

INTRODUCTION

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Margaret Mead, during her long and fruitful career, made persistent efforts to anticipate the future and to alert leaders and citizens of the need to make preparations in the short term, so that they might realize desired outcomes, and avert undesired ones, in the longer term. Although Mead practiced anthropology in many modes, her work in the mode that has, since her death, come to be termed “Anticipatory Anthropology” is of special interest because of her pioneering role from a remarkably early date. It is an honor to edit and provide commentary for this volume, which presents, here for the first time, a collection of Margaret Mead’s truly Anticipatory Anthropology.

Out of Mead’s prodigious output of writings and lectures, which numbered in the thousands, this volume presents a selection of twenty-five items judged to be most directly relevant to Anticipatory Anthropology. The major selection was made by the overall editor of this Mead Centennial Series, William O. Beeman, who selected some thirty-odd items, which the two of us then further winnowed to twenty-five. Our selection procedure gave priority to those of Mead’s writings and lectures that treated the future systematically—that is, explicitly, comprehensively and coherently. Beyond this criterion, our procedure sought to do credit to the wide variety of problems she addressed, and to minimize redundancy.

The items we selected date from 1943 to 1977—from long before most social scientists showed any serious interest in the systematic study of the longer-range sociocultural future, until one year before Mead’s death. Of these twenty-five items, twelve appeared originally in published form, and thirteen were lectures, symposium presentations, or, in one case, a testimony to the United States Congress. The twenty-five items are arrayed chronologically, so that readers may more readily understand and appreciate both the historical context in which each item appears, and the general pattern of Margaret Mead’s evolution as a scholar, thinker, and public anthropologist. I have written a separate commentary for each item, in which I have tried to make my remarks appropriately appreciative, yet fair and rigorous.

If Mead were alive today, I am quite sure she would enjoy the former and demand the latter.

Anticipatory Anthropology is seen here not as a special subfield of anthropology, but rather as a mode of gathering and using available data, information and knowledge to assess future possibilities. Cultural anthropologists have long had expertise in analyzing the past career and present status of Culture X. Anticipatory Anthropology calls for them to use available knowledge of Culture X, plus ethnographic inquiry as appropriate, to anticipate or visualize possible alternative future paths for that same culture. To put it in simplest possible terms, Anticipatory Anthropology is a disciplined effort to discover what members of a society want and fear—as well as the sacrifices they are willing to make, and the initiatives they are prepared to take, toward realizing the outcomes they want, and preventing the ones they fear. Put another way, Anticipatory Anthropology (like the general interdisciplinary field of Futures Studies) is about the possible, the probable, and the preferable. The “possible” refers to what could happen. The “probable” refers to (among other things) what would likely happen under appropriate circumstances subject to human control—such as political will, leadership skill, resource allocation, regulation, and education. The “preferable” is a normative judgment as to what should happen—by the values of an interviewee, a panel of citizens, or the like.

Anticipation is here seen as a kind of “soft” prediction: broad, approximate, conditional, corrigible, and usually focused on the middle range of the future—say, the next five to twenty-five or so years. It is thus distinct from the more precise and shorter-ranged “hard” prediction of the economist with respect to the future price of a stock, or of the political scientist with respect to voting behavior in an upcoming election. It is also distinct from sheer wish-fulfilling speculation, magical thinking, science fiction, or romantic fantasizing.¹

MARGARET MEAD’S HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION

Mead’s contributions to anthropology and the social sciences were enormous and varied. Since there are others much more qualified than I to assess the variety and totality of her contributions, in this volume I shall limit my comments rather narrowly to her contributions to Anticipatory Anthropology.

Mead's Ameliorative Drive

Margaret Mead's anticipatory efforts were deeply rooted in her drive to ameliorate the ills of society, a drive that seems to date back to her early adolescence, and that, as her career progressed, harnessed more and more of her energy and expertise as an anthropologist. In Volume One of the present Mead Centennial Series, the editor, William O. Beeman, puts it this way: "Mead believed in the amelioration of human life through increased understanding between groups....Thus, discovering and reporting central truths about different societies was not just an intellectual exercise. It was something that would ultimately make the world better" (Mead and Métraux 2000: xxx).

Mead was, of course, hardly alone among anthropologists in harboring an ameliorative drive. Throughout the twentieth century many other cultural anthropologists also felt a sense of urgency to use their expertise to protect many of the tribal and peasant cultures that had become endangered—all too often because of mistreatment or exploitation by members of more powerful societies. Sometimes these protective efforts were successful, but often they were not. When they were not, it was often because such efforts sought to minimize or even prevent contact between the local culture and outside systems—rather than to work out ways to confront those systems effectively.

Such a "keep out" attitude, often verging on sentimentality, was not shared by Mead. Though she certainly respected the integrity of individual cultures, she also recognized that change was inevitable and not always bad. She did not flinch from the challenge of working with local people, when so invited, to help them map out coping strategies to defend themselves against negative outside influences, while also selectively and adaptively borrowing those aspects of outside cultures that would be genuinely beneficial. Mead's strong ameliorative drive led her, in 1941, to become a founding member of the Society for Applied Anthropology, an organization that thrives to this day. In 1949 she was elected President of that organization, the first woman to be so honored.

World War II Experiences

The onset of World War II saw an important evolution of Mead's interests and influence. Like many other Americans, she felt a strong need to defeat the Axis powers, and offered her expert services to the U.S. government, where they were eagerly welcomed. Numerous other anthropologists did the same, including Mead's mentor and friend, Ruth Benedict.

Those were hectic times. The government constantly found itself in urgent need of anthropological advice as to how to deal effectively

not just with small non-literate cultures in battle areas (e.g. in Oceania or New Guinea) but also with large national cultures. This need for advice often involved the cultures of peoples living in enemy-occupied lands—whether enemies (e.g. Japan), friends (e.g. France), or neutrals (e.g. Thailand). Such lands were of course not available for fieldwork, so Benedict, Mead, and their associates had to rely either on existing published knowledge, or on a new genre that came to be termed “the study of culture at a distance.” Thus the first systematic effort to think anthropologically about the cultures of large modern nation states coincided with the effort to carry out such studies at a distance. This new genre was based on a variety of non-conventional data sources then available in the U.S., such as interviews with natives of Culture X then resident in the U.S., or literature and films about Culture X.²

Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and their associates began work in this new genre at Columbia University in 1940, more than a year before Pearl Harbor, in a program that came to be known as the “Research in Contemporary Cultures” (RCC) program. Original funding came from the U.S. Navy Department’s Office of Naval Research. In 1944 these efforts at studying culture at a distance, which eventually evolved to include much non-war-related research, were integrated into a new “Institute for Intercultural Studies” (IIS). After the war, in the period from 1947 to 1952, the RCC program was formalized and greatly expanded, eventually involving the input of as many as 120 social scientists of various disciplines. It thus stands as the largest anthropologically-inspired and -led interdisciplinary research effort ever undertaken anywhere, before or since.³

From their earliest days, the RCC and the IIS, by the very nature of their assignments, were seriously concerned with anticipating alternative futures. William O. Beaman, for example, notes that this research effort “resulted in a number of significant governmental policy decisions, including the decision not to execute the Emperor of Japan at the end of the war” (Mead and Métraux 2000: xvi).⁴

Another wartime example of Mead’s concern with amelioration, application and anticipation is seen in Volume Two of this Mead Centennial Series (Mead 2000). This book is not as rigorous as Mead’s other works, since she produced it in just six weeks, out of a sense of great urgency. As is made clear in the commentary by Volume Two’s editor, the French-born scholar of American society Hervé Varenne, this book was certainly no ordinary ethnography. It was as much about what Mead wanted the American sociocultural system to become, as it was about the existing realities of that system (2000: xii, xvi). Mead’s purpose was not just to inform Americans about an

anthropologist's analysis of her own culture, but also to motivate her American readers to make the sacrifices necessary to win the war, by suggesting a better future—an inspiring national “optimistic scenario”—that would be realizable once the war was won. The ensuing events of that war—and especially the atomic bomb and its catastrophic effects on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—changed the world forever. All this stimulated, even more, Mead's ameliorative urge to “win the peace” and build a better and safer future for the entire world.

Manus and “New Lives For Old”

As influential as the war and the atomic bomb were in stimulating Mead's development as an applied and public anthropologist, it must be noted that these experiences were, after all, shared by all the other anthropologists of her generation—even though few of them may have responded as vigorously as she did to the vast new challenges presented. In addition, Mead possessed one powerful experience that was utterly unique to her, and sprang from her next to last major fieldwork effort, summarized in her book, *New Lives for Old* (Mead 1956). This fieldwork took place in 1953 among the 4,000 or so Manus people of Great Admiralty Island in the Bismarck Archipelago, now part of the Republic of Papua New Guinea. The 1953 fieldwork was a re-study of the same people she had first gotten to know twenty-five years earlier, when she and her then husband, Reo Fortune, had done fieldwork there. Since the end of the war in 1945, she had been hearing rumors of significant changes in the intervening years, and was eager to see these changes for herself. On this second trip she would be getting re-acquainted with her Manus friends, many of whom she had known as children during the earlier study. This time she was joined by two younger anthropological colleagues, Theodore and Lenore Schwartz.

Upon her return, it was immediately obvious to Mead that in the intervening twenty-five years Manus culture had changed almost beyond recognition as a consequence of the island having been used during the war as a major staging base by Allied, principally American, troops. During 1944 and 1945, as many as one million American servicemen had passed through Manus. They had created airfields, set up organizations, hired local labor, and built barracks, mess halls, and hospitals. They had thus demonstrated to the local people, day after day, a completely different way of life. Here had been a “culture contact” situation so powerful and all-encompassing as to have brought about previously-unimaginable changes in Manus behavior and aspirations.

However, as anthropologists are well aware, externally-induced changes in behavior and aspirations do not always eventuate into stable and positive changes in the local sociocultural system. Often the opposite is true. Sometimes the result is cultural decay and disastrous social anomie. However, this was not so with the Manus. There, a mere eight years after the war, Mead found vast and apparently stable changes in basic Manus social organization and cultural value patterns. The explanation for these changes lay not just in the American stimulus. It also lay, as Mead is at pains to explain, in the nature of the pre-existing Manus sociocultural system—plus, extremely fortuitously, a gifted charismatic local individual, Mr. Paliau, to lead the change process. The specifics are complex, but Mead's own summary will suffice here: "This book—the record of a people who have moved faster than any people of whom we have records, a people who have moved in fifty years from darkest savagery to the twentieth century, men who have skipped over thousands of years of history in just the last twenty-five years—is offered as food for the imagination of Americans...." (1956: 21).

The Manus experience, unique to history, and unique to Mead among all the world's social scientists, was clearly a powerful stimulus to her ameliorative thinking. It exposed her to a radical, "all at once" model for sociocultural change, in contrast to the more conventional models calling for "step by step" incremental change. It gave her a wider angle of vision than most of her colleagues, and a deeper appreciation of the possibility that positive sociocultural change could, in some circumstances, occur more rapidly than previously supposed. This is evident in many of the writings and lectures presented in this book.

Mead's Anticipatory Drive

Amelioration and anticipation are close partners. When one desires amelioration as ardently as Mead did, one quite naturally finds oneself developing some kind of vision, or "optimistic scenario," about how life could and should be made better in the future. An ameliorator, to be effective, must also be an anticipator.

What makes Mead's early emergence as an anticipator especially notable is that it ran counter to the prevailing spirit of anthropology during the 1920s and 1930s, when Mead came of age as an anthropologist. Most anthropologists of that day were far more interested in the past, the "ethnographic present," or the actual present—than in the future. Anthropology, as the great Alfred L. Kroeber used to say as late as the 1950s, was essentially a historical discipline. Mead shared this interest in history—but she was also interested in the future.

Mead was, of course, not the only anthropologist of her generation to engage in anticipation. Others also did, especially a number of those who defined themselves as “applied” anthropologists. However, most applied anthropologists of that period seem to have been content with relatively circumscribed anticipatory efforts—often limited in scope primarily to the particular innovation they were attempting to promote. Efforts at broad-scale systematic anticipation addressing alternative futures for whole sociocultural systems, and spelling out complex processes of change, were rare. In this more ambitious style of anticipation, Mead was outstanding.

Final Decades

In the final two or three decades of her life Mead’s ameliorative, applied and anticipatory activities increased exponentially. Her personal networks with people from many different nationalities and disciplines expanded dramatically. As carefully chronicled by Dillon (1980), the reach, scope, and ambition of her attempts to better the human condition through politics and government were impressive, and certainly unique in the history of American anthropology. By the 1960s Mead had become one of the most famous women in the world—perhaps *the* most famous. She clearly saw her fame as a gateway to her influence, and her influence as a gateway to her service to society. This service was recognized shortly after her death, when President Jimmy Carter awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America’s highest civilian award.

It seems clear that Margaret Mead’s strong interest in improving the human condition sprang in part from her early religious enculturation. At the age of eleven, against the wishes of her atheist parents, she volunteered for instruction and confirmation in the Episcopal Church, an organization in which she remained active throughout her life. When the World Council of Churches sought her advice, she gave it. Upon her death, she received the equivalent of a state funeral at the National Cathedral in Washington and was buried in the Pennsylvania parish where she was confirmed.⁵

MEAD AND FUTURES STUDIES

This volume takes the position that almost any anthropologist who wishes to work in the anticipatory mode, could do so if he or she wished. At the same time, an anthropologist such as Mead, who becomes seriously involved in such anticipatory work, sooner or later

comes to be regarded as also being a “futurist,” that is, a serious specialist in the interdisciplinary field of Futures Studies.

Emergence of the Future Studies Movement

The last ten years of Mead’s life were the years when the Futures Studies movement, as we know it today, took flight. Although precursors to Futures Studies date back at least to the nineteenth century in Europe and America, today many futurists date the launching of this hybrid field and movement to the 1960s. For example, the World Future Society was established in the U.S. in 1967, and during the ensuing twelve years its membership grew from a few hundred to nearly 60,000. This movement, and its social, scientific, and philosophical foundations, are comprehensively and accessibly summarized in Bell (1997: 1–72). I strongly recommend this two-volume work as the best single introduction to Futures Studies for the serious scholar.

Although Mead was, as far as I know, not visibly active in the affairs of the World Future Society, she clearly was a part of this general movement, and in some ways ahead of it. For example, according to her associate and friend Wilton Dillon, as early as the mid-1950s she was publicly advocating that universities ought to have a Chair of the Future, just as they might have one for the Middle Ages or Classical Greece (personal communication, 2003). It is no accident that, of the twenty-five items that appear in this book, five date from 1968 alone, and another eleven between 1969 and 1977.

Mead’s Recognition as a Futurist

While it is easy, with the benefit of hindsight, to criticize some of Mead’s anticipatory work, I believe we should credit her for being a full generation ahead of almost all of her contemporaries. In her prescience, her wisdom, and her willingness to risk ridicule in order to proactively serve the broad needs of society, she exemplified a true humane commitment. Most of the issues she raised remain relevant today as we continue to look ahead.

This positive judgment is shared by one of Futures Studies’ most respected intellectual leaders, Alvin Toffler, who has written many influential books on the future. In 1972 he edited a volume entitled, *The Futurists* (Toffler 1972). In it he described the activities and successes of the world’s most respected futurists, and in each case included excerpts from their publications. Toffler identified twenty-three such individuals. He emphasized that these futurists, being unusually creative thinkers with unusually broad interests, were difficult to categorize, except under very broad rubrics, of which he pro-

vided three, as follows. First, there were eight “scientists,” namely Arthur C. Clarke, Olaf Helmer, Herman Kahn with Anthony J. Wiener, Theodore J. Gordon, M. S. Iyengar, I. Bestuzhev-Lada, and Erich Jantsch. Second, there were eight “philosophers and planners”: Kenneth E. Boulding, Yujiro Hayashi, Daniel Bell, Ossip Flechtheim, Bertrand deJouvenel, Fred L. Polak, John Wren-Lewis, and R. Buckminster Fuller. And finally, there were seven “social critics,” in which category Toffler places himself and Margaret Mead, along with Paul Ehrlich, John McHale, Marshall McLuhan, Robert Jungk, and Arthur I. Waskow.

On this list, Mead is the only female and the only anthropologist. Toffler estimated the mean age of these twenty-three individuals to be about fifty-five. Mead at the time was 70, and had by then been doing futures-type work for thirty years. In summarizing Mead’s contribution, Toffler states:

In this striking chapter from her book *Culture and Commitment*, the famed anthropologist argues that we have shifted from a culture that is “post-figurative” (one in which the young learn from the old) to one that is “cofigurative” (one in which both children and adults learn chiefly from their peers). She appealed for a “prefigurative” culture in which, as the future explodes into the present, the old learn to learn from the young. Her voice, crossing generational and academic lines, has been influential in preparing the soil for the futurists (Toffler 1972: 27).

MEAD’S INTELLECTUAL APPROACH AND EXPRESSIVE STYLE

Many of my comments on Mead’s approach to, and style of, the art of anticipation are to be found in the commentaries I provide for the twenty-five items in this book. Here, however, are a few general comments.

With respect to her intellectual approach, one notes that some of Mead’s items are systematically analytical, and organized into sections. Other items, even long ones, lack any sectioning whatsoever. A number of her items—especially those based on oral presentations—have a spontaneous and “notional” spirit about them—supplying (and even overstating) powerful ideas and suggestions, though sometimes not tracing out all their major implications.

With respect to expressive style, one should bear in mind, first of all, that Margaret Mead valued the English language as a thing of beauty. She was a serious and published poet, and some of her anthropological writings—the more “humanistic” ones—have an almost

poetic ring. While some of her items are clearly the result of careful, deliberate writing and re-writing, others seem hurriedly produced, doubtless under the pressure of a heavy schedule of other commitments. But always, she tried hard to communicate not only to fellow scientists, but also accessibly to the interested general public.

Holistic, Non-Quantitative Approach

Like most cultural anthropologists, Mead looked at cultures as whole entities. For example, her Manus report, *New Lives for Old* (Mead 1956), deals with overall changes in every major aspect of the Manus sociocultural system. As she turned her analytical and anticipatory attention increasingly to the entire world, this holistic approach quite naturally evolved into a general systems approach, an interest that led her to become one of the founders of the Society for General Systems Research, and eventually its President.

As indicated in my commentary on Item 1974a, Mead's work in general systems theory brought her into collaboration with a variety of renowned scientists, many of whom were highly quantitative in orientation. In this respect, Mead is the exception. She limits her anticipatory work to qualitative analyses, and refrains from quantitative analyses even in those situations where it would obviously be useful—e.g., in dealing with the world's demographic growth.

Since Mead was known to be familiar with quantitative approaches, a reader of today might wonder why she avoided using them. Part of the explanation lies in the nature of the fieldwork that she—like most other cultural anthropologists educated before World War II—carried out. Typically, the anthropologist journeyed to a small non-literate sociocultural group, often one that had had limited contact with the wider world. Ordinarily, there was no local quantitative data base to build upon—no reliable local census figures, no systematic health statistics, no cadastral record of land use rights. And what is more, the fieldwork period was short, perhaps less than a year, and almost always less than two years. Much of this valuable time was necessarily devoted to settling in, getting organized, developing rapport, and so on and so forth. In addition, the anthropologist, ideally, would make a concerted effort to develop some facility with the local language. For all such pragmatic reasons, it is not surprising that Mead, most of whose fieldwork was carried out in a half dozen such non-literate cultures (the single major exception being that of Bali), does not use a quantitative approach in her anticipatory work.

In addition to the above pragmatic reasons, there is the more basic intellectual reason that anthropologists of the day were more

interested in variation between the cultural population under study, and other such populations—than in variation within the population under study. So, the anthropologist would tend to concentrate his or her efforts on developing a good overall understanding of the local culture as a whole, which tends to be a largely qualitative undertaking.

Non-Use of the Scenario Method

I find it regrettable that, with just one partial exception (Item 1968c), Mead did not use the scenario method—doubtless because this method did not come into widespread use, outside of the community of Futures Studies specialists, until after her death. Thus Mead missed the opportunity to take full advantage of a method of basic importance, as explained by futures scholar and sociologist Wendell Bell:

The end product of all the methods of futures research is basically the same: a scenario, a story about the future, usually including a story about the past and present. Often, it is a story about alternative possibilities for the future, each having different probabilities of occurring under different conditions. Also, it often includes goals and values, evaluating alternative futures as to their desirability or undesirability” (1997: 317).

Use of the scenario method would have greatly enriched the comprehensiveness, and enhanced the coherence, of many of Mead’s anticipatory statements. It would have led her to be more explicit in fleshing out processes of change, and more concrete in identifying key driving forces, and specifying how these forces would interact. If she had lived a few years longer, it is highly plausible that she would have started using scenarios and—given her rich background, brilliant imagination, and powerful writing skills—that she would thus have made an even greater contribution to Anticipatory Anthropology.⁶

The Meadian “We”

Through the years, Mead’s writings reveal an unusual and remarkable penchant for using “we,” “us,” and “our.” This usage merits some exploration. To begin with, it must be emphasized that the Meadian “we” is not the polite editorial “we” invoked to express a personal opinion in mock-modest fashion. Rather, her “we” seems to mean, essentially, “Margaret Mead plus other concerned, informed, and humanely inclined citizens of both the society concerned, and of the world.” This concept of the “we” is consistent with her career-long preference for working with teams of people from various disciplines and cultural origins, as a way of harnessing their energies toward a common purpose, and learning from them which of her own ideas they deemed valid or invalid, and why.

Psychologically, Mead's "we" is seen by her daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson, as relating to the tradition of the religious sermon. It is an inclusive and persuasive "we" – we who are here united. It seeks to persuade the listener by projecting the probability of agreement (personal communication, 2003). Sociologically, Mead's "we" seems generally to refer to, and address, people who were quite well educated and financially stable. Though her ethical and emotional concerns were certainly with the less fortunate people of the world, her immediate operative "we" tends to apply primarily to those among her likely audience who possess the knowledge and sociopolitical power needed to effectuate change.

The sum total of all of Mead's "we-s" is truly impressive, as is suggested by the size of the Margaret Mead Collection in the Library of Congress, created in connection with the Mead Centennial. Remarkably, this Collection is the largest of all the numerous collections to be found in that great national repository, memorializing so many important historical figures. The Mead Collection contains more than half a million individual items: publications, speeches, fieldnotes, data files, memos, and letters written by Mead, often jointly with one or another of her numerous "we" cohorts.

The spirit of the Meadian "we" is also found in the arrangements made to celebrate her Centennial, in which a Margaret Mead Awards Program was established, with the following Meadian quotation as leitmotif: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has." The Margaret Mead web site describes these awards as follows:

As part of the Margaret Mead Centennial celebration, the Institute for Intercultural Studies and *Whole Earth* magazine joined together to honor small groups of thoughtful, committed citizens who have changed the world. The first awards were given in mid-1999, ...and continued through the Centennial. These awards honor organizations that reflect Mead's broad sense of the relevance of anthropology to social action: groups that have demonstrated effective, imaginative, and compassionate actions on race, gender, culture, environmental justice, child rearing, and self-empowerment within communities. Mary Catherine Bateson, president of the IIS and Mead's daughter, says: "We recognized groups of committed citizens who have created a level of community awareness that did not exist previously, and who have invented new social forms that can teach and inform other communities. We found organizations that have done things that can be replicated, that have wide resonance, and demonstrate the choices we have in shaping cultures for the future. My mother would have appreciated that."⁷

Limited Use of a "Political Economy" Approach

The above sentiments are, in my view, highly appropriate. At the same time, I would be even more satisfied with Mead's approach to Anticipatory Anthropology if she had devoted as much attention to the macro-political and -economic variables, as she did to the psychological and micro-sociological. Although she was clearly opposed to the exploitation of peoples without power—by their colonial rulers or anyone else—in her publications she paid less attention to such matters than would many other anthropologists, especially those professionally educated subsequent to World War II. My personal bias would favor a considerably greater emphasis on a "political economy" approach, and a considerably stronger focus on such phenomena as the exploitation of nation by nation, race by race, gender by gender, and class by class.

The twenty-five items in this book, beginning on page 35, will enable you to come to your own judgments about Mead's intellectual approach and expressive style. In these items you will meet the disciplined scientist Margaret Mead, who became only the third woman to be elected President of the American Anthropological Association in its first 60 years, and who later crowned her career by serving as President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. You will also meet the humane, imaginative Margaret Mead, who was regarded as one of the world's pioneer futurists.

EDITOR'S PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH DR. MEAD

In this section I will briefly describe my contacts with Margaret Mead, both to shed light on the energetic, fascinating, and generous person I found her to be, and to provide you with a basis to judge whether I am being adequately fair and objective in my commentaries. I do this in the spirit of Mead's consistent advocacy, to her students and colleagues, of what she called "disciplined subjectivity."

My personal contacts with Margaret Mead were in fact very few. I was never her student and never worked for or with her on any project. Our relationship was based simply on her interest in, and willingness to help, my professional work. I was thus just one of many younger scholars whom she reached out to encourage.

Contacts Concerning Cross-Cultural Statistical Analysis

The summer of 1964 found Mead, myself, and hundreds of other anthropologists from many countries, in Moscow to attend the quadrennial meeting of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. I was on the program to present briefly the rationale and methodology of a book then in preparation, entitled *A Cross-Cultural Summary* (Textor 1967).⁸ My presentation was scheduled for 8:00 AM, and I wondered whether anybody would bother to attend, given the early hour and the conference's myriad other papers, attractions, and distractions. Suddenly, to my shock, a few minutes before 8:00, I walked Margaret Mead and her friend, the late Rhoda Métraux. I felt flattered that anyone so senior would take the trouble to come to hear my presentation—but also a bit unnerved, since it was common gossip that “Margaret doesn't like statistics and doesn't approve of the Human Relations Area Files system.” Anyway, I went ahead and gave my paper. At the end of the session, Margaret Mead came up to me and proceeded to shock me once again. She informed me that she highly approved of what I was doing, and that my method allowed her, and people of her persuasion, to make good sense out of the Human Relations Area Files' cross-cultural statistical approach.

The *Cross-Cultural Summary* could not have been produced without the computer. In 1964 there were many anthropologists who viewed this new device with suspicion, and some, even with hostility. But not Mead. Despite the fact that she had never used a computer—and, as it turned out, never did—she saw merit in this particular use of that new tool, and offered her support. Not only was I grateful; I was highly impressed and remain so today, four decades later.⁹

In conjunction with the Moscow conference, the Soviet tourist agency, Intourist, arranged bargain tours for the foreign anthropologists to visit Leningrad, and also Uzbekistan. Many of us took advantage of these bargains, including Mead and myself. I thus had a chance to become better acquainted with her. Two impressions remain deep in my memory. First, there was her immense physical and intellectual energy. She was then 62 years of age, but threw herself into these tours with vigor, despite a weak and bandaged ankle. On several occasions she assumed a sort of “school-marm” stance toward me, pushing me to learn as much as possible about Russia while I had the chance, and to “develop plausible hypotheses” about Russian society and culture. At first I found this a bit gratuitously intrusive and vaguely annoying, but I soon began to enjoy it. Margaret had, after all, made a serious study (at a distance) of Russian culture and personality, and it was soon clear that she really did have a lot to teach me.¹⁰

My second recollection is of Margaret's pragmatic commitment to liberal political goals. It so happened that our visit to the Soviet Union coincided with the now-infamous Tonkin Gulf Incident, which President Lyndon B. Johnson promptly proceeded to use as grounds for his escalating the American military involvement in Vietnam. When the news broke in the Moscow media, I was outraged (as were many other anthropologists specialized on Southeast Asia) and I mentioned to Margaret that I was considering "going public" with my criticism right then and there. Once again she assumed the school-marm stance, saying something like: "Bob, you will do no such thing. My God, do you realize who the alternative to Johnson is?"—meaning, of course, that year's Republican presidential nominee, Senator Barry Goldwater. There followed a heated discussion, I taking the position that "Look, character does count; this man is not to be trusted; and he is going to cause great loss of life," and Margaret taking the position "Yes, but—under Goldwater it would only be worse." In the end, I decided to wait until I returned to the U.S. to vent my wrath, feeling that for an American to do so in a foreign country, especially the Soviet Union, would not be appropriate. Clearly, she influenced my decision.

Contacts Concerning the Peace Corps

I had only one other significant contact with Margaret, and that concerned a book I wrote and edited, *Cultural Frontiers of the Peace Corps* (Textor et al. 1966). This was a collection of reports on early Peace Corps experiences in thirteen host countries located in Asia, Africa, or Latin America, each written by a social scientist or historian with special knowledge of that country. Knowing of Margaret's long-standing interest in applied anthropology, I sent her a copy of our manuscript and requested that she consider writing the Foreword. I then waited some while for an answer. Finally it came—from Aghios Nikolaos, Crete, where she was vacationing and writing. It was a cablegram that said simply, "Will write foreword. Mead."

Some time later the manuscript came back by airmail. To my amazement, Margaret had gone over every page of that bulky manuscript, and written in her suggestions and corrections on perhaps one page out of every three or four. Then, just to make sure I did not overlook any of her suggestions, she had placed a paper clip on every one of those marked pages! At this point, though I did not quite realize it at the time, my contributors and I had become part of a Meadian "we."

In writing her Foreword, Margaret correctly but modestly identifies herself as "an anthropologist who has been concerned with the development of the theory and practice of applied anthropology

since its beginning efforts just before World War II" (Textor et al 1966: ix). She then offers an endorsement of our work which also reveals something of her own self-concept as a public anthropologist:

The aim of writing so that what is said will be exact, meaningful and acceptable to everyone, everywhere, is one that anthropologists have tried to fulfill only in the last twenty-five years. The necessary skills are exceedingly difficult to acquire, and as yet we do not wholly understand them. But in this book, the editor and the authors have made a mighty effort in the direction of the purposeful inclusion of the whole potential audience in order that, in the end, each reader will appreciate the achievements and wish to correct the defects in the still developing program of the Peace Corps (Textor et al 1966: vii).¹¹

Thereafter, until the end of her life, I would see Margaret at annual meetings, and we would have an occasional exchange of letters about routine professional matters. That was the extent of my subsequent contact with her.¹²

This concludes my Introduction. For the reader anxious to get to the heart of this book, I recommend turning immediately to Margaret Mead's twenty-five writings and lectures, starting on page 35. For those interested in the rationale of Anticipatory Anthropology, as it has evolved in the twenty-five years since Margaret Mead's death, as well as in her legacy for the future of this emerging mode of inquiry, I recommend first reading the Appendix to this Introduction, and then turning to her writings and lectures.

APPENDIX: THE RATIONALE AND FUTURE OF ANTICIPATORY ANTHROPOLOGY

Margaret Mead died in 1978, and in the quarter century since then the interdisciplinary field of Futures Studies has matured greatly, as have certain related aspects of anthropology. This Appendix examines a few of these changes that I consider most relevant to gaining a better appreciation of the Mead legacy, as well as a deeper understanding of the rationale of Anticipatory Anthropology and its potential for serving society in an era of ever more rapid global change.

Ethnocentrism and Tempocentrism

As background for appreciating the value of Mead's contributions, it is helpful to start by briefly examining two "centrisms": ethnocentrism and what is here termed "tempocentrism." As used here, ethnocentrism refers to one's being excessively centered in one's own culture, and tempocentrism to one's being excessively centered in

one's own timeframe. Most humans are subject, most of the time, to both centrisms. Both have the advantage of providing considerable short-run psychological comfort—although sometimes, as I will discuss, at a huge long-run personal or social price.

Ethno- and tempocentrism are close psychological cousins. One of the first things the anthropologist notices about the people he or she studies in the field, is how automatically they take for granted—and invoke—the premises and values of their own culture. Similarly, one of the first things the professional futurist notices about a group of people he or she studies, is how automatically they take for granted the situation, premises, expectations and values of their own timeframe—even when that timeframe is inappropriate for the purpose at hand. Tempocentrism makes it harder to pay critical yet imaginative attention to future possibilities and probabilities, and hence harder for individuals, communities or societies to realize future opportunities and avoid future dangers.

Both centrisms are frequently characterized by “secondary ignorance,” that is, ignorance of the very existence (and importance) of one's own ignorance. Futurists frequently find people whom they judge to be not only tempocentric, but also unaware of their own tempocentrism. Likewise, cultural anthropologists frequently find people whom they judge to be both ethnocentric and unaware of their own ethnocentrism. When such “secondarily ignorant” people hold positions of political or economic power, they can do great harm.

In today's and tomorrow's dangerous world, it is essential to find ways to transcend both of these centrisms. But the task is daunting, because both types of mis-centeredness do in fact function to promote a sense of psychological security by providing the individual with a firm, taken-for-granted framework for perceiving, thinking, feeling, believing and evaluating. Indeed, a person might be highly intelligent and generally rational, and yet so prize this sense of security that they will strongly resist—consciously or subconsciously—any efforts to suggest that they might be mis-centered.

A costly example of ethnocentrism in action is the Vietnam War, during which much official American policy was based on historical ignorance, which in turn was deeply rooted in racial biases toward Asians, as well as a variety of ethnocentric assumptions about the Vietnamese. An understanding of (primary and secondary) ignorance and ethnocentrism helps explain the disastrous American political and military policies that resulted in the loss of two million or more Vietnamese and over 58,000 American lives—not to mention a dangerous erosion of the fabric of American democracy.¹³

Costly examples of tempocentrism in action also abound—especially in the realm of environmental policy. Today, some American leaders take comfort in a psychological “denial” of the very notion that current unrestrained urban growth policies in the southwestern U.S. will result in unsustainable demands on available water supplies in the future. Such policies have already led to a serious desiccation of a number of waterways and a substantial depletion of numerous aquifers. The future will prove these tempocentric policies disastrously wrong. Posterity will pay a punishing price.

For decades, cultural anthropologists have been deeply aware of the problem of ethnocentrism. They have pioneered in efforts to de-ethnocentrize not only themselves, but all of the social sciences. The result is that if an anthropologist were today to challenge an economist, political scientist, sociologist or psychologist as being “ethnocentric,” there is a good chance that the latter social scientist would actually take such criticism to heart, and revise some of his or her premises. Overall, anthropology’s contribution toward discouraging ethnocentrism and building cultural awareness and sensitivity—a massive undertaking in which Margaret Mead herself eventually became one of the world’s most articulate and effective spokespersons—ranks as one of the major social science-based educational achievements of the entire twentieth century. If anthropologists can similarly develop self-awareness with respect to the phenomenon of tempocentrism, they will substantially leverage their ability to contribute to the well-being of society.

The Value of Anticipation Despite its Fallibility

All sane humans anticipate. All goal-directed behavior is by definition anticipatory in some sense. We behave in a certain way because we anticipate that this will enhance our chances for a more desirable future situation, or reduce our chances for an undesirable one. This capacity to anticipate in a reasoned, conditional, corrigible, strategizing manner is disproportionately developed in the human species. It is part of being sapient, and has conferred enormous evolutionary advantages upon *homo sapiens*.

This human capacity is, however, much more effective at the level of the individual, family, or small community—than at the level of whole societies, let alone complex inter-societal or global relationships, where our ability to anticipate is much more limited. Given these limitations, many of us fall back upon simple platitudes or aphorisms, or magical beliefs of one kind or another. What makes Margaret Mead special is that she had the ability to transcend many such limitations, and address alternative futures for large population

groups or whole nations, or for the whole of the world's people. This is an ability that is crucially important in today's world, where global demographic, techno-economic, political and sociocultural changes are occurring at an ever-accelerating rate, and where major populations could face annihilation by weapons of mass destruction, or ecological catastrophe. Indeed, it was the emergence and proliferation of such weapons, and an awareness of such ecological dangers, that spurred Margaret Mead to become a "futurist before her time."

When Mead, or anyone else, engages in any kind of prediction or anticipation concerning the future of a sociocultural system, this is, of course, clearly different from describing (or speculating about) that system's past or present—for the very fundamental ontological and epistemological reason that there are no future facts. There are only facts about the past or present that a researcher (or an expert, a leader, or an interviewee) regards as *relevant* to the future—for example, facts concerning such extant "driving forces" as high technology, global electronically mediated commerce, rapid population growth, resource depletion, or environmental despoliation.

Nonetheless, some people, including some leaders who are otherwise intelligent, take a very different position, and simply refuse to engage in any kind of systematic anticipation, citing the fact that there are no future facts, and contending that all anticipation is hence fallible. I disagree with that position. I believe that despite this inherent fallibility, there is an important, indeed necessary, place for broad systematic anticipation in modern life. Further, having devoted much of my research effort over the past quarter century to Anticipatory Anthropology, I consider it plausible that the anthropologists who do take the time and trouble to engage in systematic anticipation are at least as aware as those who do not, that such anticipations could prove wrong.

More specifically, I base my argument in favor of Anticipatory Anthropology on the following seven-point line of reasoning.

1. Our anticipations of the future do, after all, often turn out to be essentially correct.
2. The best kind of anticipation is usually the kind that is repeated through time. To be most effective, anticipation—whether in anthropology or any other social science—should be an iterative process, not a "one shot" operation. This makes anticipations corrigible. For example, if an anticipation framework requires iterations to occur every five years over a twenty-year period, then at Year 5 the anticipator can take cognizance of the changes in reality that have occurred, and make needed corrections in

deciding what to project for Years 10 or 15 or 20, etc. Thus, I personally favor a research strategy that is focused primarily on the intermediate rather than remote future, and is repeated at intervals, with projections systematically updated each time.

3. If one engages in systematic anticipation using a holistic approach of the type that has long been the hallmark of cultural anthropology, one soon finds oneself dealing not just with the possible and the probable, but also with the preferable. Such systematic anticipation can thus serve as a powerful means for clarifying and prioritizing the values held by an individual, a community or a society. These values apply not just with respect to what people want their future reality to be, but also with respect to the price they are willing to pay, and the initiatives they are willing to undertake, in order to realize that preferred future.
4. The best way to realize a preferred future is first to visualize it—in concrete enough terms to provide the motivational basis for appropriate action needed for its realization. An individual, community or society that fails to visualize its preferred future, risks being seriously dissatisfied with what it gets when the erstwhile future becomes the present.
5. An act of anticipation or visioning can sometimes eventuate into a socially useful “self-fulfilling prophecy.” For example, in 1961, shortly after his inauguration, President John F. Kennedy announced a vision that seemed highly fallible to many at the time, namely that the U.S. would send a man to the moon and bring him safely back to earth by the end of that decade. In 1969, to the excitement of the world, that vision was realized. Kennedy’s vision was itself a crucial factor in the creation of a specific program, which ultimately led to a changed reality. Of course, it is for each of us to decide whether we regard the U.S. space program as being, on balance, desirable or undesirable. As of the year of the first moon landing, at least, Margaret Mead regarded it as desirable. (See Item 1969, below.)
6. Just as there can be self-fulfilling prophesies, so there can be socially useful “self-negating prophesies.” The act of anticipating a negative outcome can be correct as of the time of anticipation, yet lead to subsequent action designed to prevent the anticipated outcome from becoming reality. For example, the U.S. government’s publicly articulated anticipation that at current rates of smoking, X percentage

of American smokers will die prematurely, can have the direct or indirect effect of helping to cause many individuals to quit, and many others never to start.

7. Finally, much useful Anticipatory Anthropology can be practiced using quite conservative, or “soft” predictions. For instance, if the ethnographer uses a “scenarios elicitation” method, he will probably choose to elicit from an interviewee both her “optimistic” and “pessimistic” scenarios. In such a case, all that is logically required is that the interviewee consider these two scenarios to be simply “possible”—having a probability of realization that is judged to be greater than zero. Even if the interviewee sees a scenario as having a low probability—say, .05 or .10—such a scenario can still be heuristically useful. A case in point would be an ecologist interviewee’s Pessimistic Scenario, which might project a major ecological breakdown. Even if the ecologist assigns to it a low probability, such a projection, dealing with a matter of such fundamental importance to the long-range survival of an entire society, deserves our serious attention.

A similar logic applies to an interviewee’s Optimistic Scenario. The mere fact that such a scenario is regarded by some as being of low probability is not in itself sufficient grounds for refusing to take it seriously. President Kennedy’s optimistic vision of sending a man to the moon during the Sixties was seen by many as having a very low probability. Yet it became reality. Indeed, it is in the very nature of an Optimistic Scenario that it is typically seen as having a lower probability than numerous other plausible (and less preferable) scenarios.

To recapitulate: Anticipatory Anthropology and Futures Studies are generally more about designing the future, through articulating alternative future scenarios, than about predicting a particular future. That said, logically there is no escaping the fact that all anticipation does embody some kind of prediction. But the key point is that this need not be “hard” prediction. At a minimum, a given vision or scenario need only be deemed possible, rather than impossible. Logically, to say that a scenario is “possible” requires only that one assign to it a probability greater than zero—an extremely “soft” requirement. Only if the ethnographer were to ask an interviewee to provide a scenario designated as “most” probable, or “highly” probable, would “hard” prediction be involved (Textor in Sippanondha 1990:

135–152). Taking into account all of the above seven points, I believe that fallibility should not be seen as a sufficient reason to shrink from engaging in serious anticipation. If Margaret Mead were alive today, I believe she would essentially agree with the above line of reasoning.

A Personal Example

Because Anticipatory Anthropology will be new to some readers, it might be helpful at this point to report briefly on why and how I developed my commitment to doing some of my research in the anticipatory mode. In so reporting, I will be following the advice that Margaret Mead constantly urged upon her students: “Use yourself as data.”

My report begins in 1958, when I returned to Cornell University to write my dissertation, after five years of fieldwork in Thailand. I brought home with me an enormous corpus of field notes, including systematic data on certain cultural subsystems that, I discovered, could best be analyzed using the university’s new computation center (a facility that had not even existed when I left Cornell for Thailand in 1952). I started by using IBM cards and simple counter-sorter and tabulating equipment, but soon realized that use of a computer would be much more effective. I thus “got onto the computer” at a very early point in the Age of the Computer, from 1959 to 1964, first at Yale and then at Harvard. I did this simply out of perceived necessity, despite little background in statistics, and despite the need to rely on others to do my programming.

In 1958, computers were so new that few people had a clear or confident idea as to what would be this strange device’s longer-run impact on society. It is well known that as late as the mid-1950s, even the head of the International Business Machines Company (IBM) projected only an extremely limited market for this new device. And within the anthropological community, the great majority knew very little about the computer, let alone about its potential.

Let us imagine that it is 1958 and you are interviewing me ethnographically about my anticipations regarding the future use of the computer by the Thai people between that year and a twenty-five-year horizon date of 1983. To your introductory questions, I might have replied: “Well, it seems likely that computers will become more numerous in Thailand, and have an appreciable sociocultural impact, but I am not sure how.” You are not satisfied with such a vague answer, so you probe further: “Could you just relax a bit, speculate a bit, and flesh out that picture?” To that probe, I might have hesitantly replied that maybe the Thai census bureau and some other large governmental organizations, and perhaps also some large banks and businesses, would use the computer and find it cost-effective.

Even this projection would have been a hesitant one, however, because I was mindful that just a few years earlier the Thai census bureau itself had been hesitant in making use of business machines – not computers, but just elementary IBM punch-card counting-sorting and tabulating machines. However, the bureau had had so little faith in this new equipment, that it was spot-checking these machine-produced results by using a centuries-old instrument that it truly trusted, namely the abacus.

At this point you still suspect that I have other ideas to share, so you decide to probe more aggressively. You try to open up my imaginative resources, by asking me a wild, “off the edge” question: “Do you anticipate that, in the middle run—say, 1963 to 1978—many middle-class Thai families will be using computers in the home?” Although this is indeed true today, I would then certainly have answered No. The very question would have seemed utterly preposterous to me, since the reality in 1958—at the Cornell Computation Center and elsewhere—was that a computer was an enormous and mysterious device that had to be kept in a large air-conditioned room, and manned by a crew of professional technicians who would not let anyone else go near “their” machine. To make any kind of use of this machine, one had to have, or hire, programming skills. How could such a machine ever be installable and useable in an ordinary person’s home? In 1958, I could not possibly have anticipated the advent of microelectronic miniaturization, the breakthrough that ultimately made the personal computer possible. Nor could most electrical engineers of that day. After all, it was not until about 1973 that the microchip emerged, and not until about 1978 that the prototype personal computer became available.

Let us fast forward to 1978. You are interviewing me again about the future of computers in Thailand in the near or middle term. By that year, microelectronics had evolved to the point where I could and soon did produce visions and scenarios of considerable specificity, with enough lead-time to be of possible value to policy-makers, planners or citizens.¹⁴

I confess that I find it a little embarrassing to relate this personal example, since one of the main reasons I entered anthropology in the first place was to discover creative ways to use modern technology humanely and effectively in improving living conditions in economically less developed nations such as Thailand. I certainly would have done a better job as a development anthropologist if Margaret Mead or someone had offered me a course in Anticipatory Anthropology before I left for the field in 1952. Unfortunately, however, to my knowledge no university at that time offered such a course.

What If Margaret Mead Had Used a Scenarios Elicitation Method?

Today, interviewing people by eliciting their scenarios for the future, and helping them build visions of their own, is a key method in Futures Studies—and one that fits remarkably well into the holistic ethnographic tradition of anthropology (Textor in Sippanondha 1990: 146–150). There is general agreement that this method produces its richest results when multiple and contrastive scenarios are elicited, because almost all futurists today construe the future as embodying a multiplicity of possibilities, rather than a single inevitability.

All of us, as we pass through life, have our own special “retro scenarios,” visions of what we might have done if circumstances had been different. Here, with respect to Margaret Mead, is mine. Though it might seem implausible to some readers, it seems quite plausible to me.

During the Seventies I decided to enter the futures field. I started in 1976/1977, when I took sabbatical leave one year early and began reading the futures literature. I did this primarily because I had become convinced that the rapidity and complexity of on-going global sociocultural change had made it necessary for some of us in anthropology to engage in systematic anticipation, if our discipline as a whole was to have its best chance of remaining robustly relevant to the needs of society. In particular, I felt that there was a need for systematic anticipation by those anthropologists heavily involved in Development Studies, as was true of both Mead and myself.

Browsing the futures literature, I was impressed by the broad array of methodologies that futurists had invented, or borrowed and adapted, for use in Futures Studies (Bell 1997: 228-317). Some of these methodologies were impressively sophisticated and creative. However, I was disheartened to discover how extremely limited the impact of my discipline had been on Futures Studies. I felt that anthropology, for all its limitations, had something special to offer. It was clear to me that anthropology's emphasis on understanding whole sociocultural systems was needed in Futures Studies, where most research was more narrowly focused often on just one or another subsystem. I reasoned that ordinary people everywhere do, after all, aspire to live desirable and worthwhile future lives in the context of a whole socio-cultural system—not just a business subsystem, a political subsystem, a communication subsystem, etc.

Moreover, I saw a great opportunity for anthropologists to enhance and improve research on alternative futures for peoples indigenous to the non-Western world. Although the great majority of social scientists in the world, of whatever discipline, are Westerners, cultural

anthropology is unique among disciplines in virtually requiring that its members at least try to develop sophisticated and empathic understanding of non-Western peoples. For this reason, also, I felt that anthropology ought to become involved in Futures Studies.

I therefore began searching for a methodology that would allow anthropology to make a useful contribution—one that would be seen as useful not just by anthropologists, but by social scientists and futurists in general. Why not, I thought, find a way to adapt ethnography, the classic methodology of cultural anthropology, to the needs and constraints of Futures Studies? Why not ask people questions directly about their future? Why not develop a way to elicit from an interviewee their visions of possible, probable, and preferable futures for their sociocultural system? So, I proceeded to do just that, in a spirit later encapsulated by Bohannan and van der Elst: “What people hope will happen and what they fear will happen can easily be made part of every ethnographic study—all you have to do is ask and listen. Doing that can open windows on the future as people work to bring about their hopes and avoid their fears (1998: 100).”

The method I developed, known as Ethnographic Futures Research (EFR), builds upon one’s ethnographic knowledge, but systematically asks questions about the future. The EFR interview has much in common with the conventional ethnographic interview. It is confidential, interactive, semi-structured, flexible, open-ended, and focused on patterns and systems. In an EFR interview, three contrasting scenarios are elicited: an Optimistic, a Pessimistic, and a Most Probable Scenario. The ethnographer probes non-directively, seeking to free the interviewee from their tempocentrism, and to achieve a high degree of clarity, comprehensiveness, contextualization, and coherence. An interview might take as little as an hour, or as long as ten or more hours in several sittings. The interview is tape-recorded, and then written up in summary protocol form, for editing and approval by the interviewee. The quality of the final product depends on the robustness of the interviewee’s knowledge and imagination, and on the skill of the interviewer.¹⁵

EFR was still in the early stages of its development in 1978, the year Margaret Mead died. If she had lived a few years longer, or if I had developed EFR a few years earlier, I would almost certainly have made an effort to interview her using this new method.¹⁶ To minimize bias and enhance robustness, I would have involved perhaps three other scholars as co-interviewers. For example, suppose that Mead chose to deal with alternative middle-range futures for the U.S. in the context of a rapidly evolving global system. In that case I would have involved, say, a political economist, a development-ori-

ented social scientist from an economically less developed country, and a respected futurist or systems scientist with global interests. For gender balance, at least one of these three co-interviewers would be female, and at least one, male. I think there is a good chance that Mead would have accepted our invitation, in part because of its subject matter, and in part because she loved to work with teams of colleagues from a variety of disciplinary and cultural backgrounds.

The EFR procedure seeks to achieve comprehensiveness and coherence by requiring the interviewer to probe using an agreed-upon list of broad domains. Possible domains could include demography, technology-economy, energy, environment-ecology, transportation, tourism, information-communication, politics-law-government, social structure, education, religion, and cultural identity. In my opinion, a book of this sort, authored by Margaret Mead, would have made her visions of possible, probable and preferable futures accessible to the worldwide social science and general audience in an eloquent, memorable and quotable fashion.¹⁷

Anticipatory Anthropology in Practical Service to Twenty-First Century Society

My personal "Optimistic Scenario" is that anthropologists and futurists will work together with increasing closeness over the next ten to twenty years and beyond, to their mutual advantage and that of society. In many ways, it would be a natural partnership (Riner 1987). Futurists, after all, have just as strong a professional "vested interest" in identifying and counteracting tempocentrism, as anthropologists have with respect to ethnocentrism. Futurists can help anthropologists to "de-tempocentrize" their thinking and methodology. Similarly, anthropologists can help futurists to "de-ethnocentrize" their thinking and methodology.

Developing a certain amount of anthropological sophistication would be useful to futurists, the majority of whom are upper- or middle-class urban residents of economically advanced Western industrial nations, and are hence not likely to possess adequate knowledge of, or empathy with, ordinary people from economically underdeveloped non-Western nations. These are the very kinds of ordinary people that many cultural anthropologists seek to understand through intensive fieldwork.

If Margaret Mead were alive today, I believe she would be urging her anthropological colleagues to devote their attention—descriptive, analytical, and anticipatory—to the world crisis in population, resources, and environment. I believe she would also point to the potential, for good or ill, of such profound global "driving forces" as

the Information, Biotechnical, Materials Science and Energy Revolutions, as well as the ever more pervasive digital “global marketplace.” Today it is not just small isolated sociocultural groups that are being impacted by these powerful, all-pervasive forces, but virtually every society across the globe.

Listed below are several kinds of anthropological research in the anticipatory mode that I believe Mead would be encouraging today:

- Working with governmental or civic leaders to visualize alternative *demographic* futures, assessing the main sociocultural and human well-being implications of each, and formulating culturally grounded policy recommendations. This is an absolutely vital problem area given the enormous demographic momentum throughout much of the world today, especially in its poorest and ecologically most fragile areas.
- Assessing possible, probable, and preferable futures for a given human group as a consequence of the *Information* Revolution and its vast potential for bringing about broad sociocultural change. Such research might, for example, take the form of a fieldwork-based technological forecast of the impact of the Internet on a given community or culture, with recommendations as to public policies needed to ensure democratic access, personal privacy, and the preservation and enrichment of cultural identity.
- Assessing possible, probable, and preferable effects of the *Biotechnical* Revolution on local peoples. This Revolution provides the scientific and technical basis for previously unimaginable medical treatments, or for the design of new food plants that can grow in forbidding climates and inhospitable soils, or for ecologically sound means of pest control. At the same time, this Revolution carries profound ethical implications in such areas as human cloning, organ transplants, and the substantial extension of the human life span.
- Assessing the potential, for a given society, of the *Materials Science* Revolution, which generates completely new materials, not found in nature, that will possess the particular properties needed to relieve pressure on natural raw materials that are non-renewable, or that would be better used for purposes of greater social value.
- Analyzing the *energy* needs and resources of a given population, and its readiness to develop and utilize

alternative, often non-traditional, energy sources that would be sustainable and non-polluting.

- Doing a *cultural-ecological* analysis and projection of resource use and renewal for a given region, with appropriate policy recommendations.
- Assessing the *readiness* of a given community for a new type of productive tool, technique, or educational input, while also assessing possible adverse consequences for the local people.
- Working with land use and transportation *planners* to develop culturally grounded alternative scenarios concerning problems of urban crowding, traffic congestion, and air and water pollution.
- Using field and library / electronic research to develop alternative scenarios concerning the possible, probable and preferable effects of the emerging *global* economy on local productivity, employment, cultural continuity, ecological sustainability, or the equitable distribution of the benefits of techno-economic innovation.
- Conducting deeply contextual fieldwork on *ethnic tensions* in areas such as Israel / Palestine, Serbia / Kosovo, or Indonesia / Aceh, to produce grounded yet imaginative visions and policy recommendations aimed at preventing future genocide.

These are some of the daunting challenges that lie ahead. They are challenges that I believe Margaret Mead, if she were alive today, would lead in addressing. If other anthropologists rise to meet these challenges, they will be serving society and anthropology well, and in the process, honoring her memory.

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ing Mead at a microphone) my thanks go to photographer Rick Stafford of the Harvard News Office. For the task of digitizing and otherwise preparing these photographs for publication, I am indebted to Michael Seric Thompson and Robert K. Costello, both of the Smithsonian Institution. Finally, I wish to thank Ms. Vivian K. Berghahn for her very helpful and professional editorial assistance and, similarly, Mr. Mike Dempsey for production assistance. Responsibility for any errors is of course mine alone.

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. For more on the rationale of Anticipatory Anthropology, please see the Appendix to this Introduction, p. 16.
2. For an example, see *Themes in French Culture*, Volume Four of this Mead Centennial Series (Margaret Mead with Rhoda Métraux, 2001 [originally 1954]). See also the appraisal of that effort by the editor, Kathryn M. Anderson-Levitt, a specialist on French culture (2001: vii-xxii).
3. For more information, see Volume One of this Mead Centennial Series (Margaret Mead and Rhoda Métraux, eds. 2000 [originally 1953]). In his Introduction to that volume, William O. Beeman provides a comprehensive account of the history of the RCC and IIS and of their significance to the social sciences, and to society. The IIS remains active to this day serving as Mead's literary executor and home to the activities of the Margaret Mead Centennial. For further information, visit <http://www.interculturalstudies.org/aboutus.html>. On this site, one can find a mission statement that is highly relevant to the present volume: "The IIS is committed to celebrating Mead's Centennial by emphasizing the human capacity to imagine and work toward a positive future."
4. The U.S. government's decision not to try the Japanese emperor as a war criminal was highly controversial at the time. But today, most serious scholars agree that retaining the emperor (or at least the imperial institution) was the correct decision. It enabled the Allied Occupation to promote democratic change in collaboration with liberal Japanese elements, with no need to worry about military, paramilitary or physical resistance—and ultimately with impressive success (Textor 1992). Today, two generations later, the Japanese political culture has changed profoundly, and Japan is a stable, functioning and peaceful democracy.
5. For the reader desiring background on Mead's career, personality, and ameliorative drive, there are several good sources. One might start with the memorial issue of the *American Anthropologist* (1980), where several of

her colleagues report on various aspects of her life. I also recommend Mead's autobiography (Mead 1972), and the various biographies and memoirs by Bateson (1984), Dillon (2001), Grinager (1999), Howard (1984), and Lapsley (1999). Additional such studies are now being written and a continuously updated listing will be available from the web site of the Institute for Intercultural Studies: <http://www.interculturalstudies.org>

6. This matter is further discussed in the Appendix to this Introduction, p. 24.
7. Accessible through <http://www.interculturalstudies.org>
8. The goal of this book was to bring together the entire coded cross-cultural literature (from the Human Relations Area Files and thirty-seven other sources) into one volume in accessible form. To do this, I used a then-novel device, the computer, and developed a "Pattern Search and Table Translation Technique" to render each of the book's more than 18,000 statistically significant two-by-two tables into a single declarative English (or, if desired, Russian, French or German) sentence that expressed the essential meaning of that table. The book would thus present a comprehensive array of statistically-based cross-cultural information in both quantitative and qualitative terms, with a high degree of transparency.
9. Three years later, when I was preparing to publish the *Summary*, I asked Margaret Mead for an endorsement, and she obliged with the following: "A real forward step....goes a long way towards making the Human Relations Area Files more significant." The jacket for this book also contained endorsements by six other scholars: George Peter Murdock and Irvin L. Child of Yale University, Harold E. Driver of Indiana, Philip E. Slater of Brandeis, Raoul Narroll of the State University of New York, and John M. Roberts of Cornell. All six had long been committed to, and productive in, statistical cross-cultural analysis. Mead was the only exception. In my view, this episode illustrates an important aspect of her personality, namely her empathy for the new and her ability to imagine middle and long-run human consequences of this or that innovation.
10. For an account of her contributions to the anthropological understanding of Russian culture and to the ongoing tradition of Russian anthropological research, see Mead 2001 [1955 and 1962]), and especially the comments of its editor, Sergei Aruitnov, on pages xiv-xx.
11. *Cultural Frontiers* was well reviewed. And it sold well, which gratified all of us who participated in its writing. (We donated our proceeds to the Peace Corps.) Today, thirty-eight years later, the book is apparently still widely available in public libraries around the U.S. Unquestionably, a key reason for the book's success, and especially its longevity, has been that it bears a stamp of approval from Margaret Mead.
12. There is, however, one exception. In March 1970 my son Alex was born, and his mother and I sent out the usual routine birth notices to many of our friends, including Margaret. A few weeks later a silver cup arrived in the mail, inscribed "from Margaret Mead." It became, of course, an instant heirloom.

13. In my view, there should not have been a Vietnam War, and, if American leaders had had their ethnocentrism under better control, I believe major conflict there could have been avoided.
14. See Textor et al. 1983, 1985 and Textor 1986.
15. For specifics, see Textor in Sippanondha (1990: 135-152), or Bell (1997: 312-15).
16. I would have proposed that the protocols generated by the interview be written up in book form — either by her, or else drafted by me for her editing and approval. She would make that decision, and in any case, she would be the sole author, since the ideas in the book would be solely hers.
17. If you find the above idea too fanciful I would refer you to a book that was actually produced using a closely similar research plan, so that you can judge for yourself how well such an approach might have worked with Mead. In 1988 three collaborators and I used EFR to elicit alternative middle-range future scenarios for Thailand by interviewing a single highly qualified individual, namely the Thai scientist and national leader Sippanondha Ketudat. Sippanondha was a Harvard-educated nuclear physicist and university professor, who at various times had been Minister of Education, a major figure in Thailand's premier national planning agency, and head of that nation's national science foundation. At the time we interviewed him, he was serving as founding President of Thailand's National Petrochemical Corporation, a public-private company. He was, in short, a man of great learning and experience, comparable in many ways to Margaret Mead. Hence, taking a look at his book, which is available electronically, will give you a rough idea of what a similar book by Mead might have looked like (see Sippanondha 1990).

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NOTE: This list of references includes only a few works by Mead herself. For a listing of all her works, see *Margaret Mead: The Complete Bibliography, 1925-1975*, edited by Joan Gordan, 1976, The Hague: Mouton. In addition, many of her publications are searchable on-line at <http://www.interculturalstudies.org>. For those readers able to visit Washington DC, I strongly recommend visiting the vast collection of Meadianna available at the permanent Margaret Mead Collection at the Library of Congress.

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