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## American Anthropologist 84:3 (1932)

Lindstrom gave a comprehensive and thoughtful account of the terminological history of "Big Man" in Melanesia (AA 83:900-903, 1981). May I add that the term has wider currency, especially in Africa? Joan Vincent, for example, uses "Big Men" in the title of her book, where she traces (1971:3) the implicit and explicit usages of the term by ethnographers.

In Ghana, "big man" is popularly used in a half-mocking, half-respectful manner to describe a person of importance, in opposition to a "small boy" (who may be the same chronological age), who is always at the receiving end of favors. As Robert Price wrote, "Big men are those of social weight, worth and responsibility; while small boys are like children of little consequence. . . . Big men are expected to look after the material well being of their social inferiors-small boys are expected to exhibit obsequious public deference toward big men" (1974:175).

And Bruce Grindal, when he asked school boys in northern Ghana to write their life stories "from now to the year 2000" found that a favorite dream was to return home as a big-man (1972:89).

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### *References Cited*

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