

PACIFIC STUDIES

Vol. 19, No. 3

September 1996

“TO STUDY NATURE RATHER THAN BOOKS”: CAPTAIN JAMES COOK AS NATURALIST OBSERVER AND LITERARY AUTHOR

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This article explores several apparent inconsistencies in the self-promulgated image of Captain James Cook as the epitome of the eighteenth-century explorer, an observer who recorded exactly and only what he had seen. Cook's ongoing habit of appropriating and simplifying the observations of others can be reconciled with his reputation as a scrupulous observer; on his first voyage, for instance, he simplified the naturalist observations of the specialist Joseph Banks better to reflect what he had seen. Moreover, as Paul Carter has argued, Cook's often highly subjective language reflects the scientist's awareness that even the most carefully made observation is inescapably subjective: the scientist's duty is to acknowledge and precisely to locate that subjective stance. But I shall also argue that Cook's integrity as a scientific observer became increasingly impaired by his aspirations to authorship. In the manuscript journal of his final voyage, at least one borrowed (and unacknowledged) passage did not describe what Cook himself had seen. And though in his writings Cook sought to sustain the rhetorically effective nonspecialist perspective of the “plain” and thus “honest” man, his problematic attitude to specialist and nonspecialist terminology indicates how Cook's subjective stance becomes increasingly difficult to locate.

CAPTAIN JAMES COOK (1728-1779) is perhaps the epitome of the eighteenth-century scientific explorer. It is difficult to summarize his achievements. Some have claimed that his early hydrographic work in eastern Canada--particularly his charting of the St. Lawrence River--was directly responsible for the British conquest of Canada that concluded the Seven Years' War.¹ And it is indisputable that he and the scientists and artists who traveled with him on his three great circumnavigational voyages contributed immeasurably to knowledge in numerous disciplines. Sent on his first circumnavigational voyage to discover a supposed southern supercontinent, Cook

found none. However, his exploration of Tahiti, New Zealand, and Australia yielded not only valuable maps and charts but also observations of immense zoological, botanical, and ethnographic interest. Cook returned to the southern hemisphere on his second great voyage, circumnavigating the globe at high southern latitudes and proving his hypothesis that no such supercontinent existed. Shortly after returning in triumph, Cook relinquished retirement and chose to make yet another voyage; the Admiralty hoped that this time Cook would prove a generally held hypothesis and discover a navigable passage linking the northern Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. But in 1779 he was killed in Hawai'i, where the expedition had spent the previous winter.

Cook contributed not only to science but also to the fields of language and literature. He is a curiously familiar figure in historical linguistics, for instance. His voyages introduced several new words into the English language and began to spread that language into several new worlds. Moreover, the grammar of Cook's circumnavigational voyage journals as well as contemporary editorial corrections to it are of sociolinguistic value, illuminating the development of a written standard English. When he wrote his first voyage journal, Cook did not anticipate that it would be read by anyone other than his superiors at the Admiralty--or that its editor, John Hawkesworth, would earn £6,000. Cook duly wrote his second and third voyage journals with publication firmly in mind. The Admiralty had initially appointed him for his expertise as a hydrographer and an astronomer, not for his ability to write an elegant journal of "remarkable occurrences." But a comparison of his first and last voyage journals illustrates that he learned quickly. His grammar speedily approached (though never attained) the standards of correctness proper to published prose.² And just as Cook improved his grammar, reflecting the period's linguistic anxiety, so he learned and implemented conventions of travel literature that were new to him.

As a travel writer, Cook was always representative of his time: he wrote at a time when the concept of "travel literature" denoted a wide range of material. Indeed, changes in his own practice may have resulted from tension among the contemporary demands, for example, for authentic firsthand observation, for novelty, and for comprehensiveness.³ This article will argue that on Cook's first circumnavigational voyage, his practice as a journalist generally coincided with his practice as an observational scientist. Even when borrowing observations from others, Cook generally--I argue--recorded as precisely as possible only what he had seen, thus fulfilling one of the first principles of scientific observation. For instance, Cook not only borrowed but simplified a number of natural-historical descriptions made by Joseph Banks, the young, wealthy, university-educated representative of the Royal Society. I shall suggest that even here Cook simplified Banks's observations,

better to reflect the nonspecialist perspective that Cook often exploited in his writings.

Cook's experience as an astronomer and hydrographer had also taught him of the limitations of even the most meticulous firsthand verbal and visual observations. A secondary focus of this article is the flagrantly figurative and approximative language characteristic of Cook's comparisons of the new to the known: drawing on and supporting Paul Carter's study of Cook's place names, I shall suggest that such apparently "imprecise" scientific language signals to Cook's readers the inescapable subjectivity of any observation. Such imprecision is not necessarily incompatible with Cook's self-presentation as a champion of accuracy. Throughout his career as a circumnavigator, Cook associated himself with such conventional symbols as the plain style and un-generalized particulars.⁴

But I shall also argue, as I chart the complicated and increasingly incompatible relationship between Cook's practice as a scientist and as a journalist, that Cook's integrity as a scientific observer became increasingly impaired by his aspirations to authorship. I am particularly interested in how Cook's changing conception of his role as a travel journalist is reflected in his ongoing habit of appropriating observations from the journals of others. In his second and third voyage journals, Cook continued to appropriate the observations of others--sometimes acknowledging them, sometimes not. And at least one borrowed (and unacknowledged) passage did not describe what Cook himself had seen: confined to the beach, Cook could not have seen the enormous statues on Easter Island that were described in his journal. The public's demands on its author had begun to compromise Cook's principles as a scientist.

In the true Cook spirit, this project has a strong empirical base. I have used the text-retrieval and analysis program *TACT* to analyze electronic texts of Cook's first and third voyage journals. With this tool I have been able to assess with more speed and more certainty the extent to which any particular passage is representative of Cook's general practice.⁵

Legends of Cook: Popular and Not Merely Posthumous Praise of Cook as an Accurate and Discriminating Observer

Shortly after Cook's second voyage, James Boswell met him at the house of Sir John Pringle, the president of the Royal Society. Boswell's admiring description repeats key terms: Cook is insistently associated with "truth" and "veracity," truth for Boswell being something that could be measured in gradations "nice" and "very fine." Boswell describes Cook as "a plain, sensible man with an uncommon attention to veracity. My metaphor was that he had

a balance in his mind for truth as nice as scales for weighing a guinea.”⁶ Boswell also relates an anecdote about Cook illustrating this “uncommon attention to veracity”: “It was supposed that Cook had said he had seen a nation of men like monkeys, and Lord Monboddo had been very happy with this. Sir John happened to tell Cook of this. ‘No,’ said he, ‘I did not say they were like monkeys. I said their faces put me in mind of monkeys.’ Here,” said Boswell, “was a distinction very fine but sufficiently perceptible.”⁷

Misrepresentation of his fine and accurate observations unfailingly irritated Cook; he had been particularly incensed at the alterations made to the account of his first voyage by its editor, John Hawkesworth. Hawkesworth, though writing in the first person as Cook, the captain of the ship, had supplemented many of Cooks observations with those of Cooks shipmate Joseph Banks and with Hawkesworth’s own philosophical reflections. At the same meeting, Cook complained to Boswell that Hawkesworth had also made “in his book a general conclusion from a particular and [taken] as a fact what they had only heard.”

As Boswell describes him, Cook presents himself as wary of generalization and misrepresentation, and aware of the subjectivity even of his own fine observations. To the Royal Society’s president, John Pringle, Cook contrasted himself not only with Hawkesworth, who took hearsay as fact, generalized from a particular, and conflated the reports of separate observers, but also with Lord Monboddo’s informant, who had transformed faces that “put [Cook] in mind of monkeys” into men that were “like monkeys.” And in other contexts, public and private, Cook continued to portray himself as the epitome of precision. In the preface to the published account of this voyage that appeared the subsequent year, Cook invoked what Lamb has called “the rhetoric of antirhetoric,” characterizing himself as a “plain man,” “determined to give the best account he is able of his proceedings,” unable to deliver “elegance” or “plausibility,” and restricted to the plain style that was traditionally associated with objectivity and accuracy.⁸

Cooks association with unmediated fact not only was perceived by Boswell but was central to the popular legend surrounding him. During Cooks lifetime, the concreteness and minuteness of Cooks vision had been parodied by the *Critical Review*, which, in a dispute over official authorship rights to the account of Cooks second voyage, had taken the side of his rivals, who argued that a mere navigator could not be expected to write the official account of a voyage so important to science. The *Critical Review* characterized Cook’s style as minutely paratactic in a long list of ship’s supplies, disdainfully concluding the list with “astronomers”: “malt, sour krout, salted cabbage, portable broth, saloup, mustard, marmelade of carrots, inspissated juice of wort and beer, the frame of a small vessel, fishing-nets and

lines, additional cloathing, a landscape-painter, botanists, and astronomers.”⁹ But posthumously, Cook’s observational practices were praised. Reviewing the published account of his third and final circumnavigational voyage, the *English Review* and *European Magazine* in 1784 characterized Cook, respectively, as “exact,” “accurate,” “minute,” with no “bias to speculation”; not’ as fine a writer as Captain King, but less likely than Mr. Anderson to “transfer his own ideas to the objects before him.”¹⁰ Two different doggerel poems present the conventional vision of the man, associated with a panoramic perspective (“the whole,” “ev’ry object,” “survey”) as well as with the ever-present minute details (“the parts,” “accurate”).

Near the Circle Antarctic [*sic*] he sails round the Pole
Attentively viewing the parts and the whole.

Firm and compos’d he steers his destin’d way,
And ev’ry object views with accurate survey!

And Cooks twentieth-century editor and biographer J. C. Beaglehole described Cook as “the genius of the matter-of-fact.”¹¹

The accuracy of Cooks portrayal of the external world is further suggested by the elusiveness of his inner world, never projected outwards: not a few biographical and literary portrayals of Cook foreground the silence or even the absence of their subject. Cooks habitual taciturnity, a cause of frustration for all those who sailed with him, is recalled in a frequently cited nineteenth-century anecdote told by a very old Maori recalling his childhood. Besant, the first original biographer of Cook since his contemporary Kippis, resorted to “reading” such concrete things as countertops and portraits in the absence of anything else. Twentieth-century imaginative treatments of Cook also characterize him as silent and enigmatic: Kenneth Slessor’s poem “Five Visions of Captain Cook” (1931) concludes with a secondhand report of Cooks death by a blind Scotsman surrounded by empty chairs, a culmination of the remoteness and mysteriousness associated with Cook through the poem. And in several twentieth-century plays inspired by his life, Cook is silent or even absent.¹²

Indeed, as he presented himself to his public, this self-effacing and extraordinarily accurate observer corresponds closely with the idealized eighteenth-century explorer-scientist described by Barbara Stafford in *Voyage into Substance* (1984). Stafford’s observer “reads natural characters as they actually are rather than skimming over, personifying, or transmuting them into what they are thought to be” and, though relating the hitherto unknown to the known, is careful “to draw minute distinctions where a careless mind

might have interjected broad associations."¹³ Despite any idealization of the "piercing" and discriminating eye of the eighteenth-century sailor, Stafford's idealized observer differs very much from the real seamen in Cook's crew, whose fondness for applying old names to new species was repeatedly deplored by the Royal Society's representative Joseph Banks: "Besides these were many species which tho they did not at all resemble any fish that I at least have before seen, our seamen contrivd to give names to, so that hakes, breams, Cole fish &c. were appellations familiar with us, and I must say that those who bear these names in England need not be ashamd of their nam[e]-sakes in this country."¹⁴ And like Cook, Stafford's idealized observer is often the first to see and record the previously unseen, but scrupulously records only what he has seen firsthand.

Complication: Cook Copies and Simplifies the Naturalist Observations of Joseph Banks

And yet in the journal of his first circumnavigational voyage, Cook sometimes drew his naturalist and ethnographic observations from sources other than his own perceptions. Perhaps this was to be expected, even of Cook. Engaged by the Admiralty specifically for his expertise as a navigator and hydrographer, in his official journal Cook was expected to record everything "remarkable." The majority of Cook's observations are his own. But especially during the first half of the voyage, Cook silently appropriated the observations of others. He relied particularly on Joseph Banks, at twenty-seven already a fellow of the Royal Society, its representative on the *Endeavour's* voyage, and eventually its president. That Cook used Banks is well known. Beaglehole's comparison of the journals of Cook and Banks has established that extensive "extracts from Banks" appear in Cook's summary description of Tahiti, the *Endeavour's* first extended port of call.¹⁵ Banks's influence has also been detected by Glyndwr Williams in Cook's reflections on the inhabitants of Australia,¹⁶ and it can also be seen in Cook's summary descriptions of the flora and fauna of New Zealand and Australia (Banks 2:6; Cook, 276-277). Both Beaglehole and Williams have observed that Cook did not tend to copy Banks exactly: he often supplemented or summarized Banks, or left things out. Cook rarely incorporates Banks's descriptions of insects, for instance.

Given Cook's inexperience, his diligence, and his ambition, his use of Banks is unsurprising: Banks was indubitably the best resource on board. But two particularly curious habits of Cook the copyist must be addressed. Unlike Hawkesworth, who in the preface to his *Voyages* explicitly acknowledged that the observations and reflections of several men were subsumed

under the person of the captain--and whom Cook deplored for this practice--Cook never acknowledged his borrowings from Banks. The seams appear only occasionally. The non-classically educated Cook refers to two male Tahitians as Lycurgus and Hercules, names assigned by Banks to a just man and a large man, respectively, before their real names (as Cook puts it) were discovered.¹⁷ And when describing more exotic species of plants and animals, it is clear that Cook must have copied Banks's taxonomy: it is unlikely that Cook had previously seen "gum dragon" or an opossum, although he uses these terms as analogues.¹⁸

However, what is most striking is that, in a number of his descriptions of species similar to those in England and Europe, Cook not only copies Banks but eliminates some of the fine distinctions in Banks's descriptions of plants and animals by substituting words like "exactly" for words like "somewhat." For example, "Quails **differing but little at first sight from those of Europe**" (Banks 2:5) becomes "Land fowl are likewise in no great plenty and all of them except quails are I believe unknown in Europe, these are **exactly like those we have in England**" (Cook, 276-277). I will suggest that on Cook's first voyage, his alteration of Banks's journal reflects the professional astronomer's desire to record only and exactly what he had observed:

**The *Endeavour* Voyage (1768-1771):
From Astronomy to Ethnography**

The ostensible object of Cook's first voyage was to observe from Tahiti the transit of the planet Venus across the face of the sun, the timing of such observations from widely separated locations then being critical to finding the distance of the sun and the scale of the solar system. Though the astronomical event was rare, for Cook the making of astronomical observations was routine. But in secret instructions, Cook had also been instructed to make discovery of the supposed southern "Continent or Land of great extent."¹⁹

As captain of the *Endeavour*, Lieutenant Cook was required by the Admiralty to keep not only a log and such visual records as charts and coastal profiles,²⁰ but also a journal containing such details as "place where the ship is at noon; changes of wind and weather; etc.," along with "remarks on unknown places" and "remarkable occurrences" generally.²¹ This was a completely new task for him. Cook had already kept ship's logs in northeastern North America and, indeed, as a marine surveyor and practical astronomer, was even a published author--of a report (communicated by a fellow) to the Royal Society of his observations of an eclipse and of several volumes of sailing directions accompanying his charts of the Newfoundland coast.²² But he

had not previously been expected to record naturalist and ethnographic information.

What aids could Cook have used? Cook lacked much formal education, but was enterprising and highly intelligent. A Yorkshire estate foreman's son, he spent some time at the Postgate School, where he and seven other poor children would have been taught "reading, writing, and arithmetic."²³ At age eighteen, he apprenticed himself to a ship owner; at twenty-seven, he joined the navy. Throughout his working life, Cook supplemented his professional training as a navigator with private study: for instance, he spent the winter months in Canada grounding his surveying techniques by reading mathematics and astronomy.²⁴ For naturalist information, Cook had a number of resources on board.

The written instructions given to him by the Admiralty and by the Royal Society do not seem particularly helpful:²⁵ a little more useful than the four untranslated lines of Virgil concluding the Royal Society's discussion of transplantation (Cook, 518) were the instructions that observations should be made "carefully" (the Admiralty; Cook, cclxxxii) and "minutely" (the Royal Society; Cook, 517), and that local names and medicinal properties should be recorded. Specimens should also be collected: the Admiralty's instructions assumed that "proper Examination" of botanical objects would be made in England. More specific instructions could not be given: the "Hints" offered by James Douglas of the Royal Society acknowledged that "the Natural productions of the Country, in the Animal Vegetable and Mineral Systems . . . open so vast a field, that there is no room in this place for descending to particulars" (Cook, 517). The emphasis was indeed on the "minute" and the "particular": a century earlier, Boyle, writing in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* in 1666, had emphasized the importance of both the "peculiar" and the "particular."²⁶ Douglas does not rule out metaphor: he makes no mention of the unmetaphorical, plain, and paratactic prose of the kind described by Sprat in the seventeenth century and stereotypically associated with the Royal Society. Indeed, despite any idealization of the plain style for scientific travel writing, Cook would have been confronted with a variety of styles in the books that he referred to that he could have used as models.²⁷

Cook was a reader: his constant consultation of books has been well documented. On board were the manuscript journals of previous British voyages in the Pacific and between sixty and seventy books of travel and natural history brought by Banks.²⁸ Both Banks and Cook consulted these texts: Cook records seeing "a Sea lyon the head of which was exactly like the head of the male one described [by] Lord Anson" (234), and Banks, near Pepsys Island, disagrees at some length with Dampier's description of the distribu-

tion of the “small shoals of the red lobsters which have been seen by almost every one who has pass’d these seas” (1:210).

Joseph Banks himself was by far the most useful resource for Cook. After his education at Oxford, where he had personally established a botany tutor, the wealthy Banks had traveled to Newfoundland on a kind of Grand Tour, and on Cooks voyage was a full-time observer and journalist, accompanied by Linne’s former assistant Solander and by the artists Buchan and Parkinson. Though Banks later failed publicly to disseminate his collections and his writings, he was always generous in allowing others, including Cook, access to them.

When Cooks naturalist observations betray the influence of Banks, their accounts are sometimes reasonably comparable. For example,

about noon saw one like a snipe but less and with a short bill which I judge to be a land bird (Banks 1:395)

At 11 Am saw a Bird something like a snipe only it had a short Bill, it had the appearance of a land bird. (Cook, 165)

More often, Cooks and Banks’s accounts differ. The differences identify a few distinctive characteristics of Cook as a naturalist observer. As stated above, Cook occasionally removes Banks’s fine distinctions. This habit of Cooks is especially striking in two contexts. In his descriptions of edible plants in Tahiti, most of the distinctions removed are those relating to taste:

a fruit **not unlike an apple which when ripe is very pleasant** (Banks 1:342)

a fruit **like an apple** (Cook, 120)

a fruit in a Pod **like the large Hull of a Kidney bean**, which when roasted **eats much like Chestnuts** and is call[d] *Ahee* (Banks 1:343)

a fruit in a Pod **like a Kidney bean** which when roasted **eats like a chestnut** and is called *Ahee* (Cook, 121)

Bread fruit cookd in this manner becomes soft and something **like a boild potatoe, tho not quite so farinaceous as a good one yet more so than the midling sort** (Banks 1:344)

Bread fruit, Bananoes and Plantains Cook’d this way eats **like boild Potatoes** and was used by us by way of bread when ever we could get them (Cook, 122)

Later in the voyage, Cook simplifies a few of Banks's descriptions of fauna, particularly of birds: he not only removes distinctions and qualifications but twice substitutes the unequivocal adverb "exactly" for qualifiers like "differing but little at first sight" and "very like if not quite the same":

Of Birds there are not many species, and **none except perhaps the Gannet the same as those of Europe. There are however ducks and shags of several kinds sufficiently like the European ones to be calld the same by the seamen**, Both which we eat and accounted good food (Banks 2:5)

Sea and water fowles of all sorts are however in no great plenty, **those known in Europe are Ducks, Shags, Gannets & gulls** all of which were eat by us and found exceeding good (Cook, 276)

Quails differing but little at first sight from those of Europe (Banks 2:5)

all of them except quails are I beleive unknown in Europe, **these are exactly like those we have in England** (Cook, 276)

The Land Birds were crows, very like if not quite the same as our English ones. . . a Crow in England tho in general sufficiently wary is I must say a fool to a New Holland crow and the same may be said of almost if not all the Birds in the country (Banks 2: 118)

and **Crows exactly like those we have in England** (Cook, 311)

It is tempting to postulate that Cook simplified Banks's distinctions in descriptions of edible and inedible flora and fauna because he was unable to perceive them. To those who sailed with him, Cook's insensitive palate was infamous: he ate "acrid" roots and a toadfish that was not only hideous but poisonous. Moreover, in George Forster's version of the toadfish incident, Cook stubbornly insisted on serving up the fish, against the advice of Forster and his father, because it was the "identical sort of fish" that Cook had eaten "without the least bad consequence" "on the coast of New Holland."²⁹ And in his descriptions of these few birds, Cook may also have simplified what he had read in Banks so that his account did not credit him with observational abilities he did not at that time possess: to him these birds may have looked exactly like crows and quails.

A further examination of Cook and especially a more comprehensive comparison of Cook and Banks suggests that Cook was capable of making fine distinctions in his naturalist observations, more often using qualifiers than

words like “exactly.” In his first voyage journal, Cook uses approximations and qualifiers like “something like” (8x), “very (much) like” (3x), “most like” (1x), “some such like Animal” (1x), or “of the . . . kind” (8x) or “sort” (3x) more frequently than he uses “exactly like” (3x) or “in every respect like” (1x).³⁰ Especially in his ethnographic observations, Cook often emphasizes the approximative use of terms by pairing them with the coordinator *or*: “speech or prayer,” “cheif or king,” “tribe or Family,” “Hamlet or village,” “servants or slaves.”³¹ Indeed, Cooks observations are occasionally more precise than those of Banks. On one occasion when his written observations may otherwise have been influenced by those of Banks, Cooks numerical estimate of “some hundreds” seems more accurate than Banks’s “many millions”:

the little silver backd bird which we saw off Faukland Isles and Cape Horn . . . **many millions** I may safely say of the small bird mentiond yesterday about as large as a dove, greyish on the back, some with a dark colourd mark going in a crooked direction on that and its wings (Banks 1:389-390)

some hundreds of Birds that were smaller than Pigeons, their backs were grey, their bellies white and the ends of their tails black, and have a blackesh line along the upper parts of the wings from the tip of one to the other. We saw birds very like these near Faulklands Islands on the Coast of Patagonia, only they had not the black strake along the wings. They fly low like sheer-waters or Mother Caries Birds and are perhaps of the same tribe. For distinction sake I shall call them Doves. (Cook, 161)

Moreover, Cooks observations are sometimes qualitatively more accurate than those of Banks. In the ancient spirit of the Royal Society--“to study Nature rather than Books”--Cook seems less likely than Banks to be influenced by his reading. Glyndwr Williams has argued that Cooks first descriptions of the inhabitants of Australia show fewer preconceptions and more open-mindedness than those of Banks, “a readiness to view a strange and primitive life style on its own terms.” Even when Cook borrows ideas and expressions from descriptions of American aboriginal peoples for his summary description of the native Australians, he makes significant changes to the content: Cooks description, unlike those of his sources, distinguishes between “necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe” and “all things necessary for life.”³²

Cook’s relative ignorance of natural science sometimes meant that his observations were more accurate than those of his more knowledgeable companions. On his second voyage Cook won a dozen bottles of wine from

Johann Reinhold Forster in a “hotly contested ‘philosophical dispute’ . . . between the ‘Experimental-Men’ and the ‘military Men’ ”: Forster insisted that what Cook correctly identified as tall trees were basalt columns, then “ ‘all the fashion in the philosophical world.’ ” And Banks’s beloved Latin binomials, simultaneously signaling similarity and difference, sometimes provided only an illusion of precision: on at least one occasion, Banks applied his names--whether Latin or English--as rashly as the common seamen. His “birch” was in fact a counterpart of the beech; and the “cranberries” (a term perhaps influenced by Wallis’s journal), the berries of the shrub *Pernettya mucronata*.³³ Cook’s corresponding comparison is more cautious and thus in this case more accurate: his berries are not “cranberries” but merely “like Cranberries,” and even his “wood of the Birch kind” differs more explicitly from “that in England or North America” than Banks’s *Betula antarctica*.

The trees here are chiefly of one sort, **a Kind of Birch** *Betula antarctica* with very small leaves, it is a light white wood and cleaves very straight; sometimes the trees are 2 or 3 feet in diameter and run 30 or 40 feet in the bole; possibly they might in cases of necessity supply topmasts. Here are also great plenty of **cranberries both white and red**, *Arbutus rigida*. (Banks 1:217)

The wood is **of the Birch kind**, but of a different quality to that in England or North America, here are likewise . . . **some berries like Cranberries, but growing on bushes**. (Cook, 51)

The preceding pair of passages also exemplifies how the non-classically educated Cook, despite his temporary adoption of the classical proper names Lycurgus and Hercules, generally did not appropriate the Latin terminology that Banks applied so freely to new flora and fauna. Instead, Cook would use the English nomenclature with which he was familiar--“Gull” or “Steering” (66) for Latin *sterna* (Banks 1:241), “Gum dragon” (307) for *sanguis draconis* (Banks 2:57); “Possums” (367) for “of the Opossum kind and much resembling that called by De Buffon Phalanger” (Banks 2:117). Although Cook problematically invoked *gum dragon* and *possums* as analogues, as acknowledged above, he scrupulously used his own “instruments”--plain English rather than specialist terminology, apparently unwilling to pretend to a specialist knowledge that he did not yet have. Moreover, that Cook’s naturalist observations were at least occasionally more accurate than those of Banks suggests that elsewhere his simplification of Banks’s observations might be regarded as his attempt to record exactly and only, what he had seen. In each case, the object of study has been re-presented from a new if more limited perspective--Cook’s.

Cook, Banks, and the Kangaroo

A comparison of Cook's account of the kangaroo with that of Banks provides a useful test case for what Cook had learned on the *Endeavour's* voyage. The kangaroo and the wallaby (unlike the Australian opossum, which Banks rightly recognized as a distant relative of the American opossum and the East Indian phalanger) presented a problem in that they were completely unlike anything their European observers had ever seen before. Europeans resolutely described these marsupials in terms of European animals. But different Europeans selected different animals. Muller, publishing in 1777, "attributed the kangaroo to the genus *Mus*"; 150 years earlier, in a report that "probably never reached the eyes or ears of Englishmen," the Dutch Pelsart had described the dama or tammar wallaby as a kind of cat, "the size of a hare," with a "very long tail" "like that of a long-tailed monkey." A kangaroo or wallaby may have been Dampier's short-armed raccoon or "Beast as big as a great Mastiff-Dog" with a corresponding print.³⁴ That the beast was essentially unlike anything the *Endeavour's* observers had ever seen is clear from its prolonged namelessness: for a month after its first sighting, Cook referred to it as "the animal before spoke of" (351-363); even Banks, generally swift to apply Latin binomials,³⁵ described it only as "the animal" or "the wild animal" (2:100).

The travelers on the *Endeavour* saw the kangaroo's dung before they saw the animal itself. On 1 May 1770, Cook and Banks, along with Dr. Solander and "some of the people, making in all 10 musquets" (Banks 2:57), made an excursion inland at Botany Bay. The similarity of their accounts indicates collaboration of some kind.

We saw one quadruped about the size of a Rabbit, My Grey-hound just got sight of him and instantly lamd himself against a stump which lay conceald in the long grass; we saw also the dung of a large animal that had fed on grass which much resembled that of a Stag; also the footsteps of an animal clawd like a dog or wolf and as large as the latter; and of a small animal whose feet were like those of a polecat or weesel. (Banks 2:57)

Dr Solander had a bad sight of a small Animal some thing like a rabbit and we found the dung of an Animal which must feed upon grass and which we judged could not be less than a deer, we also saw the track of a dog or some such like Animal, (Cook, 307).

Beaglehole suggests that the stag-sized grass-eater was probably the kangaroo (Cook, 307).

There are once again significant differences between the two accounts. More cautiously than Banks, Cook concludes that the "large animal which had fed on grass" was about the size of a deer rather than "resembl[ing]" one. But in general Cook is less precise than Banks. Banks establishes loose similarities between the unknown animals and European ones only with respect to particular qualities--size, dung, footprints. In contrast, Cook extends the similarity beyond a single point of resemblance, though compensating for the generalization by adding more qualifiers: Banks's "quadruped **about the size of a Rabbit**" is for Cook "a small Animal some thing **like a rabbit**"; similarly, the "animal **clawd like a dog or wolf and as large as the latter**" is for Cook "**a dog** or some such like Animal." Banks's observation that the large animal "had fed upon grass" corresponds to Cook's conclusion that it "must feed upon grass"; *must* alerts us to Cook's reasoning processes.³⁶

Once seen, the large animal is initially compared to a greyhound: that Banks had two on board may well have influenced the description.

The People who were sent to the other side of the water in order to shoot Pigeons saw **an animal as large as a grey hound, of a mouse colour, and very swift.** (Banks 2:84)

one of the men saw an animal **something less than a grey hound, it was of a Mouse Colour very slender made and swift of foot** (cook, 351)

The sustained similarities between Cook's and Banks's reports confirm that, although neither of them had seen the animal, it was of sufficient interest to warrant some degree of discussion. The next day, June 23, Banks reports that the "people who went over the River saw the animal again and describd him in much the same manner as yesterday" (Banks 2:84). In the entry for June 24, Banks, already irritated at not yet having seen the animal himself, seems not to have found the reports of others particularly helpful: his mention of "descriptions of the animal" is followed by a patronizing account of the "Seamanlike" tendency to compare other new specimens to distinctly unhelpful referents:

Gathering plants and hearing descriptions of the animal which is now seen by every body. A seaman who had been out in the woods brought home the description of an animal he had seen composd in so Seamanlike a stile that I cannot help mentioning it: **it was (says he) about as large and much like a one gallon cagg, as black as the Devil and had 2 horns on its head, it went but Slowly but I dard not touch it.** (Banks 2:84)

Only the next day do Banks and Cook have the good fortune to see “the beast so much talked of.” Again, both men’s descriptions are similar, and constrained by the earlier analogue of the dog. Cooks, longer and in one respect more accurate than Banks’s, is a modification of the earlier report: while sustaining and developing the comparison of the animal to a canine, he also qualifies two of the previous comparisons: the animal is “of a **light** Mouse colour” and “the **full size** of a grey hound and shaped in every respect like one, with a long tail which it carried like a grey hound, in short I should have taken it for a wild dog, but for **its walking or running in which it jumped like a Hare or a dear.**” Cook also relays a description of the animal’s small legs and goatlike feet, noting that he had not seen them himself (Cook, 351-352). Banks, in contrast, has become even more constrained by his initial point of comparison: he reported that the beast was “like a grey hound in size **and running**”; only on July 7 does he observe much to his “surprize that instead of Going upon all fours this animal went only upon two legs, making vast bounds just as the Jerbua (*Mus Jaculus*) does” (Banks 2:89). Banks also concludes his initial firsthand description of the animal with the characteristic, candid, and really rather accurate exclamation “what to liken him to I could not tell, nothing certainly that I have seen at all resembles him” (Banks 2:85).

Both men revise their descriptions when the eternal sportsman Gore shoots a young male specimen of “the animal that had so long been the subject of our speculations” (Banks 2:93-94) or “the Animal before spoke of” (Cook, 351, 359). The greyhound is no longer a useful analogue; indeed, -Banks finds it difficult to find any analogue at all. With a male specimen, Banks could not perceive this marsupial’s similarity to the opossum.³⁷ Its method of locomotion explained Banks’s comparison to the jerboa and perhaps reinforced Cooks comparison of its head and lips to that of a hare. For Cook, just as he had avoided using specialist terminology, had undoubtedly never seen a jerboa and therefore did not use it as an analogue.

its body was long the head neck and shoulders very small in proportion to the other parts--it was hare lip’d and the head and ears were most like a Hares of any animal I know (Cook, 359n)

To compare it to any European animal would be impossible as it has not the least resemblance of any one I have seen. Its fore legs are extremely short and of no use to it in walking, its hind again as disproportionally long; with these its hops 7 or 8 feet at each hop in the same manner as the Gerbua, to which animal indeed it bears much resemblance except in Size, this being in weight 38 lb and the Gerbua no larger than a common rat. (Banks 2:94)

Beaglehole's examination of the manuscript sources establishes that Cook rewrote his description after examining the specimen more closely and then amplified it after consulting Banks's account. The passages in boldface below, inserted subsequently, correspond to Banks's text and do not appear in the Mitchell transcript (MS M), sent to England from Batavia in 1770: it is possible that Cook added them well after the fact.³⁸

it was a small one of the sort weighing only 28 pound clear of the entrails. The head neck and shoulders of this Animal was very small in proportion to the other parts; the tail was nearly as long as the body, thick next the rump and tapering towards the end; the fore legs were 8 Inch long and the hind 22, its progression is by hoping or jumping **7 or 8 feet at each hop** [interlinear addition; not in MS M] upon its hind legs only, for in this it makes no use of the fore, which seem to be only design'd for scratching in the ground &ca. The Skin is cover'd with a short hairy fur of a dark Mouse or Grey Colour. Excepting the head and ears which I thought was something like a Hare's, **it bears no sort of resemblance to any European animal I ever saw; it is said to bear much resemblance to the Gerbua excepting in size, the Gerbua being no larger than a common rat** [sentence written closely at end of page; not in MS M]. (Cook, 359)

In this, Cook's summary account of the kangaroo, he modifies an observation derived from Banks that he cannot corroborate at firsthand: Banks's "any European animal" becomes "any European animal **I ever saw**," although Cook retains, with severe qualification, his own initial comparison of the animal's head and ears with those of the (European) hare: "Excepting the head and ears which **I thought** was something like a Hare's" He also flags Banks's reference to the Gerbua with "**it is said**." He records not its original weight of thirty-eight pounds, given by Banks, but its weight "clear of the entrails" when he must have examined it. And where Banks describes only the general proportions of the limbs of this particular specimen, Cook measures their precise dimensions--perhaps because the specimen would remain in Banks's possession, perhaps because of a cultural compulsion for measurement,³⁹ or perhaps because as an exact scientist Cook was more interested in concrete kangaroos than in kangaroos in the abstract.

Cook and the Limits of Verbal and Visual Precision

These verbal descriptions of the kangaroo were not only supplementary but even secondary: once killed, the kangaroo was weighed, measured, drawn,

and perhaps even preserved. On this, perhaps the first voyage with professional artists on board, the navigator and natural historians alike relied on the interplay of word and drawing in their records, and it is unsurprising that textual records were felt to be inferior to visual records in their ability transparently to convey an accurate description. Cook himself often observed that “drawings and paintings . . . give a more perfect idea . . . than could be formed from written descriptions only,” and on Cooks final voyage, the only two occasions on which he suggests that even drawing has its limits are when he must describe a dance.⁴⁰ The vicious dispute between (the ultimately victorious) Cook and the Forsters over possession of the sixty-plus engravings from the second voyage indicates the importance of visual records, and in a private letter Cook observes that these illustrations will compensate for any defects in his writing style.⁴¹

Yet as an astronomer and hydrographer, Cook would have been well aware of the limited precision even of graphic and numerical records. The best that one could do would be to make as many observations as possible, as accurately as possible: Stafford's solitary scientists recorded their observations, however incomplete, on the spot, at an “identifiable moment,” and recorded as many different observations from as many different perspectives as possible. Cook describes his practice as a journalist in similar terms, defending his second voyage journal (somewhat untruthfully) as “my own narrative” “as it was written during the voyage.”⁴²

The conventions of astronomy demanded that a recorded observation reflect the perception of a single observer from a fixed point in time and space, and that each numerical observation be accompanied by the observer's name and perhaps also by a description of the quality of the observer and of his instruments. Indeed, the first publication of Cooks own astronomical observations, communicated to the Royal Society by J. Bevis, begins by describing “Mr. Cook, a good mathematician, and very expert in his business” and his “very good apparatus of instruments.”⁴³ However, even expert astronomers routinely failed to achieve objectively exact results, even with a multitude of multiple observations: for instance, the many careful observations of the transit of Venus made by Cook and other observers on board the *Endeavour* varied considerably from each other, and indeed none yielded estimates for the distance between the earth and sun that were anything near the actual distance calculated later. That the longitude of Queen Charlotte's Sound could not be settled decisively even after multiple observations enraged the natural historian Johann Reinhold Forster, who concluded that the astronomers were either “negligent” or that their accuracy was “pretended.”⁴⁴

The conventions of hydrographic observation--visual and written--demonstrate the same insistence on multiple observations from different per-

spectives. On his first voyage, Cook's most frequent comparison using the word *like* is "like an island" or "like two islands"--from a particular direction at a particular time. More than once Cook noted in his journal that a landmark changes in appearance with the position of its observer. These multiple perspectives conventionally were not conflated, but were instead recorded on a single sheet of paper. It is significant that the last of Barbara Stafford's many references to Cook in her *Voyage into Substance* introduces the section asserting that "even singularities do not possess a unique aspect."⁴⁵ Very often a feature that was "like an island" from one direction was not an island: the truth, if Cook could ascertain it, would be evident on his very accurate chart.

Cook's charts acknowledge that however meticulous the observer and however minute and concrete the ungeneralized particular observations, it was impossible utterly to suppress or screen the idiosyncratic or subjective.⁴⁶ Indeed, as described by Paul Carter, Cook's hydrographic practice vividly demonstrates the link between the scientific observer's unapologetic subjectivity and his integrity. Carter argues that when Cook once emended his clerks' fair copy of his journal, he was not being petty but was restoring the document's single point of view: "The Soil to all appearance nothing but white sand thrown up in low irregular hills lying in narrow ridges parallel with the Shore: this occasion'd Mr Banks to give it the name of *Sandy bay*" (Cook, 222). In the Mitchell transcript, "Mr Banks" is heavily deleted and "me" written above it by Cook. Carter lists other practices of Cook's that demonstrate the same scrupulous subjectivity. Cook carefully preserved the gaps in his text and on his charts, retaining the trace of his unique passage.⁴⁷ And the accuracy of these charts meant that his place names did not have to be as descriptive as "Sandy Bay." Many were overtly figurative ("Chain Island") or occasional ("Thirsty Sound," "Providential Channel"). Indeed, Cook "[did] not intend to preserve the delusion of objectivity, for his standpoint is neither neutral nor static. Instead, they [his place names] draw geographical objects into the space of his passage."⁴⁸ His similes illustrate the same subjectivity, the same insistence on recording information as he had seen it at the time. Although Cook sometimes compares an unfamiliar landscape with a site in England (180) or with such other widely known landmarks as the Peak of Tenerife (232), he just as often compares it to something encountered within the course of that particular voyage, making no concessions to later readers. For instance, when in Newfoundland, Cook had described a "remarkable Rock, that at a Distance appears like a Shallop under Sail." A Newfoundland shallop (from French *chaloupe*) is a shallow-water fishing boat; Cook mentioned them elsewhere in the text that accompanies his chart.⁴⁹

Cooks fanciful place names also foreground the figurative use of language and thus the very arbitrary link between word and thing and the limitations of language as a descriptive tool. The subjectivity and singularity of these place names, so persuasively discussed by Carter, is evinced with particular clarity in Cooks naming of the first Pacific islands. Osnaburgh Island, named and unmemorably described by Cooks precursor Wallis, captain of the *Dolphin*, as “nearly circular and about two miles over,” by Banks as “like a very short cone,” and by Johann Reinhold Forster as “a high Peak with a flat top,” to Cook from northwest by west “looks like a high crown’d Hatt, but when it bears north the top is more like the roof of a house.”⁵⁰ Cook’s text describes mountains like camels and dromedaries (222, 300), pigeon houses and glass houses (301, 319); islands and rocks like hay stacks (30, 178), com stacks (185), arched bridges (21), castles (192), and so forth. His charts give them names to match. Several of Cook’s similes reflect, perhaps, an unconscious sense of conflict as the Pacific encounter begins: on the first island, Lagoon Island, two notable trees look like a “Large Tower” and “very much like a flag,” respectively. Bow Island (“of a Bow-like figure”) is surrounded by a “border of land and Reef. . . like a wall.” The subjectivity of Cooks place names can be illustrated vividly by comparing Cooks name for Hao, *Bow Island*, with Bougainville’s: *La Harpe*.^{5 1}

Many other features of Cook’s journals illustrate his conscious awareness of the approximative nature of language, of its limitations. But on his first voyage, he was rarely deterred by these limitations and diligently set about describing the unfamiliar and extraordinary sights that he had diligently sought out. Indeed, he typically acknowledges difficulty only when describing strong emotions, formulaically “better conceived than described.”⁵² Both Cook and Banks, before facing “the animal before mentioned,” had been sorely challenged by the costume of the chief mourner in Tahiti. Banks resorted to drawing: “He put on his dress, most Fantastical tho not unbecoming, the figure annexd will explain it far better than words can” (1:288-289). Even Cook was provoked into a rare admission of perplexity, but unlike Banks he ploughed ahead with his pen: “I cannot tell how to describe or to convey a better Idea of it than to suppose a man dress with Plumes of feathers something in the same manner as those worn by Coaches hearses, horses &ca at the funerals in London” (136).

A reader of Cooks journal is often aware of Cooks awareness of the approximative nature of language: doves are so named “for Distinction sake”; settlements are called “Hamlet or village”; rulers called “cheif or king.” But unrigorous synonyms are more often used less explicitly in Cooks prose. In the *Endeavour* journal, for instance, a Malaysian word, *proe*, describes a Tahitian boat (129); and the word *king* appears thirty-two times.

For, as a writer, Cook seems to have taken the subjectivity of individual perception and the approximative nature of language for granted. Indeed, readers of John Douglass edition of Cook's journal, which appeared in 1777, a year after the dinner party at Sir John Pringle's, could marvel at the men of "this ape-like nation" with their "monkey countenances."⁵³ And editor Douglas had not misrepresented Cook: in Beaglehole's edition of Cook's own journal, which appeared almost two hundred years later, we can read Cook's own words describing the "Monkey faces" of "this Apish nation."⁵⁴ In both editions, words could be compared with illustrations: the man in the engraving in the 1777 text differing visibly from the man in the reproduction of William Hodges's original in the 1961 text and neither looking anything like a monkey.⁵⁵ Cook's seemingly erroneous memory of his observations--"I did not say they were like monkeys. I said their faces put me in mind of monkeys"--must have taken for granted, consciously or unconsciously, his inescapably subjective stance: even his most carefully chosen words necessarily presented a singular vision of the world.

Cook and Contemporary Conventions of Travel Writing

Cook's convictions about scientific authorship were put in the spotlight in 1775-1776, in a controversy that pitted him against the Forsters, sponsored by the Royal Society to travel on the second voyage (1772-1775). The Admiralty, determined "that there should be no more Hawkesworths," spent 1775 deciding whether the second voyage narrative should be written by Forster senior, by Cook, or jointly: their deliberations have been described at length.⁵⁶ One issue was the ability of either man to write with "correctness": in a letter to Lord Sandwich, Forster attacked Cook's grammar and style; but the foreign-born Forster's own writing was found by Lord Sandwich in need of "correction."⁵⁷ Cook was eventually given official sponsorship, along with rights to the plates. But George Forster's quickly written *Voyage Round the World* (1777) appeared six weeks before Cook's version.⁵⁸

In his preface, Forster made several attempts to discredit his competitor's scientific and authorial credibility. Like Cook, Forster championed accounts that--unlike Hawkesworth's much-maligned volumes--were firsthand; he also acknowledged the usefulness of separate accounts that presented the view of the "same objects" by "different persons" with "different points of view." Forster made his own point of view, that of the natural historian and philosopher, sound infinitely more interesting to the public than that of Cook the navigator, compiler of "nautical details," "bearings and distances," and "instructive particulars." More seriously, Forster also intimated that Cook's text was not in fact a firsthand report: Cook had not only been too

busy “to superintend the printing of his own Journals” but had not even written them himself. These statements of Forster’s were not without foundation: Cooks text had been ghost-edited by John Douglas.

Forster described the greatest difference between him and Cook as their treatment of “facts.” Forster mocked what he implied was Cooks “simple collection of facts,” “which no art could reunite into a whole,” “a single proposition,” and argued that it was necessary for the traveler to “have penetration sufficient to combine different facts, and to form general views from thence.” Dr. Johnson also believed that the collection of facts was in itself insufficient, being the necessary prelude to the “ascent to principles.” Moreover, Hawkesworth’s version of Cook had been reviled for not synthesizing, for its “multitude of frivolous particulars,” and in particular for “le[aving the reader] totally in the dark” as to the “rationale of the many singular customs of these islanders.”⁵⁹

As characterized by Boswell and in the preface to his account of the second voyage, Cook had insistently allied himself with particulars, with the authority and accuracy of unmediated firsthand observation. In practice, Cook was an accomplished former of hypotheses and synthesizer of facts. It is important to note that his objection to Hawkesworth was that he drew “a general conclusion from a particular” rather than from a number of them. Cook certainly did not refrain from speculative synthesis, though, as Forster’s biographer Hoare observes, he flags it as such: his account of the formation of icebergs is clearly speculative, though given credibility by his concluding reminder that it “is written wholly from my own observation.” Moreover, his entire second voyage can be seen as a nautical fact-collecting expedition to prove his scientific hypothesis that no southern supercontinent existed.⁶⁰

Cooks editor Beaglehole asserts that Cook, throughout his authorial career and especially after Hawkesworth’s treatment of his text, was compelled to see to it that any reader of his journals should see things as he had.⁶¹ His second and third voyage journals thus differ in some ways from his first. Perhaps recalling the £6,000 earned by Hawkesworth, Cook became increasingly “authorial” when he recorded the events of his subsequent voyages. On his second voyage, for instance, he occasionally referred to “the reader” and kept several concurrent manuscript journals, revising constantly; it is difficult to describe the resulting records as made “on the spot.” By the third voyage, he writes consistently in civil time rather than ship’s time, with dates confined to the margins; suppresses most nautical details; and writes with reasonable correctness.⁶² He was no longer writing a private document for the Admiralty but was composing a narrative for the reading public.

Cook the scientist also became more “literary.” Though on his first voyage Cook had copied Sydney Parkinson’s drawing of the naturally arched rock in

Tolaga Bay, his written text had ignored the natural masterpiece whose "romantic" prospects had charmed Parkinson and his employer Banks.⁶³ In contrast, on his second voyage Cook verbally described for his reading public the "curious and romantick Views many of these [Antarctic ice] islands exhibit and which are greatly heightened by the foaming and dashing of the waves against them and into the several holes and caverns which are formed in the most of them, in short the whole exhibits a View which can only be described by the pencil of an able painter and at once fills the mind with admiration and horror." As on his first voyage, Cook attempts the description with his pen. But on this voyage, he asserts that his words desert him as he aspires to the sublime, to describe "Lands doomed by nature to everlasting frigidness and never once to feel the warmth of the Sun's rays, whose horrible and savage aspect I have no words to describe." While such statements of verbal inadequacy are less characteristic of the "early" Cook, they do increasingly pervade travel texts in the later part of the century.⁶⁴

Cook the naturalist becomes more prominent as Cook the navigator disappears from his text. Although the introduction to the published account of the second voyage acknowledges the presence of Johann Reinhold Forster, the "person skilled in Natural History. . . engaged to accompany me," Cook's reaction to the Forsters' plan to publish a botanical account of the voyage suggests that he regarded them as competitors even in this field.⁶⁵ Cook had certainly done his homework. By the third voyage, for instance, he cites the zoologist Thomas Pennant's recently published *Synopsis of Quadrupeds* (1771) in a descriptive paragraph appended to his lengthy account of the edibility and social behavior of the arctic walrus. The passage also shows Cook's characteristic fondness for measurement and drawings, and his continuing concern with nomenclature, evident ten years earlier in his account of the "Egg bird" (66):

Pennant in his *Syn. Quadr.* p 335 has given a very good description of this Animal under the Name of Arctick Walrus, but I have not yet seen a good drawing of one. Why they should be called Sea horses, is hard to say unless it be a corruption of the Russian name Morse, for it has not the least similitude to a Horse; It is without doubt the same Animal as is found in the Gulph of St Lawrence and there called Sea Cow, it is certainly more like a Cow than a Horse but this likeness consists in nothing but the Snout. In short it is an animal like a Seal but incomparably larger; the dimensions and weight of one, which was . . . of the largest, were as follows. . . .⁶⁶

And by the third voyage, Cook avoids using the adverb *exactly* to modify comparisons of unfamiliar plants and animals to familiar ones, as it had three

times in the *Endeavour* journal.⁶⁷ The quality (and of course the novelty) of Cook's naturalist observations are evinced by the fact that in 1784 Thomas Pennant hounded Cook's ghost editor John Douglas, seeking to use Cook's observations in his forthcoming *Arctic Zoology*.^{6 8}

Although Cook had certainly rewritten parts of the journal of his first voyage, he obsessively revised the account of his second voyage. These revisions seem to deprive the text of the immediacy and authenticity signaled by the lacunae and lack of polish in his first voyage journal. One might be reminded that Dr. Johnson preferred Boswell's "Journal" over his "History" in his *Account of Corsica*: "Your history was copied from books; your journal rose out of your own experience and observation." But here Dr. Johnson is praising firsthand observation rather than condemning synthesis. Johnson transformed his own on-the-spot records into his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, "one of the main subjects" of which is what Johnson believed to be the imperative "transition from empirical recording to discursive reflection."⁶⁹ As Beaglehole has observed, Cook revised and synthesized in order to convey his perceptions as precisely as possible, so that he would never again be misrepresented.

And yet one final change in Cook's practice as a journalist signals his potential loss of integrity as a scientific observer. Having spent the relatively brief time between voyages in the company of professional scientists,⁷⁰ Cook further distances his observations from those of the common seamen by eschewing their terminology. On the first voyage, he had seen some "fish like skip jacks" (166); on the second voyage, he describes the locomotion of Antarctic penguins as "something like the Fish known to seamen by the Name of scip jacks."⁷¹ This distancing continues on the third voyage. Curiously, all these "distancing" passages in the third journal are clustered in one of the first summary descriptions, of Kerguelen Island. But the explanation lies less in Cook's desire to define his bias as an observer than in his (here) acknowledged parroting of "Mr Anderson's own words":

one of those birds **which sailors call** Noddies settled on our rigging and was caught

Seals (or **as we used to call them**, Sea Bears, being that sort called the Ursine Seal)⁷²

The "Mother Caries" bird of Cook's first voyage (39, 161) is now "the small black [Petrel]" as well as "Mother Careys chicken"; "the largest of the petrels" is "**called by the Seamen** Mother Careys goose." Once Anderson's journal is no longer in front of him, Cook continues to distance himself from his men: "the most of them were of that sort **known to Seamen by the**

name of Elephant fish."⁷³ But Cook's failure to provide a term of his own and his subsequent failure to flag similar terms epitomizes a rather greater loss of integrity in his process of making and recording observations: the position of the observing subject is no longer in focus.

Cook's awareness of his reading public apparently caused him increasingly to violate one of the first principles of scientific observation--recording only what he himself had seen. It is well known that on his later voyages Cook continued to supplement his journals with the observations of fellow journalists, often but not always acknowledging the borrowings. Beaglehole has argued that "Cook was a discriminating borrower," that--for instance--his "discussion of the morals of the women of Tahiti . . . is Cook as well as Wales," but acknowledges in the introduction and through the texts of the journals that there is much that is "not of Cook." Moreover, Beaglehole admits that Cook's account of the interior of Easter Island is completely derived from both Pickersgill and Wales: Cook was ill and confined to the beach. While Pickersgill's report is acknowledged and reported directly, that of Wales is not.⁷⁴

"Travel literature" embraced a variety of methodologies and subjects, and both the "old" Cook and the "new" had their place. But what Paul Carter has described as the "dissonance" between (and within) Cook's texts alerts their readers to the difficulty--much discussed in the period--of reconciling the conventions of several disciplines simultaneously. And perhaps the elusiveness of Cook for his more imaginative biographers can be attributed partly to the ever-shifting status of the subject--no longer just a navigator, not quite a naturalist.

NOTES

Many thanks to John Percy, Don Fernie, and three anonymous reviewers for their most helpful comments on earlier versions of this article.

1. Richard Hough, *Captain James Cook* (London, Sydney, and Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994), 19, refers to these "fanciful claims."

2. See Douglas Gray, "Captain Cook and the English Vocabulary," *Five Hundred Years of Words and Sounds: A Festschrift for Eric Dobson*, ed. E. G. Stanley and Douglas Gray (Cambridge, 1983), 49-62; Barbara M. H. Strang, *A History of English* (London: Methuen, 1970), 73; Carey McIntosh, *Common and Courtly Language: The Stylistics of Social Class in Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 105-114; Carol Percy, "In the Margins: Dr Hawkesworth's Editorial Emendations to the Language of Captain Cook's *Voyages*," *English Studies* 77, no. 6 (November 1996), 549-578; Carol Percy, "English Normative Grammar in Practice: The Case of Captain Cook," *English Historical Linguistics 1994*, ed. Derek Britton (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996), 339-362.

3. Charles L. Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 57, 85, 109.
4. *Ibid.*, 44, 72-73.
5. John Bradley and Lidio Prescutti, *TACT 1.2* (University of Toronto, 1990). I am grateful to the Hakluyt Society, copyright holders of the Beaglehole edition of Cooks journals, for their permission to scan it and to quote from it here.
6. James Boswell, *Boswell: The Ominous Years 1774-1776*, ed. Charles Ryskamp and Frederick A. Pottle (New York, Toronto, and London: McGraw-Hill, 1963), 308.
7. *Ibid.*, 308-309.
8. James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World* [ed. John Douglas], 2 vols. (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777), 1:xxxvi. See also Percy Guy Adams, *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), 243-271; Barbara Maria Stafford, *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1984), 46-52; Jonathan Lamb, "Minute Particulars and the Representation of South Pacific Discovery," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28, no. 3 (1995): 287.
9. *Critical Review: or, Annals of Literature* 43 (1777): 371-372.
10. *Ibid.*; *English Review, or an Abstract of English and Foreign Literature* 4 (1784): 281-297; *European Magazine, and London Review* 6 (1784): 290-292.
11. Poems, respectively, from *Geography Epitomised; or, a Tour Round the World: Being a Short But Comprehensive Description of the Terraqueous Globe: Attempted in Verse (for the Sake of the Memory) and Principally Designed for the Use of Schools* (Philadelphia and London, 1786), 46; and W. B., "Irregular Ode on the Death of Captain Cook," *Lady's Magazine* 21 (London, 1790): 100. James Cook, *The Voyage of the Endeavour, 1768-1771*, vol. 1 of *The Journals of Captain Cook on His Voyages of Discovery*, ed. J. C. Beaglehole, Hakluyt Society extra series 34 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955) [hereafter "Cook"], cxcii, quoted in Glyndwr Williams, "'Far More Happier Than We Europeans': Reactions to the Australian Aborigines on Cook's Voyage," *Historical Studies* 19 (1981): 499.
12. The Maori anecdote is quoted in Helen Wallis, "Publication of Cooks Journals: Some New Sources and Assessments," *Pacific Studies* 1, no. 2 (1978): 194; Walter Besant, *Captain Cook* (London and New York: Macmillan & Co., 1890), 10-12, 32-36, 89; Kenneth Slessor, "Five Visions of Captain Cook," in *Trio: A Book of Poems*, by Kenneth Slessor, Harley Matthews, and Cohn Simpson (Sydney: Sunnybrook Press, 1931), n.p.; Marlies Thiersch, "Cook Plays Now and Then," in *Captain James Cook: Image and Impact; South Seas Discoveries and the World of Letters*, 2 vols., ed. Walter Veit (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1972-1979), 1:46-49, mentioning in particular on p. 53 Shan Benson's *Voyage on a Dinner Table* (radio play, 1954).

13. Stafford, *Voyage into Substance*, xxi, 46, 381, 424-425.
14. Joseph Banks, *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks, 1768-1771*, ed. J. C. Beaglehole, 2d ed., 2 vols. (1st ed. 1962; [Sydney]: Trustees of the Public Library of New South Wales in Association with Angus and Robertson, 1963) [hereafter "Banks"], 2: 6-7. See also Banks 1:153, 2:5, and 2:117.
15. Harold B. Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks, 1743-1820* (London: British Museum [Natural History], 1988), 72; Cook, cciv-ccvii, ccxiii-ccxiv.
16. Williams, " 'Far More Happier Than We Europeans,' " 505-506.
17. John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere*, 3 vols. (London, 1773), iv-v; Cook, 78, 82, 85.
18. E.g., "a gum **much like sanguis draconis**" (Banks 2:57); "Gum one sort of which is **like Gum Dragon** and is the same as I suppose Tasman took for gum lac" (Cook, 307). "The third was **of the Opossum kind and much resembling that calld by De Buffon Phalanger**" (Banks 2:117); c.f. "**Possums . . .**" (Cook, 367). Bold emphasis is used here and in subsequent quotations to draw attention to textual differences.
19. Quoted in Cook, cclxxxii.
20. See Cook, xix-xx, cclxv-cclxxi; and *Charts & Views, Drawn by Cook and His Officers and Reproduced from the Original Manuscripts*, ed. R. A. Skelton (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1955).
21. *Regulations and Instructions relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea. Established by His Majesty in Council*, 10th ed. (London, 1766), 158.
22. E.g., James Cook, *Directions for Navigating the Gulf and River of St. Laurence* (London, 1760); *Directions for Navigating on Part of the South Coast of Newfoundland* (London, 1766); *Directions for Navigating on Part of the North East Side of Newfoundland, and in the Streights of Bell-Isle* (London, 1766); J. Bevis, M.D., F.R.S., "An Observation of an Eclipse of the Sun at the Island of New-found-land, August 5, 1766, by Mr. James Cook, with the Longitude of the Place of Observation Deduced from It," *Philosophical Transactions . . . for the Year 1767*, 57 (London, 1768): 215-216.
23. J. C. Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, completed by T. H. Beaglehole (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974); John Graves, *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland, in the North Riding of the County of York* (Carlisle, 1808), 199.
24. Cook, cvii-cviii.
25. Quoted in Cook, cclxxix-cclxxxiv, 514-519.
26. Mr. Boyle, "General Heads for a Natural History of a Countrey, Great or Small," *Philosophical Transactions* 11 (2 April 1666): 186-189.

27. See Brian Vickers, "The Royal Society and English Prose Style: A Reassessment," *Rhetoric and the Pursuit of Truth: Language Change in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Thomas F. Wright (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1985), 1-76; Adams, *Travel Literature*, 243-271.
28. Cook, 66; Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks*, 72.
29. The roots of "wild Yamms or Coccas" were "so Acrid [MS M, *bad*] that few besides my self could eat them" (Cook, 353). The Mitchell manuscript (MS M) is a transcript of Cooks journal by his clerk Richard Or-ton. It was sent by Cook from Batavia to England in 1770 and is now in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. See Cook, xix, ccxviii-ccxxi. The toadfish incident may have been rewritten with hindsight by George Forster. Cook claims that it was eaten "without the least suspicion of its being a poisonous quality"; Johann Reinhold Forster's journal notes that "it was a kind of *Tetrodon*" but describes it neutrally as "a fine large fish"; only his son George's published account claims that the diners had realized beforehand that "several species" of *Tetrodon* "are reckoned poisonous." See James Cook, *The Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, vol. 2 of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery*, ed. J. C. Beaglehole, Hakluyt Society extra series 35 (Cambridge: For the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1961), 535; Michael E. Hoare, *The Tactless Philosopher: Johann Reinhold Forster (1729-98)* (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1976), 121; Johann Reinhold Forster, *The "Resolution" Journal of Johann Reinhold Forster 1772-1775*, ed. Michael E. Hoare, 4 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1982), 4:649.
30. E.g., "very much like ducks" (166); "very much like rosin" (204); "something like a Pine Apple" (121); "something like Maple" (186). These figures have been obtained from searching the electronic texts of Beaglehole's edition of Cook's *Endeavour* journal.
31. Cook, 141, 153; James Cook, *The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780, Part One*, vol. 3 of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery*, ed. J. C. Beaglehole, Hakluyt Society extra series 36 (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1967), 61, 62, 101.
32. "Directions for Sea-men, bound for Far Voyages," *Philosophical Transactions* 8 (8 January 1665/6): 140. Williams, " 'Far More Happier Than We Europeans,' " 499-512, especially 499, 501, and 507-509.
33. Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 122; Banks 1:217; cf. Hawkesworth, *Account* 1:386.
34. J. M. Thomson, "The Significance of the Voyage of the *Endeavour* to Botany and Zoology," *The Significance of Cook's Endeavour Voyage: Three Bicentennial Lectures* (James Cook University of Northern Queensland, 1970), 30; William Dampier, *A Voyage to New Holland*, ed. James A. Williamson (London: Argonaut Press, 1939), 85; idem, *A New Voyage Round the World*, intro. Sir Albert Gray (London: Argonaut Press, 1927), 312.
35. E.g., Banks 1:174.
36. Beaglehole points out that since rabbits had not yet been introduced to Australia, it is impossible from either description to establish just what had been seen (Banks 2:57n; Cook, 307n).

37. Thomson, "The Significance of the Voyage of the *Endeavour* to Botany and Zoology," 29-30.
38. Cook, 359n-360n, ccxviii-ccxxi.
39. Samuel Johnson, for instance, liked to measure things exactly and in a letter to Sophia Thrale asserted that "the computist" could dispel "a thousand stories which the ignorant tell"; see Richard B. Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and the New Science* (Madison, Milwaukee, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 3132; and Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 72.
40. Cook "intended chart and verbal description to be read together" (cclxv); the Forsters "described . . . both in word and drawing" "new and various miracles of nature," quoted in Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 89. See also Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole* 1:xxxiv; Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, 61, 165, 308; 109 and 131 relate the difficulties of describing dance.
41. Hoare, *The Tactless Philosopher*, 163; letter quoted in Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, cxlii.
42. Quoted in Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, cxliii. Stafford, *Voyage into Substance*, 405, 421-426.
43. This practice is demonstrated in a paper summarizing the results of worldwide observation of the transit of Venus, 3 June 1769: Don José Joaquin de Ferrer, "On the Determination of the Parallax of the Sun from the Observations of the Transit of Venus over His Disk, June 3, 1769," communicated by M. Cerquero through Sir James South, *Memoirs of the Royal Astronomical Society* 5 (1833): 253-296. For an example of Cook's own practice, see Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, 78; Bevis, "An Observation," 215-216.
44. Rupert Thomas Gould, *Captain Cook* (1935; rpt. London: Duckworth, 1978), 55; Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 124.
45. Stafford, *Voyage into Substance*, 260, 430.
46. Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, chap. 2; Stafford, *Voyage into Substance*, 440.
47. Cook, 222, quoted in Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1987), 28-29.
48. *Ibid.*, 28.
49. Cook, *South Coast of Newfoundland*, 8-9.
50. Hawkesworth, *Account* 1:432 [Wallis]; Banks 1:249; Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 96 [Forster]; Cook, 72-73. The rest of Forster's description, however, is more imaginative, illuminating his great interest in vulcanism.

51. Cook, 69-72.
52. Cf. Cook, cxci. Stafford, *Voyage into Substance*, xxi; Cook, 346; see also Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, 187.
53. Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole* 2:34.
54. Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, 462, 466.
55. William Hodges's "Man of Malekula," in Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, fig. 71a, facing 576; J. Caldwell's engraving in Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole* 2:34.
56. Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 456-471; Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 151-162; Wallis, "Publication of Cook's Journals: Some New Sources and Assessments," 163-194.
57. Beaglehole, *Life*, 462, 467; Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 156-157.
58. Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole*.
59. George Forster, *A Voyage Round the World in His Britannic Majesty's Sloop, Resolution*, 2 vols. (London: B. White, J. Robson, P. Elmsley, 1777), viii-xii; Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and the New Science*, 67. Reviews of Hawkesworth quoted in Lamb, "Minute Particulars," 292.
60. Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 126; Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, 643-646.
61. J. C. Beaglehole, *Cook the Writer: The Sixth George Arnold Wood Memorial Lecture* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1970), 13.
62. J. G. Forster, author of the competing account of Cook's second voyage, makes this point to discredit Cook: "Dr Hawkesworth's publication which had been sent to meet Capt Cook at the Cape, with the news of the prodigious profits of the compiler, inspired him with the desire of becoming an author." *A Letter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Sandwich, First Lord Commissioner of the Board of Admiralty, &c.* (London, 1778), 12. Beaglehole notes that Cook himself mentions money in a letter to a friend: "I am to have the sole advantage of the sale." Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, cxliii. For Cooks changing authorial practice, see also *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, cxv-cxxiii; Beaglehole, *Cook the Writer*, 13; Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, clxxi-clxxvi.
63. See Cook, cclxv--cclxvi, 187n. Add. MS 7085, British Library, London, contains Cooks copies of originals by Sydney Parkinson.
64. Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, 98-99, 646; Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 107-109.

65. Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole*, xxxiv; Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 140.
66. Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, 420-421.
67. On the first voyage, *exactly* (. . .) *like* occurs three times, in descriptions of “a Sea Lyon” (234), “quals” (276), and “Crows” (311). On the third voyage, *exactly* (. . .) *like* occurs five times (Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*), but in descriptions of buildings (270, 412), armour (280), coastal topography (425), and “a new Malt beer” (478).
68. Wallis, “Publication of Cooks Journals,” 183.
69. Schwartz, *Samuel Johnson and the New Science*, 66, 74.
70. See, for example, D. E. Allen, *The Naturalist in Britain: A Social History* (London: Allen Lane, 1976), 45.
71. Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, 69.
72. Cook, *Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, 43, 44.
73. *Ibid.*, 45, 45, 51.
74. E.g., Cook, *Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, cxxi-cxxii; see also Carter, *Botany Bay*, 18.