Arts & Humanities

A World of Families

The photographs of Ken Heyman.

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Ken Heyman's career as a photographer had yet to take off when he took his first class with renowned Columbia anthropologist Margaret Mead '23BAR '29GSAS in 1954. But Mead was so impressed with the astute perception of human interaction that Heyman had shown in her class that she invited him, a few years later, to to be her photographer on a field trip to Bali. The trip not only launched Heyman's career but began a twenty-year collaboration and friendship that continued until Mead's death in 1978.

A special exhibit of Heyman's photographs titled "A World of Families" is now on display at the American Museum of Natural History in New York to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Mead's birth last November. On display through the fall, the exhibit comprises nearly fifty black-and-white photographs selected from *Family*, a book Mead co-authored with Heyman in 1965. The book, one of 54 Heyman has authored, is a collection of photographs taken from his travels to 45 countries from 1957 to 1964. (The photos above, "An American Family at Play" and "Peru," are in the book and the exhibit.) Now 71, Heyman has shot over 150 assignments for *Life* magazine, and his photography is in museum collections around the world.

The images in "A World of Families" span such diverse cultures as Bali, India, the United States, and China. The exhibit exemplifies Mead's professional interest in the interaction between generations, which influenced Heyman's interest in photographing families.

Mead was one of the first researchers to use photography and films to supplement anthropological field work. "Pictures are held together," she wrote, "by a way of looking that has grown out of anthropology, a science in which all peoples, however contrasted in physique and culture, are seen as members of the same species, engaged in solving problems common to humanity."

Guide to school abbreviations