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## SCIENCE'S COMPASS

Given both the consideration and conclusions of the review panel, we find it difficult to understand how the allegation that the Anchorage study involved a "morally repugnant design" that bore even the remotest resemblance to Tuskegee can be given credence.

One way to avoid the "sloppy analogies to historical events such as Tuskegee" that Caplan and Annas deride is to carefully enumerate the criteria of evaluation characterizing the fundamental nature of abuses that make a study like Tuskegee a critical, enduring point of reference. But enumeration does not preclude sloppy analogy. Thus, of the eight criteria Lurie and Wolfe list, four [numbers (ii), (iii), (v), and (vi)] might apply to any ethical, well-designed, publicly funded study involving people of color.

Corbie-Smith underscores a point we sought to make in our essay. Tuskegee helps to explain the profound distrust felt by many African Americans for the research establishment. But what she does not acknowledge is the difference between the illuminating role of Tuskegee as a metaphor and the demands imposed by the uses of analogy.

Finally, Bowman opens up an issue that, while beyond the scope of our essay, warrants serious discussion—the way in which those who should be allies of the socially vulnerable may find themselves serving the interests of unethical researchers. It is the prospect of such an unholy alliance that makes the existence of searching external review—in which the careful uses of historical analogy can serve a critical function—so imperative.

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### References

1. Report to the Advisory Committee to the Director of the Panel to Review the Aspects of the Study "Interventions to Reduce HBV, HCV, and HIV in IDUs," National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, 12 December 1996, p. 16.

### Margaret Mead in Samoa

I found Martin Orans's review (*Science's* Compass, 12 Mar., p. 1649) of my book *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead: A Historical Analysis of Her Samoan Research* (Westview, Boulder, CO, 1998) partisan in the extreme.

In her letter of 15 February 1926 to her supervisor, Franz Boas, Margaret Mead stated that for the first time in her brief stay in Manu'a she planned to conduct, during April 1926, a "special investigation" of the sexual behavior of her sample of adolescent girls.

On 19 March 1926, after having told Boas that her "problem" was "practically



Margaret Mead (center) and friends in Manu'a, American Samoa, in 1926

completed," Mead wrote to Boas announcing that she had decided to cut short her fieldwork by more than a month. She then left Manu'a for the south of France without carrying out, during April 1926, her planned "special investigation" of the sexual behavior of her adolescent girls.

These historical facts seem inconsistent with the view that Mead engaged in deliberate falsification. If she had indeed been involved in deliberate falsification, she would never have made her Samoan papers available for public scrutiny in the Library of Congress.

In marked contrast, the historical facts confirm the sworn testimony of Mead's traveling companion Fa'apua'a Fa'amu that on 13 March 1926, on the island of Ofu, Mead was hoaxed by Fa'apua'a and her friend Fofoa about the sexual mores of the Samoans. Of this Mead appears to have been totally oblivious, as is anyone who has been successfully hoaxed. Thus, Orans's statement that I claim that Mead committed "a crime of misrepresentation" is incorrect.

That Mead was hoaxed makes fully credible her revealing letter to Boas of 14 March 1926, as well as her words, "I am leaving here with a very clear conscience," uttered before she sailed from Manu'a on 16 April 1926. A Boasian ideologue she may have been; a deliberate cheat about major anthropological issues she was not.

The detailed evidence for this (based on primary sources) is contained in my book *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead*, and I invite readers to consider for themselves the historical evidence contained in that book and come to their own conclusions.

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