



Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation (Perennial Classics)

By Margaret Mead

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Rarely do science and literature come together in the same book. When they do - as in Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, for example -- they become classics, quoted and studied by scholars and the general public alike.

Margaret Mead accomplished this remarkable feat not once but several times, beginning with *Coming of Age in Samoa*. It details her historic journey to American Samoa, taken where she was just twenty-three, where she did her first fieldwork. Here, for the first time, she presented to the public the idea that the individual experience of developmental stages could be shaped by cultural demands and expectations. Adolescence, she wrote, might be more or less stormy, and sexual development more or less problematic in different cultures. The "civilized" world, she taught us had much to learn from the "primitive." Now this groundbreaking, beautifully written work as been reissued for the centennial of her birth, featuring introductions by Mary Pipher and by Mead's daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Coming of Age in Samoa (1928) launched Mead's career as an anthropologist, which was reaffirmed with the 1930 publication of New Guinea. In both volumes she theorizes that culture is a leading influence on psychosexual development. She also surmises that the so-called civilized world could learn a lot from so-called primitives. Essential volumes for academics.

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About the Author

Margaret Mead (1901-1978) began her remarkable career when she visited Samoa at the age of twenty-three, which led to her first book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*. She went on to become one of the most influential women of our time, publishing some forty works and serving as Curator of Ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History as well as president of major scientific associations. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom following her death in 1978.

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