

Acceptance of the Mineralogical Society of America Award for 1997

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Mr. President, Past President, Mineralogical Society of America Councilors, Members:

Thank you for selecting me for this award. It is a tremendous honor and I appreciate it very much. Needless to say, there are many people to whom I owe my deepest thanks. Firstly, my parents and grandparents who reared me to respect learning, teaching, and knowledge. Special thanks go to my mother, who first stimulated my interest in geology, my father who tried (not so successfully) to develop in me a love of mathematics and physics, and to both my parents for gracefully surviving and supporting my decision to become a geologist. Most importantly of all, thanks to my husband, Perry Smith, who has taken day-to-day responsibility for raising our children and for stimulating my interest in other aspects of life to ensure balance in my world. Without Perry, much of what I have accomplished would not have been possible.

Secondly, I would like to express particular gratitude to Tony Eggleton of the Australian National University for his special role in my geological upbringing, and also for encouraging me to go to the United States to continue my education. Tony was the person who introduced me to transmission electron microscopy and its application to the study of mineral reactions and rescued me from my less than happy experiment with a career in the mining industry. He is also the person who showed me the 1983 MSA award speech by David R. Veblen and encouraged me to contact David about Ph.D. studies. I thought Arizona sounded like a terrific place. I was stunned when I found the word "Baltimore" on his more recent publications (where on Earth was Baltimore?).

It was a terrific experience working at Hopkins. This was a real center of scientific excellence and the graduates from that time now populate the faculty of universities around the United States. It was also a surprisingly human place—many students had children—if not when I arrived, then soon after. In fact, John Fournelle and I even tried to hatch a scheme to set up a nursery in a drafting room at one point. Children were a wonderful part of the graduate school experience. They played quite an important role in developing in us all a sense of balance and priority. It is important that women can feel comfortable simultaneously growing their careers and their families. Of course, my deepest thanks are due to David Veblen, who was my advisor and who encouraged us all to pursue our own research interests. This flexibility was very important to me and I appreciate it very much. David's ability to provide constructive advice on just about any topic related to mineralogy and geochemistry is a real indication of what a superb mentor he was to me, and no doubt is now to others. Blair Jones (U.S.



Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia) and Dimitri Sverjensky were also important mentors, and I thank them too.

There are many other people to whom I am indebted and to whom I offer my thanks. My closest colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during the pre-35 years: fellow Bs: Bill Barker and Bull Bailey (the three of us were dubbed the killer bees by an isotope geochemist, no doubt tired of sitting through talks filled with pictures of little dots), as well as John Valley and other faculty who hired me at UW, provided a supportive environment, and shepherded me through tenure.

I am not at all confident about the extent to which I deserve the recognition associated with the MSA award. However, I thank MSA and accept this as a vote of confidence in my future work. The work in our research group now involves combining mineralogy and low-temperature geochemistry with microbiology to understand reactions that occur at mineral surfaces. I thank the Mineralogical Society of America and applaud the council for having the vision to sponsor our recent short course on the topic of geomicrobiology and taking leadership in this emerging area of geoscience.

There are three accomplishments before the age of 35 of a different type that I am inordinately proud of. These are my children, Nicole, Andrei, and Elliot. They are my joy and sanity and I thank them, and Perry, for their love and patience, especially in the many weeks each year that I am away from home.

Thank you all.