navy destroyer *Queenborough* sailed into Pago harbour on June 21 for a routine goodwill visit during a training cruise. There were official visits, the traditional cocktail party on board for the local VIPS, and shore leave for the ship's company.

Franz Habenschuss, young, thin, tattooed, a career sailor with three years of faultless service and a wife and infant son in Australia, went ashore in the first group.

After a few beers in a local bar, he and four other ratings set off to see more of the island of Tutuila than the bars of the Pago Bay area. Franz drove a rented car towards the western side of the island. . . . And they drank more beer at village stores. That night the car, with Franz at the wheel, knocked down and killed Mrs. Fa'afouina Faimalie Moeivanu, who was walking along the road in the village of Futiga.

There were stories that Franz and a shipmate were beaten by villagers. The local police took over and Franz was locked up. The following afternoon he pleaded guilty in the High Court to a charge of driving while drunk and causing a woman's death.

It was then that *Fa'a Samoa* took over. Commander Donald Weil, the destroyer captain, and some of his officers went to Futiga along with High Chief Sonoma Unutoa, deputy secretary of the Office of Samoan Affairs. With them they carried $250, collected by *Queenborough's* crew for the Moeivanu family, plus a pile of traditional fine mats, one of the basic symbols of Samoan

ceremonial.

The money and mats were presented and Chief Unutoa voiced the apologies of Commander Weil and the ship's company on Franz' behalf. Futiga High Chief Ulufale and other village leaders responded. Custom, Samoan custom, which has settled disputes for centuries was satisfied. Franz was forgiven. The matter was closed.

It was—*Fa'a Samoa*, but there was still American legal justice to satisfy. The High Court resumed the following morning and the Samoan judges heard about the ceremony, were satisfied that *Fa'a Samoa* had been followed and voted for a lengthy sentence which would be immediately suspended, allowing Franz to rejoin the *Queenborough.*

Then American justice spoke through Associate Justice Goss. . . . He overruled the Samoan judges, and imposed a sentence of 200 days subject to parole, which could mean Franz' release in 64 days. . . . The *Queenborough* sailed and Franz went to gaol. But, once again, *Fa'a Samoa* prevailed. The gaol warden, Chief Fele Falasuamaile, who was a relative of the dead woman, had heard that during the anxious hours of the hearing, Franz couldn't eat. Chief Fele took him to a hotel, bought him a meal and tried to persuade him to eat. . . . The gaol authorities, bending over backwards to help, are currently allowing Franz to leave gaol for visits in local homes. [1971:31]

While I became aware, during my restudy in 1954, that individual passions could be aroused even to the point of assault, murder, or suicide, and while I differ somewhat from Mead in my interpretation of the placid nature of Samoans, I differ very strongly with the Freeman position that Samoans are characteristically violent, aggressive, and strong passioned. Freeman cites a case where a chief who arrived late at a Sa'anapu village council meeting *(fono)* demanded another kava ceremony since he missed the the one that traditionally opens such meetings. When his demand was refused he and another chief ended up fighting furiously just outside the *fono* house. Such behavior would not be tolerated in the village of Ta'u; chiefs have far too much respect for the village council. While Freeman might have observed this behavior, such a grossly abnormal incident has no bearing on Samoan cultural norms or Samoan personality. It is merely a description of deviant behavior, something that is becoming more and more frequent as Samoa modernizes and secularizes.

3. *Samoan authoritarianism results in emotional stress and psychopathological belmvior:* Freeman's chapter on "Samoan Character" states:

> Mead also claimed in *Coming of Age in Samoa* that among Samoans there was an "absence of psychological maladjustment," and a "lack of neuroses." Those who grow up and live within the highly authoritarian Samoan society are frequently subjected to emotional and mental stress, and this experience sometimes results in psychopathological states, suicides and other violent acts {1983:216) . . . This tension also occasionally finds expression in outbursts of uncontrollable anger (Ibid.:218). , . . Yet another expression of these tensions is a form of hysterical dissociation known as *ma'i aitu,* or ghost sickness. [ibid.:222]

Other observers of the Samoan scene, however, do not corroborate Freeman's claim regarding the oppressiveness, authoritativeness, and lack of flexibility of the Samoan social system. Grattan, for example, comments on the democratic nature of the society.

> This is the society that without the horrors of revolution or even a general election has achieved the social miracle that knows neither poverty nor the stigma of illegitimacy; whose warm laws of courtesy and hospitality embrace even the unheralded stranger within its gates; a system that, in the present disordered state of world society, is, with all its faults, something that is rare and rather wonderful. [1948:158]

And in regard to matters of social and political rank he writes:

> There is a mutual interdependence and recognition of titled and untitled people, and each group has its recognised and respected place in the community. Social groups in Samoa are therefore complementary: on the one hand, respect, obedience and service with the hope of a later improvement in status, and on the other, a prudent appreciation of the essential contribution of the untitled members of society. Where social inferiors feel dissatisfaction at treatment received they are at liberty to withdraw their support and attach themselves to some other branch of their family connections in another part of the country, and thus a large measure of social equilibrium and social justice

thus a large measure of social equilibrium and social justice is maintained. [ibid.:14]

R. P. Gilson also comments on the somewhat complex nature of the Samoan family system that on the surface appears authoritarian but upon closer scrutiny reveals itself as remarkably flexible. While the family head *(matai)* controls the recruitment of household members and has it within his power to expel any who refuse to submit to his authority (thereby threatening the unity of the group) "a member of a household—an adult member, at any rate—will always have several alternative places in which he may reside; if conditions in one become unsatisfactory, he may choose to go elsewhere" (Gilson 1970:15).

This flexibility and respect for the individual, regardless of status, that marks Samoan social relations finds expression in many aspects of life including the centuries-old kava ceremony. Here "respect and recognition are the motivating factors that influence the order of distribution, and the elasticity of Samoan custom, which is evidenced here as elsewhere, allows for a nice and discriminating judgment to be exercised by the orator directing that part of the ceremony" (Grattan 1948:49).

While Grattan's observations pertain to a period some years after Mead had documented the Samoan scene, the following quote by George Brown, a missionary who worked in Samoa from 1860 to 1874, describes an equally comfortable social environment—certainly not one which would promote mental illness.

> With regard to the Samoan youth, it may be said that, judging from our standards, the life of the young people was on the whole a very happy one. They have of late years had to attend school, but this has never been regarded as a very serious matter by the Samoan boys and girls. As a rule, they went because they wished to go, and stayed away when they pleased to do so without any fear of punishment. [1910:59]

Even at the levei of village politics the authority of the chiefs has always been limited and social participation was not only permitted but encouraged. John Williams recorded in 1832 that the chiefs had no power to compel their people, that decisions were reached at meetings on the village green *(malae)* where men, women, and children might all speak, except in the case of declaring war when women and children were not allowed to be present (LMS Microfilm 1832).

4. *Samoan personality is characterized by ambivalence toward authority figures:* The Samoans are, in Freeman's view, "a proud, punctilious, and complex God-fearing people, whose orators delight in extolling the beauty of mornings that dawn with the sanctity and dignity of their ancient polities serenely intact. Yet, as we shall see, such are the rigors of the Samoan rank system and so intense is the emotional ambivalence generated by omnipresent authority that this goal is all too frequently not attained; . . . for as anyone who has grown up within a Samoan polity well knows, 'the Samoan way is difficult indeed'" (1983:130).

Throughout the 32 years I have been researching Manu'an culture, I have observed that teenage and young adult males are given a great deal of personal freedom. Members of the *aumaga* (society of untitled men), some of whom are teen-agers, often sleep together in the home of one of the village families, and frequently sit up until wee hours strumming guitars, joking, and playing cards. If these young people are repressed, they are also adept at hiding it. Young women are perhaps more restricted and given more household responsibility than men. But they also seem relaxed in family interactions. By adolescence, Samoans have learned to regulate their own personal conduct, and there is practically no testing of the limits of sanctioned behavior.

Nor do I believe that Samoan authority was any more oppressive in 1925-26 than when I observed the culture. William Green, a government school principal in American Samoa who was in residence when Mead was there, wrote:

> Personal combats and first fights are rather rare today. I believe there has been no murder case in American Samoa since our flag was raised in 1900. Natives will suffer indignities for a long time before resorting to a fight but they remain good fighters. Boxing contests are held occasionally. . . . Respect for elders and magistrates has, I suppose, tended to discourage frequent combats. Life is easy, and one's habitual tendencies and desires are seldom blocked. [1924:134]

In other words, Green sees Samoan young people as neither aggressive nor ambivalent in their attitude toward authority. Finally, I believe that there is probably no better example of a lack of ambivalence toward authority in Samoan (or any other) history than the case of Fa'ase'e Fa'agase, a person hanged for murder in Western Samoa. The incident is described by Chief Justice C. C. Marsack of Western Samoa:

Marsack of Western Samoa.

> There had been a large number of convictions for murder, but in all other cases the sentence of death had been commuted by the Governor-General of New Zealand to imprisonment for life. In Fa'ase'e's case the Governor-General did not intervene. . . . The execution was carried out in secret at Vaimea gaol: but the Sheriff had agreed that there should be a Samoan representation in the presence of two of the Samoan judges. The senior judge gave me a full report the next day.
>
> "Just before Fa'ase'e had to go up the steps I asked him if he wished to say anything, and if he wanted to give a message to Samoa. He said, Tt is right that I should die. I killed a man, and though he forgave me before he died it is not right that I should live when he is dead. And there is another reason: the Chief Judge said that I should be hanged, and whatever the Chief Judge says should be obeyed. I am very happy that this ceremony is so dignified. . . . Tell the people of Samoa that I have no complaint to make, and that not many men can die in such a dignified way as I am going to die now.' " [1961:23]

SAMOAN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Derek Freeman begins his chapter "Sexual Mores and Behavior" with the suggestion that the reason *"Coming of Age in Samoa* so rapidly attracted popular attention was due more than anything else to Mead's alluring portrayal of Samoa as a paradise of adolescent free love" (1983:226). However, Mead maintained that some young women of rank—village *taupou*—who were often the daughters of paramount chiefs, were not permitted to partake of the "free and easy experimentations" enjoyed by other young females. While Margaret Mead observed that occasionally even a *taupou* had to falsify evidence of virginity at her defloration ceremony which preceded her marriage to a bridegroom of rank, there was definitely a "cult of virginity" which had to be observed by a few young women of high status. Freeman, however, believes that Samoan sexual norms were extremely puritanical and he sees the "cult of virginity" as having a blanketing effect on all courtship behavior and he believes that Mead's research has done the Samoan people a grave injustice. He writes:

> According to the elders of Ta'u who, when I interviewed them, well recollected the state of their culture in the mid 1920s, the requirement that sexually mature adolescent girls should remain chaste was at that time, very much the ideal of their strict protestant society. [1983:238]

Virginity, according to Freeman, is still a prized condition and one that is demanded by a harsh, inflexible society; he provides as his proof his investigation of virginity (the methodology is not described) among adolescent girls in Western Samoa. He states:

> In 1967 I was able to complete a detailed survey of the incidence of virginity in adolescent girls by making, with the assistance of my wife, a census of all the young females of a village on the south coast of Upolu born within the period 1945-55. This gave a sample of sixty-seven individuals varying in age from 12 to 22. [ibid.:238-239]

According to Freeman's survey, seventy-three percent (30 out of 41) of the girls between the ages of 14 and 19 claimed to be virgins. Although Freeman tells us nothing of why he believes that adolescents would tell him and his wife the truth about such a delicate matter, he obviously believes that his data on adolescent sexuality are better than that collected by Margaret Mead, and states that this proves that "after the mid-nineteenth century, when a puritanical Christian sexual morality was added to an existing traditional cult of virginity, Samoa became a society in which chastity was . . . the ideal for all women before marriage and in which this religiously and culturally sanctioned ideal strongly influenced the actual behavior of adolescent girls" (1983:239).

Every culture projects ideal behavior in its ceremonies and its descriptions of itself to foreigners and real behavior in its homes and day-to-day social interactions. Freeman shifts back and forth between these, always to the advantage of his theories. When, for example, he is out to impress the reader with the restrictive nature of the Samoan sexual code, he points to the defloration ceremony (which was mainly performed on girls of high rank, such as *taupou)* or to the fact that village councils *(fono)* fined family heads *(matai)* when teenaged members of their households became pregnant out of wedlock. On the other hand, he ignores real behavior that indicates Samoans take a rather natural attitude toward sex before and outside of marriage. While young people in Samoa are not promiscuous, as Mead suggested, neither are they models of

chastity, as Freeman would have us believe. I recall a pastor once remarking during a sermon in the Ta'u village church, in 1954, that some Manu'an villages had reported record crops of breadfruit and bananas, but that, as usual, Ta'u had its record crop of *tama o le po* (literally, "children of the night"—illegitimate, in other words). This, of course, was an exaggeration, but it attests that sexual experience was far from nonexistent among Ta'u village young people.

Since Derek Freeman is prone to call upon the early literature to document his arguments on any number of subjects, let us also utilize accounts of nineteenth century as well as modern authors in assessing the quality of the Freeman statements concerning Samoan sexuality. Missionary-scholar George Brown records:

> Unchastity in either sex before marriage was not considered a very serious offence against morality, but adultery was always condemned. Unnatural crimes were abhorred. They were not common. . . . There were few cases of rape. These were not much thought of except in the case of some person of rank or by the relatives of the family. [1910:265]

Almost all observers of the nineteenth century scene indicate that they sensed that the people, while not promiscuous, were at least quite sexually active. All agreed, however, that chief's daughters (primarily those who were *taupou)* were carefully guarded in order to protect their chastity. These precautions were taken, however, not because the Samoans placed such a high moral value upon chastity but rather because a virgin bride who was also the daughter of a high chief could command a very high price in the marriage market.

The fact that the taboo on premarital sex primarily applied to the *taupou* but not the other girls of the village is substantiated by London Missionary Society reports written in 1836 by John Williams. Williams maintains that

> Young women can be deflorated by chiefs at any time in public ceremony. This is considered honorable and does not change her chances to marry In fact—often she is given a special honorable name by the chief. [LMS Microfilm 18361

Williams goes on to speculate that this was done because the girls did not want to remain virgins and needed a respectable way to avoid it. His journal also

states that shortiy before his arrival in the islands that Malietoa's son had in a short space of time deflowered six girls. These occasions, he maintains were marked by dancing, merriment, and feasting. The fact that this sort of thing took place has never been recorded by later missionaries. This suggests that the earliest Christian influence was such that the practice was discarded during the early years of mission contact. It also suggests that the base line of Samoan behavior in regard to chastity as proposed by Mead in *Coming of Age in Samoa* is one which was established after mission contact, not with the true aboriginal behavior. This is reasonable because without Williams' account there has been no reason to believe that the culture provided any flexibility in regard to the matter of chastity. However, it does change the picture in regard to sex behavior as it is described and evaluated by Mead and Freeman.

Margaret Mead says

> Aboriginal Samoa was harder on the girl sex delinquent than is present day Samoa. . . . Deviations from chastity were formerly punished in the case of girls by a very severe beating and a stigmatizing shaving of the head. Missionaries have discouraged the beating and the head shaving, but failed to substitute as forceful an inducement to circumspect conduct. The girls whose activities are frowned upon by her family is in far better position than that of her great grandmother. [1928:273-274]

It is true that the *taupou* who was found not to be a virgin was beaten, but if we use Williams' information about the defloration of girls in the village being an acceptable procedure this would indicate that the aboriginal customs were set up so as to provide a sanctioned departure from chastity for most girls. The *taupou* was a special case.

Now the question remains, in spite of the passing of the *taupou* system, has the Christian church been able to extend the "cult of virginity" to all women regardless of rank? Modern observers (other than Freeman) seem to think not. Ronald Rose, a parapsychologist who worked in Western Samoa about the time that I was restudying Mead in Ta'u writes

> Sex adventures begin at an early age. Although virginity is prized, it is insisted on only with the *taupou,* who formerly was required on marriage to submit publicly to the groom's

> orator and exhibit the signs of virginity. . . . The *taupou* is a sort of scapegoat; she is heavily chaperoned; she symbolizes the high value placed on virginity. But the Samoans reckon that one to a village is enough!
>
> A girl's first experience is usually with a married man, and a boy's with a married woman. Virgins, male and female, are thought of as prizes in the sex game, but a permanent adulterous relationship between the mature and the immature is frowned on. Adultery is, however, as Margaret Mead says, "exceedingly frequent." [1959:161]

And Robert Maxwell, whose studies of extroversion in American Samoa led him to investigate sexual matters, wrote:

> The most frequent pattern seems to be that, at about the time of puberty, boys and girls are segregated by sex into two play groups. But they are beginning to notice members of the opposite sex. Flirtation between boys and girls is common and, apparently, sporadic sexual encounters occur. It is during this period, shortly after puberty, that many young people lose their virginity. This is by no means a universal experience, however. Some of the boys are shy, others take the rules of the church against fornication quite seriously. [1969:173]

Maxwell discovered, as did I, that sexual behavior is a very difficult area of inquiry with many pitfalls for the unwary investigator. He recalls:

> I began questioning informants about their sexual activities and received, in reply, a series of fantastic distortions and exaggerations and outright falsifications. Such lies—often in these cases concerning *moetotolos,* the sneaky sexual intruders of the night, made so famous by Margaret Mead—both benefit the teller, if he is the hero, by boosting his reputation as a lover, and are presumed by the informant to entertain and please the listener. I recorded, in my field notes, as accurately as possible one story told by an informant of his crawling into his girl friend's house, hav-

> ing intercourse, and then being discovered and chased away by the father. A few days later I learned that the entire tale was a fabrication. [1969:180]

While I personally did not feel that Manu'a islanders were as sexually active as Margaret Mead portrayed them, neither did I find them puritanical. My own observations of Samoan sexuality are probably most compatible with those of Judge C. C. Marsack, a Chief Justice of Western Samoa for over 15 years, and an authority that Derek Freeman cites on numerous occasions in his critique of Margaret Mead. Marsack observes,

> The Samoans take a very realistic view of the subject of sex. Their outlook is healthy and no interest would be evoked if they were to see the scribblings on the walls of public latrines in the more enlightened countries. Sex is a natural fact and is to be treated as such. . . . Sex is not, in his view, a suitable topic for whispered conversations between men in the corner of a hotel bar. It is not that the female sex has no physical interest for him. On the contrary, very definitely. It is merely that the relations between the sexes constitute just one very important factor among the sum total of the factors which together make up the life of mankind. [1961:89]

The Samoan attitude toward sex is complex. There is a tradition of public tests of virginity (of high-ranking girls) and village regulations requiring the chief's council to fine the *matai* (and thereby the family) of an unwed pregnant family member on the one hand, and on the other, there is the fact that such indiscretions are easily forgiven and quickly forgotten. While perhaps no more sexually active than young people in the United States there is hardly a cult of virginity in Samoa in spite of church and village pressures. As Ronald Rose writes for Western Samoa, in Ta'u village, "there is little, if any, stigma attached to pre-marital pregnancies. Children are always welcome in the Samoan household" (1959:162).

Derek Freeman, however, finds difficulty in reconciling the ideological and situational factors and rejects Mead's descriptions as contradictory and feasibly improbable.

> Mead's depiction of Samoan culture, as I have shown, is

> marked by major errors, and her account of the sexual behavior of Samoans by a mind-boggling contradiction, for she asserts that the Samoans have a culture in which female virginity is very highly valued, with a virginity-testing ceremony being "theoretically observed at weddings of all ranks," while at the same time adolescence among females is regarded as a period "appropriate for love-making," with promiscuity before marriage being permitted and "expected". . . . Something, it becomes plain at this juncture, is emphatically amiss, for surely no human population could be so cognitively disoriented as to conduct their lives in such a schizophrenic way. [1983:289]

What appears to be mind-boggling in this incidence is Freeman's lack of knowledge of the basic anthropological literature. In Robert Lowie's most famous and acclaimed monograph, *The Crow Indians*, he describes a society which, like the Samoan, contains apparently contradictory sexual themes. He writes that young Crow were extremely active sexually and that "after nightfall the young men were wont to roam about camp, blowing flutes for the amusement of their mistresses. Some venture to pull up the pegs outside the part of the tipi where a particular young woman slept and tried to touch her genitalia —a custom known as bi'arusace" (1935:50).

According to Lowie's account

> Sexual behavior was largely dominated by a double standard, which, however, was rather different from that of the Victorian era. That is to say, women were admired for immaculate purity, but they did not become outcasts by departing from the ideal.
>
> During the Sun Dance the honorific office of tree-notcher was conferred on a married woman of irreproachable fidelity, and in the same ceremony the leader of the firewood expedition was expected to be equally chaste. Even minor positions of religious character were held inconsistent with looseness. When I quoted a certain old woman's claim that she had filled such a post, my informant scoffed at the idea: Why, the Crow would never dream of choosing someone who was always running around with men. How-

> ever, even a wanton was never ostracized, she simply lost prestige. [ibid.:47]

Before closing discussion on the issue of Samoan sexuality one additional matter needs to be addressed. That is the matter of rape. In *Margaret Mead and Samoa* Derek Freeman quotes statistics for Western Samoa which indicate a per annum rape rate of 160 per 100,000 females.[2] These figures, he writes, "indicate that rape is unusually common in Samoa; the Samoan rape rate is certainly one of the highest to be found anywhere in the world. . . . There is every indication that this high incidence of rape has long been characteristic of Samoan society. Cases are reported by the early missionaries, as by Pratt in 1845" (1983:249).

My own perusal of the literature does not confirm this allegation, however. George Brown found that in the 1860s and 1870s that "there were few cases of rape," (1910:265) and Newton Rowe, who worked in Western Samoa at the same time Mead was in Manu'a wrote:

> A circumstance which created a considerable sensation about the end of 1922, and ruffled a period of calm, was that one of the white sisters [nurses] from the hospital was raped by a Samoan on the lonely stretch of up-hill road between Vailima and the Government resthouse at Mal-ololelei. It was an occurrence, I think, entirely unprecedented in Samoa. [1930:133]

SUMMING UP

The reader now has three slightly different accounts of the culture of the Samoans who live on the island of Ta'u in American Samoa. One account—Freeman's—has been described as emphasizing the "dark" side of Samoan life, while Mead's had been described as favoring the "light" side of life. But life in any culture is not all "dark" or "light," and I believe that my restudy of Manu'an culture falls somewhere in between.

I did not go to Samoa to refute the findings of Margaret Mead as Derek Freeman admits he did (1983:xii, xvii); I went to Ta'u village to evaluate what Mead had written a generation earlier. I approached my task as objectively as possible. I had no axe to grind; I had no favors to repay. I did not feel compelled to support any body of theory— Mead's, Boas' or Herskovits'. I believed that it was important for the discipline of anthropology to undersand the role of the personal equation in the collection and interpretation of data.

I found that Margaret Mead, because she was young in a society that venerates age and a woman in a society where the major political and ceremonial roles are in the hands of men, was at a great disadvantage in documenting certain formal aspects of Samoan life. In the study of young Samoan women, however, I believe she was able to establish excellent rapport because of her age and gender. I do not believe that Margaret Mead was "duped" by her young informants, because I believe she was too much aware of scientific controls and the need for data verfication to be lead astray by a group of teenage girls. I also do not believe that Samoans lie to people they have developed a close relationship with just for sport.

I am convinced that Margaret often over-generalized and was given to exaggeration but I also realize that she was on her first field trip with only twenty-three years of life to season her and only three years of exposure to anthropology to prepare her for her scientific adventure in the South Seas. During those three years she had been in close association with Ruth Benedict, whose configurational approach to culture emphasized dominant themes or major ethos sets and often overlooked individual atypical behavior.

While Margaret Mead discovered what she hoped to find in Samoa—that storm and stress in adolescence is not a universal phenomenon related to human biological nature but one related to particular cultural systems, I believe her findings were correct, that her approach was objective, and that her methodological skills in observation were exceptionally good for one of her age and experience. She has demonstrated the force of culture within people's lives without insisting that culture is the only determining factor in human behavior. Mead went to Samoa a young woman in a young science. She wrote a book that has had a major impact on anthropology and the way that behavioral scientists in general view the human animal. When I went to Manu'a to restudy the work of Margaret Mead I will admit that I would have liked to play the role of a "giant killer," and I believe that my mentor, Melville J. Herskovits, might have relished being associated with such an accomplishment. While I found interpretations which I could not totally support in Mead's writings, I found her to be more than an adequate recorder of facts and an insightful interpreter of those data. The "giant" was indeed a "giant." I have returned to Samoa for study in 1962-63, 1974, and 1976-77 and I still believe that Margaret Mead was essentially correct in her characterization and conclusions about coming of age in Samoa. And I still am impressed with the quality of her investigation.

On the other hand, I am not impressed with the quality of the Freeman

research and I believe that this "refutation" effort has contributed little to anthropology or Samoan studies. There are some fundamental flaws in Freeman's investigative procedures that greatly reduce the credibility of his findings. There is, for example, a lack of sensitivity to regional differences in behavior and an apparent disregard for time differences and evidence of cultural change. This is to say, Sa'anapu, Western Samoa is not Ta'u village, American Samoa and 1925-26 is not 1942, 1967, or 1981. There should have been careful, pains-taking control exercised to render these different places and different times comparable. This was not done. In addition to this, Freeman failed to meet a basic requirement of science—that generalizations be documented with testable evidence. David Schneider maintains that one of the canons of science "is that evidence be presented for statements of fact and that the method of obtaining that evidence be fully explained. Freeman holds Mead's work of 1925 to standards that he, in 1983, does not live up to in his own work." (1983b:6).

I also believe that Derek Freeman, through selective use of the anthropological literature on Samoa, has built a case that is far from accurate. In regard to the documentation in Freeman's book, Colin Turnbull writes

> His random collection of quotations, as unscrupulously selective as ever, comes largely from early travelers and missionaries, writers and poets, with no anthropological training. [1983:34]

One of Derek Freeman's major criticisms of Mead is that she had to depend to a great extent on acquiring information from informants (Freeman 1983:288) rather than through personal observation and that some of these informants deceived Mead just for sport. But one cannot criticize Margaret for believing the sexual accounts of young Samoan girls, many of them about her age, and then expect the scientific community to believe that the investigations of an elderly white male among girls of adolescent age could be reliable and valid on such a delicate subject as virginity (Freeman 1983:238-^0).

One of the more serious flaws of Freeman's anthropology is his inability or refusal to grasp the theoretical position of Boasian anthropology. Concerning this misconception, Marvin Harris writes:

> By showing that Mead was mistaken about Samoa Freeman presumes to right the balance between the extreme heredi-tarian and cultural viewpoints. ... He portrays himself as a veritable paragon of scientific objectivity and common

> sense. But his portrayal is a sham, for in order to counterbalance these two extremes—the absolute biological determinism of Galton and the absolute cultural determinism of Boas—Freeman erects his own fable of Boasian anthropology. [1983:20]

The fable, of course, describes Boas and his students as "absolute cultural determinists" who held a *tabula rasa* view of human nature in which biological considerations could be disregarded. This position never characterized Boasian anthropology.

Although Freeman calls for a theory of human behavior which would give greater weight to biological explanations and less to cultural ones, a critical review of *Margaret Mead and Samoa* by anthropologist Jerry Gold in the *Samoa News* (26 Aug. 1983) notes that "Freeman hardly ever opposes Mead's environmental, or cultural determinist position by arguing from a biological position. Rather, he opposes her by arguing from his own stances to wit, that his knowledge of Samoan culture is superior to hers." Gold also suggests that if Freeman has access to evidence of a biological sort that the "nurture" school has suppressed, then he should bring it forward. In a similar vein Paul Shankman suggests that "the adequacy of his new paradigm is a moot point because he is not able to determine precisely how culture and biology interact to produce Samoan behavior, and because he employs cultural and not biological explanations of Samoan behavior" (1983:22).

Marvin Harris also has searched in vain for biological data in Freeman's book. He writes

> Freeman's book ends without any discussion of how sleep crawling, status rivalry, the virginity cult, or any other aspect of Samoan adolescence can be better understood by invoking human nature more than Mead did, when she asserted that there is one human nature that allows for unlimited cultural diversity. [1983:21]

I am not certain whether the Mead/Freeman controversy has been a good thing or a bad thing for the science of anthropology. It has brought charges that anthropology is a "soft science," and Freeman's book has given comfort to supporters of what David Schneider has referred to as a political philosophy marked by "materialist, biologistic thinking." However, it has also forced anthropologists to re-examine issues like nature/nurture, proper field

anthropologists to re-examine issues like nature/nurture, proper field methodology, scientific objectivity, and professional ethics.

It is unfortunate that Margaret Mead was not alive when the Freeman book was published so that she might have entered the fray. It would have been a colorful battle and one from which we all would have profited. It is also unfortunate that Derek Freeman, who has spent some six years living in Samoa, who speaks the language fluently and, who, because he is a chief, claims better rapport with the people than other Samoan specialists, did not choose to write a comprehensive treatise on Samoa rather than a refutation of the work of a single investigator. Imagine the value of work which would have honestly evaluated all of the ethnographic literature on Samoa and would have posed various hypotheses (not only his own) about Samoan behavior for future investigators to test. A body of scientific, anthropological data is something that many people contribute to and amend in the search for better explanations and greater predictability of human behavior. It should not be something that attempts to close the door on all further investigation and purges alternative interpretations. This is the effect of *Margaret Mead and Samoa, the Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, It could have been a great contribution.

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POSTSCRIPT

The Problems of Youth in Contemporary Samoa

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In the spring of 1985 I went to Samoa to inquire into the problems of youth and to find out what influence Derek Freeman's book might be having on the professionals who were working with them. I am now pleased indeed to have been invited to add a postscript on my research to Lowell Holmes' critique of Freeman's work.[1]

Freeman's book on Samoan culture and the media coverage it received trouble me for much the same reasons it troubled Holmes and the other reviewers he discusses. From general reading in Samoan and Polynesian ethnography, I could not accept the extremity of Freeman's harsh portrayal, too negative to be sufficiently mitigated by his closing reference to some of Samoa's "shining virtues" (1983:278). I was also critical of his failure to deal seriously with the complexities of recent social-historical change. Although this failure has characterized much anthropological analysis of the past, it is surprising to find it in a contemporary book that specifically purports to advance scientific method. In addition, I was astonished by Freeman's misinformed presentation of Franz Boas as a scientist who ignored the importance of biology in human affairs. After all, it was the work of Boas, a physical as well as social anthropologist, that laid the basis for the "new physical anthropology" which, in the United States, has stressed the intricate relations between the physical and the cultural in relation to human evolution itself, and to such matters as fertility, nutrition, and health.[2]

The issue raised by Freeman's book that made me decide to go to Samoa, however, pertains to its implications for understanding and dealing with problems of adolescents and young people in Samoa today. Elsewhere in the world, delinquency, suicide, and other escalating problems of Third World youth are seen as arising from new social and economic conflicts, and from the malaise and hopelessness associated with such difficulties as school failure, unemployment, and loss of cultural identity. By contrast, the proposition that is central to Freeman's argument with Mead is that the problems of Samoan youth

central to Freeman's argument with Mead is that the problems of Samoan youth in recent decades are nothing new. To Freeman, high rates of delinquency, suicide, and other expressions of psychological disorder are indications of difficulties that are old in Samoan society. Freeman asks us to believe that the culprit is not new forms of social disorganization, but instead Samoan culture itself. In this respect, I would argue that it is he, not Mead, who would make Samoa out to be a unique case.

I have not been a Pacific scholar, but research on colonization and education and their relations to social conflicts in other parts of the world made it impossible for me to accept Freeman's proposition.[3] Consider, for example, the problem of youth unemployment. The phenomenon had no counterpart in societies based on subsistence farming, where the economic future of young people was assured. In 1970 I was studying schooling in urban and rural Zambia, and I noted the considerable attention that was being given to what was a relatively new problem in that and other sub-Saharan African countries— the lack of jobs for young people who had completed secondary school. Youth unemployment is of course older in industrialized countries than in countries where, in their pre-colonial and independent past, urban centers were more integrated with and less disruptive of village farming life. Everywhere, however, youth unemployment is on the increase, and everywhere with deleterious psychological effects. As stated in a UNESCO report of five conferences on youth held in different parts of the world between 1977 and 1981, youth unemployment "gives rise to other very serious problems, producing a sense of guilt, frustration, loss of identity and social rejection which may drive young people to self-ruination (drug abuse) or delinquency" (UNESCO 1985:42).

Freeman makes no mention of youth unemployment and its possible harmful effects in Samoa. Nor, as Holmes indicates, does he examine the distribution of the figures he gives on delinquency among youth in relation to distinctions between hinterland villages and those next to or part of the harbor centers of Pago Pago in American Samoa and Apia in Western Samoa. Instead he simply closes his chapter on delinquency with a vague reference to biology (Freeman 1983:268).

Freeman likewise gives no consideration to conflicts of young people that can be associated with schooling. Generally speaking, these are of two kinds: those associated with school failure and the consequent threat to self esteem; and those associated with disjunctions between school and home social relations and values, and the consequent threat to cultural identity. "Modern" schooling, as a learning process whereby children are thrown into sharp competition with their

peers, and at which they can fail, contrasts with traditional forms of learning in non-capitalist societies, where everyone learns basic skills in the course of cooperatively structured daily activity, and where there is leeway for individuals to concentrate on activities they may excel at or find particularly satisfying. Sutter (1980) has documented this clash in a Western Samoan primary school. Writing about Latin America some time ago, Mich referred to the depressing effects of school failure on young people, and of the new "inferiority of the school dropout who is held personally responsible for his failure." Mich stated, "The higher the dose of schooling an individual has received, the more depressing his experience of withdrawal. The seventh grade dropout feels his inferiority much more acutely than the dropout from the third grade ..." (Mich 1969:32). Reimer, an associate of Mich's, emphasized that "a dropout from a general school system . . . has learned that the good things of his society are not for him—and probably also that *he does not deserve them"* (Reimer n.d.:4, italics in the original).

In my study of Zambian schooling, I was impressed with the commitment of teachers, parents, and students, and with the amount that had been accomplished in building a national school system in a short period of time. However, curriculum planning was still dominated by the entirely incorrect assumption that there was nothing in the children's "traditional" home experience on which to build a scientifically oriented "modern" educational program (Leacock 1973). Superficial aspects of Zambian culture, such as names and places, were present in grade school texts, but the themes pervading the materials, as well as those sections of the curriculum relevant for future employment, were basically Western and constituted a serious challenge to a young person's sense of identity. With reference to this problem, the above-mentioned UNESCO report stated that "at the African meeting, the participants were highly critical of the educational system inherited from the colonial period . . . [for] rejecting all their values and 'importing' undesirable features such as elitism and individualism." The need was strongly expressed to establish a new system on the basis of "solid values underlying the African approach to education—mainly solidarity, continuity and the unity of theory and practice" (UNESCO 1985: 44).

A firm knowledge of their history is particularly critical for young people who must make their life choices in the context of the present clash between tradition and a form of "modernity" that is "highly ambivalent" in that it "negates and undermines the authentic values" of their past (UNESCO 1985: 45). Firm knowledge of the past choices made by their forbears and of constraints upon these choices imposed from the outside, and understanding of changes and

continuities in their culture over time, are enormously important if young people are to maintain a sure sense of identity as they face the difficult constraints and choices of the present. In Africa, reconstruction of the myriad culture histories that have unfolded on that continent is understood to be essential both for pride and self-respect, and is the basis for making informed choices about social programs and policies. I myself have contributed to the ethnohistorical analysis of the cultural changes that were taking place in native North American societies from the sixteenth century on (Leacock 1980; Leacock and Lurie 1971). Such analysis offers a parallel example of scholarly effort which furnishes a valuable resource for people who have to choose among different possible strategies for dealing with the many practical problems that confront them.

In Samoa I met some of the people who share this view of how important it is for a people to reconstruct its culture history. Lafi A. Sanerivi, General Secretary of the YMCA of Western Samoa, addressing a leadership training workshop, spoke in part as follows:

> The fact that our nations were colonized is not a new concept. We were victims of the Western "dare sport" of exploration and domination of the then called "dark and uncivilized lands." In school we studied of the "mighty ships" that braved the unknown seas that came back to England with riches and tales of vast stretches of lands . . .
>
> They came with their education and we got educated. Their way. We learnt their language, but they did not learn ours. If we did have a history, we were told to forget it because it is a history of savages. Their manners and ways of living became a model . . . Suddenly, we open our eyes and see . . . And ironically enough, we realize that we have actually learnt of how our countries were exploited, our ancestors murdered and enslaved, our values discarded, our cultures vanishing . . . We open our eyes and come to our senses and find ourselves in the Third World . . . We are the poor. We are the under-developed. We are the "have-nots" . . .
>
> Now we try and sift through the mess to identify what is really ours and what isn't. We grapple with issues and concerns of which we were a part in their making either

> directly or indirectly . . . These are Asia-Pacific realities . . . We are weak, poor and lost. Our present awareness attempts to build a people from non-entities, build a nation from a colony . . . (Sanerivi 1985:1-2).

Lafi Sanerivi was one of the approximately forty professionals I interviewed in American and Western Samoa who were concerned in one way or another with the problems of youth. These included school principals, teachers, and counsellors, as well as social workers, public health workers, psychologists, administrators, and pastors. I also attended workshops on the difficulties confronting young people, a week-long workshop held by the YMCA in Western Samoa, and a day-long session with high school students in American Samoa. Thanks to the cordiality and hospitality of which Samoans are justly proud, I talked with young as well as older people in various informal settings, visited Samoan homes, and attended weddings, church services, and public festivities. In order to probe more deeply into the changing nature of youth in the culture history of Samoa, I have since begun ethnohistorical inquiry into missionaries' accounts of their activities in nineteenth century Samoa.[4]

Shankman (1983:52) has written that "the current economic and political troubles of Western Samoa weigh heavily on younger Samoans, who are excluded from the political system and are on the margins of an economy that cannot fulfill their rising expectations," and that "these pressures and others may have contributed to an increase in juvenile delinquency and alcohol abuse in the Apia area." Further, he suggests that the explanation for the overall increase in suicide, especially among youth, between 1970 and 1982, may lie "in the modernization of Western Samoa and its interaction with traditional Samoan culture." My interview materials, in conjunction with administrative and other reports, and with the information on youth available in ethnographic studies of Samoan village life, tallied with this general position and that taken by Holmes. When coupled with historical writings and archival materials, all indications are that adolescence has indeed changed from being a period of relatively little stress, as Holmes argues, to being highly charged with the stress manifested by the delinquency and suicide figures given by Freeman.

Freeman (1983:205-6, 222-5) argues that it is the authoritarianism and parental severity of Samoan culture that are responsible for the psychological disturbances and other difficulties of youth. Moreover, he sees these traits as "integral to the pagan culture of Samoa," and merely reinforced, rather than qualitatively altered, by church teachings on the beating of children. Thus

> Samoans, as children, adolescents, and adults, live within an authority system the stresses of which regularly result in psychological disturbances ranging from compulsive behaviors and musu states to hysterical illnesses and suicide (Freeman 1983:225).

As discussed above, serious youth problems are simply traditional in Freeman's view; by implication they are insoluble without major changes in Samoan culture itself.

To be sure, the immediate source of stress for many young people is a perceived lack of empathy and concern on the part of stern and demanding parents, while parents and elders who become angry over the perceived lack of proper respect on the part of the young may be excessively abusive—unfortunately an all too familiar pattern in today's world. In relation to the problem, youth workers in both American and Western Samoa feel it is critical to educate parents about the changing needs of youth in a changing society and the importance of intergenerational communication and mutual respect. Significantly, historical materials indicate that such respect was an old feature of Samoan society. In this regard, Samoa was no different from those other societies around the world where competition over rank and status had not undercut the strong value placed on cooperative work relations, hospitality and sharing. Respect for parents was apparently so firmly built into the structure of work groups in Samoa, as in other such societies, that parents felt comfortable allowing their children considerable leeway. In turn, youth made their contribution according to their age and, to some extent, their status, knowing their future was assured.[5] In speaking about how much he enjoyed this period in his life, one elder said, "and then my time of serving was ending up in being served—that is the other side of the picture."

Missionaries to Samoa in the 1840s construed parental permissiveness as "lack of control" and repeatedly complained about it in their letters.[6] "It may be safely affirmed that a parent has no means of compelling his refractory child of seven years of age to obey him," wrote the missionary Bullen in 1847, and continued, with respect to keeping a child at school,

> He may use entreaties and threaten punishment, but the child having made up his mind to leave, and who knows full well from experience the issue of such contests, will perhaps run off to some of her family relations, who will

> readily undertake to confirm her in disobedience to parental authority. Would the parents continue in a resolute discipline till the child should be completely subdued, the evil would be greatly remedied but alas! they know nothing of such discipline and seem utterly unable to learn it. After once or twice correcting the child, I have heard them say *in her hearing,* "Well, if this do not suffice, I suppose she must have her own way" (Bullen 1847, underlining in the original letter).

One might wish to argue that the parent in this incident was perhaps not that interested in keeping the child in school in the first place. However, consider another account, one of a little boy who was undeniably going against his parents' wishes. After attending the mission school, the missionary reported, the boy determined to take no further part in "the heathenish practices of his people."

> After forming this resolution, one evening his father and mother were going to attend the night-dance in their village, and they called him to accompany them. He told them that he did not wish to go, but would rather remain in the house. This request was complied with after some little rebuke from his father. The next night, his parents again prepared for the dance, and desired their son to go with them. Again he refused . . .

This time the boy's friends became angry and argued with him but to no avail. The next day the parents took the boy to the teacher, related the preceding events, and asked the teacher to take the boy under his care (Ella 1851).

With respect to parental severity, Freeman (1983:205) cites the missionary Stair who wrote that at one time children "were indulged in every wish, at another severely beaten for the most trivial offense." Freeman does not cite the rest of the sentence. Stair (1987:178) goes on to say, "and then shortly after an oven of food was prepared, as a peace-offering to appease their offended dignity." Such ritualization suggests that such beating was hardly a common occurrence and was by no means as capricious as Stair assumed, and also that, in keeping with Samoan mores, it was shame, not physical pain, that was the more cogent sanction. In any case, the whole picture from the midnineteenth century given by missionaries who, with their wives, were in daily contact with their

parishioners, contrasts sharply with that of recent times, where beating can be serious and where, in American Samoa at least, actual child abuse is beginning to be acknowledged as a social problem. The typical case reported to the Mental Health Department of the LBJ Hospital in American Samoa, as told to me, like contemporary intergenerational conflict concerning older youth, has a familiar ring: a drinking father, probably battering his wife, and a frustrated mother taking it out on her children, in a family with from five to nine children living in too small a house. The trend towards a nuclear family unit and European-style housing means that social forms of control have become largely inoperative in such cases; economic problems have become a major source of frustration for parents; and compulsory schooling has robbed mothers of their former baby-tenders during a good part of the day.

Youth suicide has also become a recognized social problem in Samoa, especially in Western Samoa. In the late sixties suicide began to grow from a rare event into a virtual epidemic, reaching a high point of forty-nine known deaths from suicide in 1981. By comparison with the usual pattern recorded for industrialized countries, where suicide rates increase with age, suicides were heavily concentrated among young people from fifteen to twenty-four, especially young men. Perhaps in part due to the reduced availability of paraquat, the herbicide responsible for nearly four-fifths of the 1981 deaths (Bowles 1985:19), and in part due to a public information campaign through the press, the radio and meetings, known suicide deaths dropped to thirty-five in 1982, twenty-five in 1983, and lower again in 1984 (Oliver 1985; The Lifeline Team 1984). The rate of attempted suicide among youth continues to be high, however. Young people may take paraquat into their mouths and spit it out without swallowing any, or take other herbicides that are not quite as deadly. A "Lifeline Team" for suicide prevention has been established to work with these young people and their families.

A conference on suicide in the South Pacific was held at the EastWest Center in Hawaii in 1984, and papers by Rubinstein (1985) on Micronesia and Macpherson and Macpherson (1985) on Western Samoa explore the blockages to youth aspirations that lie behind the phenomenon. Like Western Samoa, Micronesia has experienced a tragic epidemic of youth suicide, the rate climbing from eight per hundred thousand in 1960-63 to forty-eight in 1980-83. Suicides are almost entirely young men; the ratio to women is twelve to one. Although rebuffs from parents, lovers, schools, or other sources trigger suicides, deep socio-cultural conflicts produce the malaise that has caused a sudden rise in the number of youth who respond to rebuff or punishment with this ultimate act of

rage and despair.

The developments that are responsible for the rise in suicide in Micronesia follow from the extreme rapidity of the changes associated with the post-World War II "modernization" of this area (plus, I would add, the stepped up colonial exploitation), and sharp discontinuities in experiences and expectations of parents raised before the war and their children raised in the post-war period. As I understand Rubinstein's interpretation, the change from a largely subsistence economy with its cooperative work groups, to a market economy and its requirement for individualized economic activity has thrown young people into greater dependency on their parents/ and has substituted specifically parental authority for the more diffuse authority of village or lineage leaders. Further, children who have grown up in the postwar world expect and need a different kind of behavior from their parents than these parents think necessary or appropriate. Finally, at the same time as young men are developing new aspirations that most of them cannot achieve, they are losing old sources of satisfaction in the social relations of the lineage meeting houses where they used to sleep (these have all but disappeared), and in the gratification of working on large, important lineage activities. Interestingly the highest rates for suicide are neither in the towns, where there are new social outlets for young men, nor in remote villages, where life has changed less, but in intermediate villages where the gratifications of the subsistence economy have disappeared while means for achieving new goals are blocked.

There are, of course, many differences between Micronesia and Samoa, and for that matter, within Micronesia itself, but similarities with respect to the general pattern of dilemmas for young men are striking. Like Rubinstein, the Macphersons (1985:59) propose a "blocked opportunity model" for the social stress Samoan young men have been experiencing. New *matai* titles were created after independence (in order to distribute votes evenly across districts), but further increase disallowed, and access has been further restricted by increasing longevity. Increasing longevity and no enforced retirement has also restricted the opportunity of those aspiring to become pastors. Economic difficulties have limited expansion of the job market which cannot accommodate school graduates, and the over supply of labor has depressed wages. Meanwhile, and most important, the New Zealand economy slowed, and American Samoa made it more difficult to enter and go on to the United States, which cut off the option of working for a while overseas that used to be taken for granted. The Macphersons (1985:56) write, "It is significant that the decline coincides with the increase in the rate of suicide , . ."

Dennis Oliver (1985) looked at the distribution of suicide in different villages and found a strong correlation between suicide-prone villages and a high wflfai-to-commoner ratio that at first blush might seem to contradict the Macphersons on blocked opportunity. The four villages with the highest suicide rates had particularly high *matai-to*commoner ratios—1:1.6 by comparison with the national average of 1:24 in 1961 and 1:12 in 1981. However, although from a long-term point of view there would be more openings for youth, from an adolescent's immediate viewpoint, in a changing and difficult situation, the virtual lack of any mature untitled men in the *aumaga* could create a greater sense of distance and powerlessness. Further, the tendency of many matai to become involved in extra-village business and political affairs can lead to a breakdown in the traditional coupling of authority with responsibility, and of the face-to-face contact that allowed traditional balancing mechanisms to function, such as the license allowed the young to criticize their elders in humorous song. Oliver (1985:76) writes that in one village with a high suicide rate and a relatively high mafaf-to-commoner ratio, he was told the *matai* were trying to "imitate Hitler," and that "there was continual friction and conflict between the top *matai."* In Lockwood's (1971:104) 1965-66 study of four villages ranging from a largely subsistence to a largely market economy, in the village at the market end of the continuum the *matai* "were too involved with politics and other matters beyond the village boundaries to give their full attention to the village itself." Such circumstances would add powerfully to the anger and frustrations of youth whose traditional avenues for gratification are quickly eroding and whose new aspirations are being blocked.

In sum, then, it is a serious misrepresentation of the situation to say that youth difficulties simply follow from the authoritarianism of the Samoan past. Instead they follow from the fact that the nature of youth as a life period has been transformed in many ways. With respect to Mead, I met few people who had read her book on Samoan adolescence. However, two of the people I came to know best in Western Samoa had read it, and both said it rang true to them in the light of their own youth. One had visited Manu'a in the thirties when he was a teen-ager. This is not to say Mead's account is without faults. On one point in particular I agree with Freeman, and I see Holmes does as well. This is with respect to Mead's ethnocentric ascription of "shallow feelings" to Samoans. Other anthropologists working in the personality and culture tradition have also assumed that the dispersed parenting so common in village-based societies leads to a shallowness of feelings. The assumption is unjustified and one I have always questioned.

Reports on the sexuality of teen-age girls and young women in the recent past, mostly given by women, ranged from formal statements about well-guarded virgins, through statements that this might be a goal but not necessarily adhered to, to criticisms of church teachings on chastity as imposing unnecessary stress on young women. In the end it seemed that discretion, rather than actual chastity, was usually the more cogent issue—a common enough state of affairs. Further, the elite or well-to-do families were in general more concerned than others, and rumors would be circulated about their sending their daughters off to Hawaii for abortions—again a familiar-sounding story. At the same time, the ceremonial defloration of the *taupou* remains an important cultural theme, and a blood-stained sheet on the wedding night is a source of family pride.

Variable concern with virginity today does not mean it was expected of an unmarried woman in the past. On the contrary, missionary descriptions and complaints concerning night dancing plus what some people said about its latter-day forms makes the sexual freedom of adolescents, with the exception of the *taupou*, undeniable in my view. This is not too surprising. After all, despite Victorian ideology, it was not so long ago that a goodly proportion of children were born "out of wedlock" in England, and this was hardly thought a matter for comment, as long as the inheritance of property or title was not involved. Unfortunately, however, the fact that teenage sexuality has been widely accepted, indeed expected, in societies around the world[7] does not help a young woman who is caught in changing and ambivalent standards. In Samoa, where adolescent behavior reflects strongly on family honor, fear of shame and disapproval concerning a sexual relation can today be a precipitating factor in a young woman's suicide attempt.

The difficulty of rendering traditionally expected service and meeting the requirements of school or job is another source of tension for a young woman whose parents have not modified their demands upon her. Furthermore, the fact that the service of young women may often today be rendered in the privacy of a nuclear family household has changed its nature. Gerber's study of family relationships in a large American Samoan village describes how vulnerable a girl may be to parental demands and how sensitive to parental disapproval (Gerber 1975:38-54). Anxiety over whether she will be reproved by her parents, or perhaps will be commended by her father in the evening family prayer is altogether different from the assurance of public recognition a girl traditionally received for her service and especially for the completion of her first fine mat. Although mat-making was time-consuming and even onerous, it was accorded the highest public value.

In closing, I want to say a few words about my personal reactions to Samoa. I have been focusing on problems but do not want to give the wrong impression. Most young people are handling them well, and I was constantly impressed with their buoyancy and creativity. I photographed the elegant dancing at school festivities and the fine paintings on exhibit at a high school, and I would have liked the time to record more of the marvelous singing I kept hearing.

I was also impressed with the understanding and concern of people working with youth, the men as well as the women. Of the people I interviewed, none were simply holding a job, though there are those in Samoa as everywhere. I was particularly impressed with the ease and assurance with which the women I met dealt with authority—not only older women—a retired mayor, a *matai*, a high-titled school principal—but young women who had successfully battled discrimination with respect to good jobs and were managing both work and family. Unlike Western women, Samoan women are not uncomfortable handling authority; by contrast with Western women they have behind them a long tradition of their own publicly recognized organizations and responsibilities.

With respect to the influence Freeman's book may have had on people working with youth in Samoa, I found it to be at best indirect. In American Samoa the only person I met who had read the book, an educator from the United States, was very critical, and, interestingly enough, the newspaper interview that informed most people about the work made no mention of any negatives in Freeman's portrayal. Freeman cites supporters of his work in Western Samoa but opinions were clearly mixed. The few people I talked with who had read the book were unfavorable, and I was told of the angry criticism Freeman had received on the occasion of a public lecture.

All told, far more relevant than Freeman's work to the problems of young people in Samoa today is the approach expressed by Lafi Sanerivi (1985:2) in his closing sentence to the passage cited above, "Our present awareness attempts to . . . build a vision of hope, equality and a just society from the aftermath of colonization."

NOTES

Chapter 1

[1] See Freeman's *Margaret Mead and Samoa* (1983), pp. 46, 57, 75, 78, 81, 94, 281-82, 295, 297, 301.

[2] Freeman leveled such an accusation in personal correspondence with me (October 10, 1967).

Chapter 2

[a]On April 25, 1967, Freeman wrote: "The conclusions I have reached (based on my researches in anthropology, evolutionary biology, ethology, history and psycho-analysis) have little in common with those of Mead and her avowal of the doctrine of 'absolute cultural determinism,' and I am now interested in the critical scrutiny of a whole trend in anthropology associated with the doctrines of Boas, Benedict, Mead, and others. The re-examination of *Coming of Age* and Mead's other early writings is one of my starting points." And on May 25, 1967 Freeman wrote: "I have read [chapters X and XI of your doctoral thesis] with interest and I am in agreement with all of your criticism of Margaret Mead's account of Manu'a. What puzzles me, however, is that having made these substantial criticisms you should go on to say in your summary conclusions (p. 232) that "the reliability of Mead's account is remarkably high." Freeman's October 10, 1967 letter stated: "You will also know, I take it, that Margaret Mead's name is execrated in Manu'a (as elsewhere in Samoa), for her writing and expecially *Coming of Age in Samoa* are regarded as *luma fai tele*, a defamatory libel. Indeed, the people of Ta'u told me that if she ever dared return they would tie her up and throw her to the sharks."

Let me say that when Margaret Mead returned to Ta'u in 1971 to dedicate a power plant, she was welcomed with open arms and showered with gifts and honors.

[2] "I would merely comment that as we look back on Mead's Samoan researches we are able to appreciate anew the wisdom of Karl Popper's admonition that in both science and scholarship it is, above all else, indefatigable rational criticism of our suppositions that is of decisive importance, for such criticism by 'bringing out our mistakes . . . makes us understand the difficulties of the problem we are trying to solve,' and so saves us from the allure of the