Margaret Mead: President-Elect, 1974

Wilton S. Dillon

Blackberry Winter, Margaret Mead's 1972 autobiography of her earlier years, bears this dedication: "To the eight peoples who have admitted me to their lives I dedicate this book in which I try to give of my own life as they have given of theirs."

Such a demonstrated willingness to practice personally what she believes vital to science and ethics—sharing and making knowledge public—is a revealing characteristic of the president-elect of the AAAS. Her sense of reciprocity in fieldwork parallels both a strong sense of obligation to make science meaningful on a global scale in return for the intellectual gifts of past generations, together with the support of contemporary patrons and critics of science. Dedicated to preserve the fragile web of life on this planet, she regards argumentation and criticism, aimed at the scientific endeavor, as a sign of caring, intimacy, and truth-seeking.

In 1935 as a member of the interdisciplinary team to "plan research in competitive and cooperative habits," she edited a collection of essays on 12 cultures; its first printing appeared in 1937 as *Cooperation and Competition Among Primitive Peoples*. That effort serves today as a base line for her applied anthropological task of working out a new symbiosis between scientists and their publics. She already is mobilizing her interpersonal, interdisciplinary, interorganizational, and intercultural networks toward the aim of increasing cooperation among competitors for scarce resources during these lean years in science. Her webs of communications are a function of her decades of robust activity coupled with her remarkably detailed memory of persons and places. Robert Lowie's praise of her specificity in 1937 ("the systematic observation of countless concrete instances") applies as well, in 1974, to her retrieval of pertinent bits of written and unwritten material needed to solve a problem or illuminate a mystery. She now brings to the AAAS more than a half century of scholarly and public endeavors as a major focus of her formidable energies.

When pressed humorously by admirers several years ago to declare her candidacy for the presidency of the United States, she replied that she would leave that to the professional politicians who had chosen that kind of career; she had chosen science, and would work through its various institutions for the public good. Some institutions are of her own creation.

One is the Institute for Intercultural Studies, which provides small-scale support for new research projects, including those of young newcomers to the behavioral sciences. The Scientists' Institute for Public Information (SIPI), of which she was president in 1970–72, the World Society of Ekistics (president, 1969–71), and the Anthropological Film Institute (president, 1970) are among the others she has helped to nurture. She was an early leader of the Society for Applied Anthropology, founded at Harvard Business School in 1941, and is identified by an early collaborator, Eliot D. Chapple, as responsible for the use of Kipling's poem *The Sons of Martha* as a statement of what applied anthropologists are all about. Her central professional identity lies with the American Anthropological Association which she also has served as president.

Views on Leadership

With her dual citizenship in both the United States and the world at large, Margaret Mead has a keen interest in the kinds of political leadership by which top executives of a given nation take responsibility "for all the people." Her avocational study of the evolution of the American presidency, compared with other forms of chieftancy, has produced some inquiries into the times when certain Presidents of the United States became aware that they should try to represent and lead everybody—not only those who voted for them. Her AAAS presidency will be marked, no doubt, by a similar outlook from the start. (She makes, however, a sharp contrast between the tasks of a politician whose professionalism she admires and the metiér of a scientist practicing citizenship.) She shares with Glenn T. Seaborg, Mina Rees, Athelstan Spilhaus, and Roger Revelle—among recent AAAS presidents—a view of the AAAS as a bonding device for all the disciplines in a constantly evolving community with separate disciplines and sections linked by the need for synergistic approaches to new unknowns.

A Systems Approach

Such an ecumenical view of science reflects her relation to the pioneer work in the development of cybernetic theory which grew out of the early Macy Foundation conferences. Her book, *Small Conferences*, written with Paul Byers, draws in part on the Macy experience organized by the late Frank Fremont-Smith. Moreover, that view fits with her active role in the Society for General Systems Research, which she presided over in 1971. All of these views of the relation between the whole and the parts are congruent with the approach of anthropology and other sciences that concentrate on studying the interconnectedness of phenomena.

She was born 16 December 1901 in Philadelphia, and her 45 years of work at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, starting in 1926, culminated with the 1971 opening of the Hall of the Peoples of the Pacific. Her present title of "Curator Emeritus" has produced little change in her place of work or her pace. She continues to serve as adjunct professor at Columbia University. Her "leisure" consists of those intervals when she beats her own deadlines of fieldwork, lecturing, writing, and appearing before TV cameras. She had planned to spend her 70th birthday in Peking learning something about the scientific community there; when the visa failed to materialize, she adapted happily to the opportunity to

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spend 3 weeks with her daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson (Mrs. Barkev Kassarjian), and her granddaughter, Sevanne, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her grandmother role has not been neglected even though the Kassarjians now live in Teheran. For global travelers, Teheran proves a convenient place to visit, as witness Mead's recent reunion with her family there while en route back here from India where, after having been a winner of the Kalinga prize for the popularization of science, she visited and collected her honorary degrees (her 22nd and 23rd) from the universities of Delhi and Bombay. Earlier honorary doctorates of law, humanities, and science came from such institutions as Ewha in Korea, Emory, Harvard, California at Berkeley, Lincoln, Goucher, Columbia, Skidmore, Cincinnati, Kalamazoo, and Leeds. Wake Forest has offered her a degree, but she has not yet found the moment in her schedule to accept this academic tribute. She has been trustee or member of the board of directors of many colleges and universities, Hampton Institute in Virginia being one to which she has devoted much attention.

Margaret Mead

Mead's Own Coming of Age

Because she is one of the most famous of anthropologists, Mead's formal education is well known to those who have followed her career since *Coming of Age in Samoa* was published while she was still in her 20's and a fellow in the Biological Sciences of the National Research Council. A conventional biographical sketch reveals that she earned a B.A. from Barnard College in 1923, and a Ph.D. from Columbia in 1929. *Blackberry Winter*, however, remains the most revealing documentation of her own personality as it developed in the various environs of Philadelphia (where her father taught economics at the Wharton School): Swarthmore, Doylestown, New Hope, and other communities that mirrored the different styles of the Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians, and Episcopalians. She alternated formal schooling with home study, at the knees of a remarkably influential grandmother and an activist mother. The firstborn of five—she had three sisters and one brother—Mead spent her unchallenging high school days during World War I trying out her literary skills as a poet, a diarist, a letter writer, the beginner of a novel a magazine editor, and creator of "short plays for school occasions." Her continuing interest in literature is recorded in her 1959 book, *An Anthropologist at Work: Writings of Ruth Benedict*, which provides some samples of the poetry used in communication between Mead and such colleagues as Benedict and Edward Sapir in the 1920's. Her citation as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters paid tribute to the literary qualities of *Coming of Age in Samoa* and *Growing Up in New Guinea*; the original manuscripts were exhibited for their artful line drawings of human figures and architectural details in the margins of field notes.

"At different times," she wrote in her autobiography, "I wanted to become a lawyer, a nun, a writer, or a minister's wife with six children. Looking to my grandmother and my mother for models, I expected to be a professional woman and a wife and mother."

Looking for her then undefined professional preparation, Mead started, in 1919, a brief period of study at DePauw University, at Greencastle, Indiana; she moved to Barnard in 1920 where she crossed Broadway to start her pivotal collaboration at Columbia with Ruth Benedict, who served then as a teaching assistant to Franz Boas. It was Boas who first encouraged Mead's studies of human adolescence as part of mapping out new fields for anthropology. Columbia's first anthropology professor, Boas (1858–1942) drew upon his earlier German education in physics and geography in shaping that eclectic discipline. Mead remains a star among his numerous illustrious students who include Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Melville Herskovits, Paul Radin, A. A. Goldenweiser, Reo Fortune, and Charles Wagley. She became a supreme practitioner of Boas' exacting standards of field investigations.

Mead, unlike other senior scientists who spend their mature years as administrator-statesmen-philosophers, persists in returning "to the field," in publishing fresh materials to illuminate continuities or discontinuities of human groups caught up in rapid change induced by new technology and integration into larger social units. She made her 16th expedition in 1973, revisiting a Mountain Arapesh group now resettled in New Britain. Boas' insistence on linguistic preparation for fieldwork also encouraged Mead to learn to use seven languages to pursue her studies in New Guinea, Samoa, the Admiralty islands, and Bali. Her field techniques in the 1920's—the "stone age tools" of the pencil and notebook—have been supplemented by motion picture and sound recording equipment as a means of bringing fieldwork up to modern times. During her sojourn as a Fogarty Scholar at the National Institutes of Health in the autumn of 1973, Mead devoted great effort to soliciting moral and financial support for an international study center of anthropological films to be established at the Smithsonian Institution for research and educational purposes.

Lowie, writing of Boas in *The History of Ethnological Theory*, remarked: "Women [anthropologists] have made important contributions independently of Boas, but probably nowhere have they achieved so much work as under the stimulation of the Columbia atmosphere—witness the publications of Drs. Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Gladys Reichard, Erna Gunther, Margaret Mead, Gene Weltfish, and Ruth Underhill." The Columbia group also included Ruth Bunzel, Fredericka de Laguna, Esther Goldfrank, and other distinguished women in science.

In 1975, Mead will become the first anthropologist since Boas, in 1931, to assume the presidency of AAAS. Their predecessors from anthropology were: James D. Dana (1854), Lewis Henry Morgan (1880), Daniel G. Brinton (1894), and F. W. Putman (1898), the last before Boas gave his retiring presidential address on 29 December 1932 in Atlantic City. (The Anthropological Society of Washington celebrated in 1971 the centennial of Morgan's Smithsonian classic, *Systems of Con-*

sanguinity and Affinity; his later work *Ancient Society* has been canonized by some Marxists.) Mead, despite her personal and historic ties with the earlier greats of anthropology, represents a vastly changed profession. She herself, through her pioneering syntheses of biological, psychological, and social aspects of personality in culture, has made major contributions to our modern understanding of how humans learn adult roles in specific cultures. Her long years at the American Museum of Natural History, as she worked alongside specialists in turtles, fish, birds, and baboons, reinforced an early premise that *Homo sapiens* can be understood best through our links with other creatures with and without backbones. She once opposed changing the name of the Society for Applied Anthropology to that of Human Organization, matching the title of its journal, because of the necessity of reminding people that behavior takes place in a physical body with a nervous system. That insistence has helped to influence such diverse research as that of Ray Birdwhistell in kinesics and Alan Lomax in cantometrics. Both Konrad Lorenz, the ethologist, and Gray Walter, the brain specialist, were presented to New York scientists under her auspices. At the Smithsonian symposium, Man and Beast: Comparative Social Behavior, she brought back to light some nearly forgotten research by Helen Blauvelt on kids and lambs because of its implications for understanding mother-infant interaction among humans. Her interest in human brain evolution has been stimulated recently by conversations with Paul MacLean and a day in his laboratories at Poolesville, Maryland. This is all of a piece with her years of collaboration with psychiatrists at the Menninger Clinic, the University of Cincinnati, and Emory University, and with those in the World Health Organization and the World Federation of Mental Health, which she helped to start.

Mead's mind moves with the greatest of ease from molecular biology to ecosystems. Such inclusiveness and thinking concentrically serves her in extrapolating from the behavior of an idiosyncratic individual to small groups and thence to planning, say, a megalopolis from Detroit to Chicago, or contemplating about how humans fit into an interplanetary communications system. The speed with which she can shift from one unit of analysis to another, finding analogies and metaphors to feed new insights, produces, of course, some cries of alarm from less synoptic specialists. Her strong equation of a personal with a scientific ethic represents another thought process well known to those who have worked with her. New staff members in her office at the museum are sternly reminded by Mead not to ask the central switchboard operator to look up telephone numbers because this would put too great a burden on the whole system. The alumnae of Mead's office would make an interesting study in themselves as enriched survivors of such on-the-job training in daily ethics. Mead, who once helped draft the code of ethics of the Society for Applied Anthropology, with its emphasis on "taking the whole into account," in recent years has interrupted fieldwork to come back to preside over ethics discussions of the American Anthropological Association.

Such mental and ethical traits are consistent, too, with much of her collaboration with Rhoda Métraux. Mead's earlier work on Arapesh art and supernaturalism and Balinese imagery was followed by research, in collaboration with Métraux, on American responses to wartime conditions and, of late, on American images of science and scientists. All are products of the human brain.

The historic tension between science and religion as competitors for "explaining" the universe is absent in her writing and work. With Dobzhansky, Tobach, and Light, she edited *Science and the Concept of Race*, and shifted naturally 4 years later to the famous discussion of right and wrong in *Rap on Race* with James Baldwin. *To Love or to Perish: The Technological Crisis and the Churches* is another recent book that she co-edited. As scientist-citizen, she is a co-worker in a number of religious institutions: the Academy of Religion and Mental Health, Teilhard Centre for the Future of Man and, as co-chairman, the U.S.A. Task Force on the Future of Mankind and the Role of the Christian Churches in a World of Science-Based Technology. Her Terry lectures on religion, delivered at Yale, produced the book, *Continuities in Cultural Evolution*. One of her newest books is *Twentieth Century Faith: Hope and Survival*. Her first husband was the archeologist Luther Cressman, a graduate of General Theological Seminary, whom she married in 1923 in Buckingham, Pennsylvania. She later was married to the anthropologist Reo Fortune, and subsequently to the anthropologist Gregory Bateson. Her sisters became the wives of William Steig, the cartoonist, and Leo Rosten, the author of *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*.

Among other important differences between Mead and her anthropologist predecessors who were presidents of the AAAS are her pioneering studies of contemporary, complex, industrial societies rather than the small, homogeneous stable societies that have been regular fare for anthropologists. The controversy over national character studies has not deterred her from a belief that nation states are "legitimate" subject matter for anthropology; she has written such books as: *And Keep Your Powder Dry, Soviet Attitudes toward Authority, Male and Female, The School in American Culture, Themes in French Culture* (with Rhoda Métraux), *The Wagon and the Star: A Study of American Community Initiative* (with Muriel Brown), and *Culture and Commitment: A Study of the Generation Gap*. Her newest book, *Ruth Benedict: A Bibliography*, now in press at Columbia, reflects their joint work on the study of cultures at a distance, particularly in Columbia University Research in Contemporary Cultures. The research methods in this project developed out of Ruth Benedict's wartime study of Japanese culture, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Geoffrey Gorer's work on Japanese and American character structure, Gregory Bateson's work on national character and morale building, and Mead's own work on Anglo-American contrasts. This creative project, financed by the Office of Naval Research, has been described by Mead and Métraux in *The Study of Culture at a Distance*.

Taking on the presidency of the AAAS will bring her more frequently back to Washington, a city she finds has changed considerably since her World War II residence as executive secretary of the Committee on Food Habits of the National Research Council. Her 3-month stay in Washington in 1973 while at the National Institutes of Health prompted her observation that New York and Washington are now much closer than before: "same stories and gossip at about the same time, with Washington having lost its monopoly for 'inside dope' and being 'where all the action is.'" Nevertheless, with the concentration of federal agencies and the Congress here, she finds that she can get done in 3 weeks what

might have taken her several months otherwise. She also discovered that "grass roots" are in the nation's capital as well as in "the provinces," and that environmentalists need not remain in less polluted or less populated sections of the country to make their impact on improving the quality of life. Politicians generally have two homes, one here and the other in their constituencies, she points out, and are able to see in both places what scientists need to do to cope competently with the big interrelated issues of energy, food, nutrition, education, and population.

Views on Time Lag

Mead's studies of time perspective of "primitives" have conditioned her awareness of how long it takes for an idea or an invention to start being operative in complex civilization. Even with telecommunications and electronics, humans today seem to have to wait 20 years for an innovation to take on, an observation she shared with the late Lawrence K. Frank. This is a dangerously long time when one is faced with the sudden impact of 400 years of inventions, she recently told the New York Academy of Sciences. But with typical cheer and hope, she is relishing the larger part the AAAS can play in the education of the public, and in providing the atmosphere of a collegium where scientists can communicate across disciplines. The idea of scientists as an exclusive, priestly caste is anathema to her, though she has learned and can speak a number of specialized vocabularies used in different sectors of academia. During the Copernican quincentennial celebrations in 1973, she applauded John Archibald Wheeler's suggestion to incorporate interdisciplinary collegia into the symposium sponsored by the Smithsonian and the National Academy of Sciences. That scientists need to learn from one another and from persons in other callings is a fixed premise of her own behavior. Her numerous lectures around the United States are an essential part of her learning about the subtle and major shifts of opinions, style, and world views evolving inside and outside the academic establishment. Sol Tax has commented that on the road Mead is doing fieldwork most of the time. A clinical perspective, however, has not inhibited her capacity for friendship and empathy with an amazingly diverse group of humans. Her celebrity status is unknown to many she holds as close friends on various continents. Few of her intellectual friends have ever read all she has written. Yet even strangers, viewing the beautiful documentary TV film, "Margaret Mead's New Guinea Journal" have stood up to applaud the warmth of her communications with her informants. Mead the observer expects to be observed in return. Matthew Huxley has suggested that the National Portrait Gallery, when it decides to include Mead in its collection, should run some film loops from that documentary, within a gilt frame, to capture that capacity for friendship and to symbolize her patronage of photography as a tool of art and science.

The interest of Mead in the nonhuman universe grows out of a lifelong inquiry into human conceptions of space and time, and how they are changed by new technology; she has long been an active supporter of space exploration. Thus the new president-elect of AAAS has proposed to the Smithsonian Institution and NASA that they cooperate in designing a ceremonial to say farewell to Pioneer 10 as it leaves our solar system and becomes, from the perspective of possible other creatures, an "unidentified flying object" which we Earth people will be able to authenticate. With the close of Roger Revelle's administration, the AAAS will enjoy some important continuity as Mead picks up his presidential competence in "thinking big" without losing sight of vital, small particulars (interrelated, of course) in the advancement of a very human science.

AAAS Council Meeting, 1974

William Bevan

The AAAS Council held its 1974 meeting on 1 March in San Francisco in the South Parlor of the San Francisco Hilton Hotel, with 54 of its 74 members in attendance at the morning session and 47 at the afternoon session. President Roger Revelle presided.

Leonard M. Rieser, retiring president and chairman of the Board of Directors, opened the meeting by calling to the Council's attention the responsibilities assigned to it by the Association's new constitution, particularly those of establishing the general policies governing all programs of the Association and of reviewing those programs, including meetings and publications.

The executive officer's report of 1973 activities, which had been distributed to Council members in advance of the meeting, is reproduced on page 496 of this issue of *Science*, together with the budget for 1974.

Elections

The Committee on Nominations reported the election, by mail ballot of the Council, of the following new committee members:

Committee on Council Affairs: Robert Berliner, Claire Nader, and William Sturtevant. (Other members of this committee are Margaret Mead, chairwoman, Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr., Dorothy E. Bliss, Edward C. Creutz, Garrett Hardin, Homer E. Newell, Roger Revelle, and George Sprugel, Jr.)

Council Committee on Fellows: Nancy S. Anderson, Lewis M. Branscomb, Ezra Glaser, Harlan Lewis, Robert T. Orr, Robert G. Page, Mary Louise Robbins, and Ruth D. Turner. (This is a new committee whose establishment was authorized by a bylaw amendment adopted by the Council at its Mexico City meeting on 26 June 1973.)