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## “We Shall Soon See the Consequences of Such Conduct”: John Ledyard Revisited

ONLY SOMEONE WHO has approached the Big Island of Hawai'i by sea can imagine the unbridled exhilaration experienced by a crew of eighteenth-century British seamen who had spent the previous seven months searching the frigid waters of Alaska's Arctic Ocean for the fabled Northwest Passage. The nearly fourteen thousand foot summits of Mauna Ke'a and Mauna Loa strained the necks of anyone gazing high into the tropical skies to soak up the splendor of the twin volcanoes. The lush flora and foliage were in full view for all the weary sailors to behold as they sailed around the island; the smell of rich soil, fresh water, and exotic tropical vegetation enticed their senses to the edge of reasonable restraint. The expedition had anchored off the island of Kaua'i just ten months prior and the adoring inhabitants indulged both officers and crew with succulent feasts and fulfilled their lavish desires. For Captain James Cook and the crews of his ships, *Resolution* and *Discovery*, paradise was a frequent port of call in their South Pacific explorations. The Big Island was no exception.

But within one month the relationship with the indulgent islanders became deadly, leaving admirers and historians to struggle with the terrible turn of events. Since the day Cook's expedition returned to

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London without its famous captain, the question of why the Hawaiians killed the great explorer has been repeatedly asked—especially considering the impression that the Hawaiians had worshiped him as a god only days before. The mystery is not in who killed James Cook, or even how, but why. New Zealand professor, J.C. Beaglehole, undoubtedly the world's foremost authority on Cook,<sup>1</sup> grieved over the events as he lamented, "Had the time of familiarity, or fancied familiarity, now come . . . ? The questions are really impossible to answer; but we seem to be confronted with a sudden shift in Hawaiian feeling."<sup>2</sup> A complete reversal of standing might be a more accurate term for the Hawaiians' apparent volte-face. Yet, their change of heart was neither sudden, nor was it simply a shift. One eye-witness states that the relationship between Cook and the Hawaiians was problematic upon arrival. He repeatedly notes in his journal the insulting and inappropriate actions of the crew, and specifically Cook, toward Hawaiian customs and religious beliefs.

As many Hawaiians are well aware, that individual was Corporal John Ledyard, of Groton, Connecticut, but few people outside of the islands understand the significance of his journal or the important implications it contains for our understanding of these events. A non-commissioned officer in the British Plymouth 24th Division since 1775, Ledyard volunteered for assignment on the *Resolution*, Cook's flagship, in April 1776. His duties made him privy to many of the goings-on of the ship's command and, as a result, he witnessed the incidents that took place on the Big Island from January 16 to February 14, 1779. His journal "is the only one from [Cook's] third voyage written in English by a nonofficer. Unburdened by a fealty to the British crown which funded the trip, and with a different perspective as a common man, Ledyard constructed a divergent set of reasonings for Cook's death in Hawaii."<sup>3</sup> Also, being well educated at Dartmouth College, schooled in classic Greek and Latin, Ledyard gained familiarity with the local language of Tahiti while there, and recognized that the Hawaiians spoke a very similar vernacular. This allowed him to translate personal conversations as well as formal meetings between Hawaiian chiefs and priests and the officers of the two British vessels. All of these things combined for a unique perspective of the proceedings; Ledyard knew the answer to why Captain Cook was revered one day and killed the next, and described those events in detail.

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One of the real mysteries concerning this entire affair is the manner in which Cook biographers seemingly refuse to acknowledge Ledyard's journal. Even one of the most recent accounts of the voyages of James Cook, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas*, by Anne Salmond, references Kenneth Munford's biography of Ledyard rather than the corporal's own journal. Clearly the journal was not an insignificant publication as the Connecticut State Assembly granted Ledyard a protection of copyright in 1783. By April 1786, each state had adopted copyright laws based upon Connecticut's acceptance of Ledyard's request. In 1790, the U.S. Congress passed the first national copyright laws based upon Connecticut's template, making Ledyard's book, *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and in Quest of a North-West Passage, Between Asia and America, Performed in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, and 1779*, the first to receive the protection of the copyright laws of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

For the course of the eighteenth century, British historians and Cook biographers blamed Cook's death on the "savagery" of the Hawaiian culture and its people, which resolved quite nicely in European minds this question of why Cook was killed. Tales of cannibalism and practices of sexual immorality made their way quickly to eager ears back home. Captain Cook's heroics as he was brutally stabbed from behind on the beach at Kealakekua Bay grew exponentially as the tale was told and retold to generation after generation of Britons. Officers and scientists who accompanied Cook wrote their memoirs of the voyage in praise of the great captain. Several of these manuscripts survive today in British archives, which brings us back to the efforts of Professor Beaglehole. He pored over these documents and painstakingly examined their contents for a full understanding of the significance of the life and voyages of Cook. In 1974, three years after Beaglehole's death, his son published the historian's final work, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, which has since become the anchor of any study on Cook. Yet, even with that effort, there was no resolution of the nagging question of why the Hawaiians who ostensibly adored Cook would take his life so violently.

In 2003, Philip Edwards edited Beaglehole's tome into a much shorter version for the Penguin Classics, simply called *The Journals*. In his account, Edwards removes the majority of personal commentary of Beaglehole's previous writings. This book reserves itself to the day-to-day entries of Captain Cook and allows the material to present itself

more on its own merits. It makes no claims and calls for no conclusions, but rather offers a straightforward approach to what the famed explorer put on paper. A most interesting note found in this book is a comment by Edwards in his introduction to the third and fatal voyage. He writes, "The invaluable accounts of the voyage by Anderson and Samwell, supplemented by extracts from (among others) Edgar, Burney and Ledyard may be found in Beaglehole's full edition."<sup>5</sup>

However, Beaglehole's opus of 1974 makes no mention of a journal written by John Ledyard. In fact, there are only two references to Ledyard at all, neither of which speak highly of the man. Beaglehole refers to Ledyard as a "wanderer . . . of lofty sentiment and literary ambitions."<sup>6</sup> In another passage in which Ledyard's superior recommended him to Captain Cook to undertake a dangerous five day journey across the frozen wastelands of Unalaska in search of Russian furriers, Beaglehole relates: "[Cook] sent . . . Corporal Ledyard of the marines, nothing loth to make a name for himself, and perfectly willing to travel stowed away inside a kayak."<sup>7</sup>

Why did Beaglehole have such disregard for John Ledyard? If Ledyard's journal was of no repute, then why did the famed historian not denounce the book, and its author, discrediting the entries at every turn? Perhaps Beaglehole could not do so without opening up an array of personal assumptions and unmerited allegations, with no concrete evidence to bear them out. Unfortunately, these are questions that may never be answered. But one thing is certain. According to Edwards, "It has to be said that Beaglehole's loyalty to his hero was so intense that he hardly ever saw Cook as biased or unfair or just wrong."<sup>8</sup> One might speculate from this that Beaglehole simply could not tolerate any views in his works that shed an irreverent light upon his hero, and certainly not a view that declared that Cook and his crew—the supercilious American included—had acted imprudently or made incorrect decisions in their dealings with the Hawaiians. The sheer weight of Beaglehole's authority on the subject of Captain Cook shut the door on John Ledyard's journal forever. Or so he thought.

In 2005, thirty-four years after Beaglehole's death, the National Geographic Society reopened the case and commissioned author James Zug to edit Ledyard's complete set of journals, documents, and personal letters.<sup>9</sup> In the same year, Zug also published his own account of the travels and expeditions of John Ledyard entitled, *American*

*Traveler: The Life and Adventures of John Ledyard—the Man who Dreamed of Walking the World.*<sup>10</sup> Zug was intrigued by his subject's approach in his journal as "Ledyard did not owe fealty to Great Britain and did not feel obligated to join in the adoration of Cook . . . the only writer to declare that Cook was in part to blame for the killings and destruction that punctuated the visit, his book became the sole source for an alternate view on the interactions between the Europeans and the islanders."<sup>11</sup> From these works the full scope of Ledyard's observations of Cook's third voyage are seen. But Zug indicates that Ledyard's book is the "sole source for an alternate view," and yet no modern accounts use this source. Is this to say that Ledyard's book was a major source at one time, but is no longer? This information has existed for over 225 years; therefore, it is certainly possible that Ledyard's popularity had run its course. But that does not change the fact that historians today fail to circulate this critical information. One can only presume that there are issues at hand, other than Ledyard's unkind words towards his commanding officer. It did not take Zug long to locate the alb-tross hanging about the neck of Ledyard's journal—a scandalous case of plagiarism. And it was no minor infraction.

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In 1783, rather than take up arms against American troops in the final hours of the Revolution, John Ledyard deserted a British warship anchored in Long Island Sound, and made his way back to Connecticut. News of his involvement with Cook's expedition had spread long before his homecoming. Governor John Trumbull introduced Connecticut's newest celebrity to a small publisher by the name of Nathaniel Patten. Writing an account of Cook's voyage had always been a goal and now Ledyard had an eager audience. He toiled on his journal from January to May 1783, in his uncle's law office in Hartford. He was captivated by the people of the Pacific islands, contemplating migration patterns, religious customs, social mores, clothing, eating habits, and every day interactions. "Ledyard's description vibrated with energy and foreshadowing and was a serious, honest attempt to see Cook's death from the Hawaiian's point of view."<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, Ledyard had another project that distracted him from his publication.

After leaving Hawai'i, Charles Clerke, captain of the *Discovery*, led the expedition back to Alaska and continued to search for the North-

west Passage. Resigning to disappointment, the crews of both ships bought large amounts of furs, primarily sea otter, for what all thought to be a fair price. Upon their arrival in Canton, China, en route to England, they discovered that their Alaskan furs fetched astoundingly high profits. Recognizing this untapped source of wealth, Ledyard was determined to return to Alaska and begin America's newest foray into the international fur trade. Robert Morris, signer of the Declaration of Independence and "financier of the revolution," became one of Ledyard's business partners in the venture.<sup>13</sup> Eager to leave Hartford, Ledyard left his unfinished manuscript in the hands of his publisher. He completed 54,000 words of his journal, but Patten soon realized that the peripatetic young man's writings stopped on June 17, 1779—sixteen months short of the voyage's completion. This would explain why the title page, designed by Ledyard, includes the years 1776 through 1779, but not 1780, the year the voyage officially ended. With his author heading to Europe, Patten had an unfinished copy of a potential best seller.

A book on Cook's third voyage, printed anonymously in London in 1781 and issued in Philadelphia in the fall of 1783, surfaced several months after the publication of Ledyard's journal in Hartford. Assumed to be a second edition of Ledyard's work for the next 138 years, Canadian historian, F.W. Howay, in 1921, accurately named John Rickman of the *Discovery* as the author.<sup>14</sup> It will never be possible to prove beyond reasonable doubt whether it was Patten or Ledyard who blatantly plagiarized the last 38 pages—11,000 words, verbatim—from Rickman's book. Neither man was alive to answer for the deed in 1921. But one must consider that Ledyard never returned to the United States, nor did he receive compensation for his efforts. In 1821, a researcher for Jared Sparks, president of Harvard University and Ledyard's first biographer, interviewed Nathaniel Patten and reported to Sparks, "I have understood the work was very popular at the time, & that Mr. P. made no inconsiderable sum from the publication."<sup>15</sup> Either way, once the plagiarism was discovered the journal lost credibility as a reliable source—only because plagiarism is so heinously considered, not because the information was inaccurate. When James Zug edited Ledyard's journal in 2005, one of his primary objectives was to locate and remove the plagiarized material. His edition of Ledyard's manuscript "ends on June 17, 1779, the last sen-

tence before a verbatim copy of Rickman begins.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, Ledyard cannot be accused of plagiarizing the section concerning Cook’s actions or his death on February 14, 1779. Zug’s edition of Ledyard’s journal provides historians with a version that is cleared of any disreputable entries.

Another potential bias against Ledyard’s journal is that it does not qualify as a primary document since it was not recorded at the time of occurrence. Ledyard kept a daily journal on the voyage, as did most of the officers, and, in keeping with British protocol, the Board of Admiralty collected these at the end of the voyage. Nearly 30 of the diaries and journals from this voyage still exist, though Ledyard’s is not among them.<sup>17</sup> He wrote his published journal from memory, four years after the fact, utilizing measurements of longitude and latitude from previously published accounts of Cook’s voyages in an effort to maintain logistical accuracy.<sup>18</sup> Regardless, no personal diary would be adequate concerning such nautical notations, even if written daily, as only a captain’s log would have information so precise. The fact that Ledyard’s journal is a memoir rather than a diary does not detract from the validity of its entries. Four years’ removal from the event is minimal compared to the memoirs of Joseph Plumb Martin, one of the greatest sources of “primary” material concerning the American Revolution. It is common knowledge that Martin did not keep a daily diary and that he wrote his memoirs in 1830—fifty years after the fact. Yet historians cite his passages in numerous books and documentaries as factual information concerning the events of the war.<sup>19</sup>

Not intending to confuse the issue with these arguments, the point must be made that Ledyard’s observations deserve as much respect, if not more, than those of Joseph Plumb Martin. The length of time between the event and Ledyard’s transcription was dramatically reduced in comparison, and Martin was 70 years old and admittedly angry when he wrote his memoirs. John Ledyard was only 33 and on the threshold of a great adventure. Virtually every officer of Cook’s third voyage wrote memoirs of their experiences and they all praised their Captain in unison. There are no eyewitness accounts, save Ledyard’s, that present the great explorer in a negative light. Was it possible that John Ledyard’s colonial roots influenced his views of the events? Certainly, but unlike Joseph Plumb Martin, Ledyard had no scores to settle. The fact that he was later financed by Joseph Banks

on two separate expeditions—after his publication had reached London—indicates that he had not offended those who knew Cook well.

Now it is understandable why Beaglehole, Salmond, and other modern Cook biographers have shied away from Ledyard's original manuscript: an unadulterated edition did not exist until 2005.

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To investigate the death of Cook and the surrounding controversy it is necessary to look beyond a simple comparison of personal journals. Neither Cook nor Ledyard kept his journal on a daily basis and Cook often left days, weeks, and even months completely undocumented. Cook's journal, for example, had missing days during every month of the voyage, and one span of silence lasted from July 12 to October 17, 1776, with only one page of notes to cover the whole of the month of August. When reading Cook's journal, one notices that at sea his method was to jot down disjointed, staccato-like entries that were more the product of a military guardian charged with his ship's safety and discipline. Upon finding land, however, his writing style changes dramatically to that of a scholar. He allows days, even weeks, to elapse before returning to his journal to write long, insightful documentaries of the events that had transpired. His entire journal closely follows this pattern of annotation, which would explain the abrupt end to his notes on January 17, 1779, one month before his death. Therefore, in order to piece together the events of January 18 to February 14, we must rely completely upon the memoirs of the crew members of both the *Discovery* and the *Resolution*. Therefore, it is necessary to rely heavily upon Beaglehole's research and compilation and consider his book, *The Life of James Cook*, as one comprehensive accounting of Cook's final days. This will leave the journal of Ledyard and the impressions of two of his biographers, E.M. Halliday and James Zug, to stand in a comparative analysis with those of Beaglehole's assemblage and Phillip Edwards.

Ledyard's perspective is critical in assessing the events that led to Cook's death, and Ledyard believed that Captain Cook was the cause his own demise. The time at sea, compounded by the fact that this was Cook's third such voyage in eleven years, may have led to an alteration in the great explorer's tolerance for the antics of the crew and the natives encountered. Several accounts note that Cook's attitude



towards the men had grown increasingly coarse throughout the voyage. He was “less patient and tolerant, more given to anger, more severe in his punishment, both in regard to his own men and the people they encountered, during this last voyage.”<sup>20</sup> Ledyard on the other hand, one of those subordinate members of the crew, makes little notice in his writings of these punishments, which might speak to the fact that his was not a journal bent on maligning his famous captain. At no point in Ledyard’s accounting of the voyage does he speak ill of Cook’s decision-making processes until after the sighting of Maui on November 26, 1778.

The crew had endured ten months of searching for the fabled Northwest Passage, only returning to warmer waters to wait for the winter season to pass. Even Beaglehole notes: “Their idea of refreshment, as they turned back from the ice, had not been this sort of hovering on the edge of paradise . . . Cook, for whatever reason, seemed to have lost contact with his men.”<sup>21</sup> With provisions low, the most egregious of which to the crew was their supply of grog, the men of the *Resolution* and *Discovery* were looking forward to a well-deserved retreat of native women, fresh water, and unsalted meats.<sup>22</sup> What they received was an unexplained seven weeks of meandering, first off Maui, and then the Big Island. At one point the seas were so fierce that it took the *Resolution* nineteen days to sail from Maui to Kealahou Bay on Hawai‘i’s eastern point, only to be blown back out to sea for another six days before being able to return. And still, Cook would not allow the ships to anchor until January 17, 1779, the day of his last entry in his personal journal.

No explanation can be found for Cook’s actions during this time. In his own journal, the explorer only discussed the lack of discipline among the men when their grog expired.<sup>23</sup> Beaglehole notes that 2nd Lieutenant James King, Astronomer-in-Chief of the *Resolution* and one of Cook’s strongest advocates after his death, wrote that the officers could only “presume” their captain’s intentions.<sup>24</sup> With no explanations being offered to any of the men on either ship, Ledyard complains, “This conduct of the commander in chief was highly reprobated and at last remonstrated against by the people on board both ships . . . the brave men, who were weaving the laurel that was hereafter to adorn his brows.”<sup>25</sup> King supported that sentiment later when he wrote in his memoirs that Cook’s refusal to land was “to the

great mortification of almost all in both ships . . . we were jaded and very heartily tir'd with Cruising of these Islands near two months . . . The Disappointment in not trying for a place of Anchorage had a bad effect on the Spirits of our Ships Company."<sup>26</sup> This marks a bursting of the bubble for more than just the common sailor and marine under Cook's command. King inadvertently included his own peers in the officers' staff when he used the phrase, "we were jaded", as opposed to "the men were jaded", or "the crew was jaded". But this discontent did not run to the point of insubordination or mutiny. In fact, there is never a discussion at any level of such behavior during any of Cook's Pacific voyages.

Beaglehole suggests that Cook was experiencing a great deal of strain at this time as the captain lashed out in his journal against the Navy Board, accusing them of "mismanagement and abuse" concerning the cordage supply on board.<sup>27</sup> At last, Cook called to drop anchor and the mood of the personnel on board both ships improved immediately, especially once he softened a previous decree of no fraternizing with the native women. On shore the men finally experienced a much needed time of rest and relaxation and put behind them the turmoil of the sea. Little did they know that once on terra firma the truly serious trouble would begin.

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Upon landing, the Hawaiians instantly hailed Cook as Lono, the god of bounty. Anywhere from ten to fifteen thousand natives threw themselves prostrate on the ground every time Cook glanced in their direction.<sup>28</sup> It is a scene that did not surprise the men of the *Resolution* and *Discovery* because the inhabitants of Kaua'i had behaved in a similar manner.<sup>29</sup> In his journal, Lt. King insinuates that "they certainly regarded us as a superior race to themselves."<sup>30</sup> Cook, ever the English officer and gentleman, assumed that this was a protocol set aside for great chiefs, as Beaglehole notes.<sup>31</sup> But his actions also epitomize of the very essence of arrogance as he mocks a most sacred trust when allowing the Hawaiians to deify him ceremoniously and anoint him as a god.

Other scholars like Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere have tackled the question of Polynesian perception of Cook from the perspective of native culture. During the late twentieth century many

Polynesians considered Cook a symbol of European dominance and white supremacy. Sahlins proposed his theory that Cook was initially hailed as the Hawaiian god Lono, who rules for four lunar months in the calendar year. Tragically for Cook, the time of Lono coincided with his arrival on January 16, and had ended by February 11, when Cook returned unexpectedly to the Big Island.<sup>32</sup> In 1992, the academic battle over the question of Cook's religious status among the eighteenth-century Hawaiians reached a climax when Obeyesekere attacked Sahlins' theory of Cook as Lono.<sup>33</sup> In his own book, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, Obeyesekere focuses attention on Sahlins' theories of native customs and religious observations to explain the Hawaiians' reverence for Cook as Lono, which subsequently led to his death. But Obeyesekere challenged the purpose behind Cook's adulation, as presented by Sahlins. Obeyesekere accused Sahlins of being a typical, arrogant Western scholar who suppose themselves an authority on non-Western cultures.<sup>34</sup> He decries the right of any non-Polynesian to speak with authority on such matters, "claiming that his own Sri Lankan heritage gave him privileged access to the Polynesian native perspective . . ."<sup>35</sup> Strangely enough, Obeyesekere weakens his own argument—in his own book—by admitting that "Not being a Polynesianist, I am conscious of treading uncertain ground."<sup>36</sup>

Sahlins, a world renowned anthropologist, fired back at Obeyesekere with a book-length justification of his theories, mixed with a scathing analysis of his antagonist's presumptions. In his book, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, For Example*, Sahlins presents a rational hypothesis for the mysterious adoration-turned-murderous-outrage bestowed upon Cook by the Hawaiians from January 16 to February 14, 1779, revolving around their observation of the return of Lono. In the end, these two scholars did little to settle their differences concerning the events surrounding Cook's death, and their recent writings on the subject have only perpetuated their bitter resentment for one another. In other words, there was still no answer to our original question.

As Sahlins points out, each time Cook arrived in the Hawaiian Islands it was during the festival of Lono, after which time the god of war and human sacrifice, Kū, regains power. Anyone still serving Lono during the time of Kū becomes an immediate adversary.<sup>37</sup> With this in mind, it is understandable why the Hawaiians expressed relief

on February 4, when Cook told them he would soon be leaving. It could also explain why the Hawaiians turned on Cook upon his return to the Big Island on February 11 to repair a broken mast. Certainly they would not want Lono to be present when the time of Kū arose. But Sahlins does not explain why the Hawaiians attacked Cook and his men with hail storms of rocks prior to their departure on February 6, when it was still supposedly the time of Lono.

It must be noted that neither Sahlins nor Obeyesekere take Ledyard seriously into account and the journal is once again side-stepped in the writings of experts on the subject. It is Sahlins who promulgates the theory that Cook was killed as a result of the most fantastically poor timing in history and Ledyard's journal refutes that argument. Ledyard adamantly proclaims the cause of Cook's death was result of the explorer's own devices. Obeyesekere, on the other hand, seems to be concerned only with whether or not it is a Polynesian who formulates the opinion. At this point, a closer look at Ledyard's journal is necessary.

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John Ledyard was a unique individual in an era of great men. He became the first American to experience the magnificence of North America's Pacific coastline, bask in Hawai'i's tropical pleasures, and trek across Alaska's icy tundra.<sup>38</sup> By 1785, Ledyard had become business associates and acquaintances with Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, John Paul Jones, Sir Joseph Banks, the Marquis de Lafayette, and John Adams son-in-law, Colonel William Smith.<sup>39</sup> From Philadelphia to Cadiz, from Paris to London, Ledyard promoted his dream of establishing a fur trade between the Russian province of Nootka Sound, in the Bering Sea, and the United States. Later, Banks employed Ledyard to lead an expedition to find the source of the Niger River in Africa. On January 10, 1789, while delayed in Cairo, Ledyard became ill and died before the expedition got underway. He was 37 years old. Upon hearing of Ledyard's death, Thomas Paine wrote Thomas Jefferson, telling him the news as told to him by Joseph Banks: "We have lost poor Ledyard . . . we sincerely lament his loss."<sup>40</sup>

John Ledyard provides clear evidence that events took place, as will be seen, that caused great consternation among the Hawaiians long

before February 11, when Cook returned to the Big Island. For example, traditional accounts note that January passed with relative quiet: Cook was treated to more pomp and circumstance of religious significance; a party of five (headed by Ledyard) spent several days climbing three-quarters of Mauna Loa's height; the men happily gathered provisions with the help of the natives; and "the *tapu* [taboo] was off the bay, and ladies . . . were restored to their lovers."<sup>41</sup> In the Beaglehole account the removal is seen as a positive action, allowing young lovers to resume their indulgences. Neither the writings of Beaglehole nor Salmond demonstrate concern for the grave circumstances of the removal of the "tapu." This is a key reference as Ledyard's journal fills in the details of the events leading up to the removal of the taboo. He explains that immediately upon Cook's establishing a base on land, a detail of men, of which Ledyard was the noncommissioned officer, set camp next to a stone wall which made up one-fourth of the boundary for the Hikiau *heiau*, or temple. The chiefs cordoned off the encampment with white rods as a formal boundary to keep the local women distant from this sacred ground. Rather than force the marine's to move and risk a confrontation on Lono's first day on the island, the chiefs preferred to establish strict borders around their campsite in order to preserve the sanctity of the Hikiau *heiau*. By Ledyard's admission the marines and the native women made a mockery of this boundary by constantly sneaking about for sexual liaisons: "The embarrassments of our enamoratoes were already under, were still greater from our contiguity to the Morai, [*heiau*] which women of the country never dare approach from religious motives. . . ." <sup>42</sup> In short, this was a serious breach of religious etiquette due to the local prohibitions of females near the Hikiau *heiau*.

Later, to save face at having their instructions and authority so blatantly ignored, the chiefs relaxed their stance and removed the barrier rods. But the marines had breeched a covenant nonetheless. According to Ledyard, "It was the beginning of our subsequent misfortunes, and acknowledged to be so afterwards when it was too late to revert the consequences."<sup>43</sup> It becomes clear from this admission that not only was there trouble afoot the first day on the island, but other crew members acknowledged this event to be the beginning of their problems with the Hawaiians.

On February 1, one of the most momentous events took place that

brought Cook-as-Lono down from his celestial pedestal. Neither Ledyard nor the many officers whose journals and notes are compiled in Beaglehole's voluminous works seems to catch its apparent significance. William Watman, an elderly gunner on board the *Resolution* passed away after suffering a stroke. His dying request was to be buried at the Hikiau *heiau*. The people of the village shut themselves up in their homes as Cook's men brought his body ashore, and only the chiefs and priests attended the funeral service. All accounts note the tranquility of the people after the service, as thousands came to lay slaughtered pigs and flowers on the grave. King and Ledyard both note later that night a very sober council of chiefs and priests sat around a fire sacrificing even more animals to heap upon the grave.<sup>44</sup> Ledyard was allowed to sit in on the somber observance and referred to their spirit of philanthropy and piety at this time as "an example that will put seven eighths of Christendom to the blush."<sup>45</sup>

But in 1961, in an article for *American Heritage* magazine, Ledyard biographer E.M. Halliday theorized why he believed the chiefs had become so "philanthropic." The Hawaiians were honor-bound to pay such homage to an individual who, while seemingly insignificant in comparison to Cook himself, was nonetheless a member of Lono's race. And yet, there was almost certainly a nagging realization among the chiefs and priests that these white men were men. They were mere mortals, consuming the Hawaiians' provisions at an astronomic rate and stockpiling on their ships what provisions they did not consume. They desecrated the Hikiau *heiau* with women and introduced venereal disease to the archipelago when they stopped in Kaua'i in 1778, the spread of which infested all of the islands at an alarming rate.<sup>46</sup> Halliday speculated that the solemnity that night around the fire may have been partly in obedience to their beliefs, as they paid their final respects, and partly in their gradual realization that these white men had been duplicitous in allowing themselves to be worshipped as something they were not.<sup>47</sup>

On February 3, less than two days after Watman's burial, Ledyard records in detail the first instance of physical violence to occur between the Hawaiians and the crew when William Bligh attempted to press the islanders into repair work on the *Resolution's* rudder. Relationships with the Hawaiians were already souring when a detail of sailors, tasked to reattach the *Resolution's* repaired rudder, needed

assistance from the Hawaiians. Bligh recruited over 50 natives who jokingly mocked the proceedings by faking their efforts in a melodramatic fashion, and in fact hindering the effort completely. When Bligh finally caught on to their prank he became enraged, striking several of the natives, and then ordered one of the chiefs to force his people to do as they had been told. Here Ledyard writes, "But of shewing their disregard and scorn, which had long been growing towards us laughed at him, hooted him, and hove stones. . . ." <sup>48</sup> At this point the English work party defended themselves as effectively as possible against such odds. Ledyard had been at the tent encampment with his troops and, having observed the scene, ran down to assist. A large crowd of Hawaiians quickly formed and soon the hailstorm of stones became too much for the Englishmen. Tempers now ran fiercely hot on each side, as Ledyard notes, "Though I plainly foresaw these things, and was conscious that they had originated chiefly from our imprudence . . . I could not justify a passive conduct, and therefore acquainted the commanding officer of the tents (Lt. King) of the disturbance, requesting that I might put the guard under arms." <sup>49</sup>

His description of these events is the only passage in Ledyard's journal in which he describes being provoked to anger in this manner. A passive, seminary-educated amateur observer of human nature and cultural distinctions, the young American feared for his safety to the point of requesting the right to arm his men against further attack. This riot was no insignificant circumstance and he is quick to admit that this sort of encounter had been long overdue. Ultimately, the crew returned the rudder to the ship, but with the aid of Ledyard's guards, not the Hawaiians, who had refused to assist further. There was no resolution between the two peoples, therefore allowing animosity to percolate. Ledyard's journal is important in the attention it gives to this incident as it demonstrates the upsurge in hostilities. <sup>50</sup>

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Hostilities were no longer an isolated incident. Ledyard notes, "Instances of this kind though of less apparent importance had happened several times before this on shore." <sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, petty theft had become more commonplace as Hawaiians made what appeared to be casual excursions out to the ships where they would snatch an object, almost always made of iron, and leap overboard to swim to a

waiting canoe. Cook ordered scourgings for any Hawaiian caught in such an activity. He also utilized his previously successful method on other islands of apprehending thieves by holding natives, chiefs, and even canoes hostage. Ledyard laments these decisions as he writes, "We shall soon see the consequences of such conduct."<sup>52</sup>

By February 4, the relationship between the Hawaiians and Cook's men had become brittle at best. But on this day Cook made a decision that was so shocking to the Hawaiian people that it could possibly have resulted in not only his own death but that of several others. The two large ships had nearly exhausted the supply of firewood gathered in Alaska and more would be needed before resuming their pursuit of the Northwest Passage. Cook accompanied Lt. King and his marines, of which Ledyard was the unit's corporal, to procure the necessary timber from Kao, a chief and friend of Cook. Beaglehole laments, "Why did he not follow his usual practice, and seek permission to fell trees near by, we do not know."<sup>53</sup> Of course, if Beaglehole had taken Ledyard's journal into account he would have known the answer to this mystery. Ledyard had noted on his journey up the face of Mauna Loa on January 26 that there were no trees of significant size "at a uniform distance of 4-5 miles" of the bay where the ships were harbored.<sup>54</sup> Considering the size of the population of the Hawaiian village, it makes perfect sense that a systematic process of deforestation for building materials kept Cook from finding an adequate supply of wood near the beaches. Ledyard's journal thus sheds light on why Cook did not follow his normal procedures for obtaining firewood.

Cook chose to dismantle the wooden fence surrounding three-fourths of the sacred Hikiau *heiau*. The fence must have been of significant size for the amount of wood present to satisfy the needs of both the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*. Recognizing this to be a holy place, Cook also summoned Kikinny, the village priest, in addition to Kao and other chiefs who were present. According to Beaglehole, the fence appeared to have begun to rot in some places and therefore there could "hardly be any impropriety or impiety" in Cook's request to purchase this wood. Kao, supposedly, was eager to accommodate the request and did not even put a payment on the purchase, though Cook paid a "handsome price" out of respect.<sup>56</sup> Beaglehole also states that the men took carved images in addition to the fencing, which they claimed was at the encouragement of the natives nearby. Lt. King



was alarmed at this action and approached Kao to apologize. The old chief allegedly allowed the removal of the smallest of the images, but indicated that the remaining two should stay. But a discrepancy within Beaglehole's version of this incident is found in a comment by Edwards in his book. Edwards states that the reaction of the chiefs and Kikinny to the wooden images being removed "... not surprisingly, caused resentment."<sup>57</sup>

Ledyard's account, on the other hand, insists there was a significant confrontation over this matter. He writes that "Cook was insensible of the daily decline of his greatness and importance in the estimation of the natives," relying upon such confidence to request the purchase of the wooden Hikiau *heiau* fence for the price of only two hatchets.<sup>58</sup> The chiefs, he continues, were dumbfounded by the inadequacy of the price offered and angry that Cook proposed such a purchase. Far from acquiescing, they rejected the offer. Cook, Ledyard goes on, was surprised and angered by their reaction and stormed up to the area, personally ordering King's men to tear down the fence and load the wood into the boats, in spite of these objections. This left the chiefs distraught "to behold the fence that enclosed the mansions of their noble ancestors, and the images of their gods torn to pieces by a handful of rude strangers without the power, or at least without the resolution of opposing their sacrilegious deprivations."<sup>59</sup>

According to Ledyard, Cook was unable to sway the chiefs, approaching them again with "a very unequal price if the honest chiefs would have accepted the bribe."<sup>60</sup> So pathetic was the proposition, which "Cook offered . . . only to evade the imputation of taking their property without payment," that again the chiefs refused.<sup>61</sup> Infuriated, Cook thrust three hatchets into the garment of the priest, Kikinny, then turned to speed the men along in their theft. Kikinny turned to one of his servants and instructed him to remove the hatchets from inside his garment, not wanting to indicate in any manner that he accepted them. By this time a crowd had gathered around the pile of wooden planks that had already been removed and, becoming outraged, began to throw the fencing back towards the Hikiau *heiau*, attempting to undo the work of the marines. Ledyard wondered why this did not explode into a fatal incident, but the marines managed to retrieve all of the wood that they needed and returned to the ship.

This account is clearly controversial. Beaglehole, for example, says

“It is clear that those were mistaken who later declared Cook guilty of some vast blasphemy in Hawaiian eyes. Neither the enclosing fence nor this particular class of images . . . had any sanctity; a Hawaiian in need would have burnt them . . .”<sup>62</sup> If ever there is an instance for Obeyesekere to complain of white historians claiming to know the minds and religious attitudes of Polynesian peoples it would be Beaglehole’s comment here. Nevertheless, the fact remains that regardless of the islanders’ needs concerning this fence in Beaglehole’s hypothetical justification, Ledyard records that they obviously had strong emotions about what was taking place at this specific point in time.

One possible answer as to why Cook was allowed to continue with this act of blasphemy is that the Hikiau *heiau* belonged to Lono during this time of the year. Lono could, therefore, do with his belongings as he pleased, though it upset the Hawaiians enough to attempt to stop him.<sup>63</sup> Ledyard notes that the “poor dismayed chiefs dreading his displeasure” may have restrained their people from rioting because, while they had challenged the authority of the other white men since the death of William Watman, they had never defied Lono himself.<sup>64</sup> While it is true that one of Lono’s race succumbed to death, as would a mere mortal, nothing to date had taken place to make the Hawaiians directly dispute the deity of Cook. Regardless of how one interprets these proceedings, all accounts agree that after this episode the chiefs began to make inquiries concerning how long it would be before Cook and his crew set sail. Just after Cook’s arrival in January, Lt. King penned a warning in his journal that “they regard us as a set of beings infinitely their superiors; should this respect wear away from familiarity, or by intercourse, their behaviour may change. . . .”<sup>65</sup> Perhaps King’s concerns were more justified than even he realized at the time.

On the following day the marines struck camp and the *Resolution* and *Discovery* departed for Maui.<sup>66</sup> Ledyard and Beaglehole both make note of the fact that as the ships sailed out of Kealakekua Bay, the Hawaiians put the torch to a small house on the corner of the Hikiau *heiau* that the crew utilized for a combination hospital/sail loft. But, again, that is all these two accounts agree upon. Beaglehole claims that the fire was the result of Hawaiians with torches that “ransacked the house for possible booty,”<sup>67</sup> while Ledyard writes that the crew of his ship felt concerned, at first, that they had left a campfire lit

that might have caused this calamity. But he then notes that the all of the men on deck, not just himself, could see that the fires were set intentionally “to shew us the resentment they entertained towards us, on account of our using it without their consent . . . it evidently was esteemed by the natives as holy as the rest of the Morai, and ought to have been considered by us.”<sup>68</sup>

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All accounts are in harmony as to the events of February 7 to February 14, 1779. The *Resolution* and *Discovery* encountered hurricane-force winds almost immediately upon leaving Kealakekua Bay. The main mast of the *Resolution* cracked under the might of the storm as large waves swamped all of the smaller boats in tow. Hammered by gales and high seas for four days while the half-sunken longboats and pinnaces acted as anchors, the two great ships had no choice but to return to the Big Island and Kealakekua Bay. It was not a choice that the captains made eagerly due to the difficulties of the last few days among the Hawaiians, but it was quite simply a decision that they could not avoid.

On February 11th the sails of the two tall-masted ships once again entered Kealakekua Bay, only their reception was markedly different. Rather than thousands of smiling and joyful Hawaiians greeting the ships with women, food, and song, there was only one canoe with Kao and a young but fierce Kamehameha, future king of all the Hawaiian Islands. By no small irony, the only items of interest that appealed to the future monarch for trade were nine iron-bladed, long knives. The rest of the islanders were in shock that the ships had returned, their patience with the Europeans strained to the point of violence. Salmon attributes the Hawaiian consternation to Cook’s return as the result of their fear that the Europeans decided to settle among them.<sup>69</sup> Some trading eventually took place, but only from the canoes that ventured out to the ships, and at exorbitantly high rates of exchange in comparison to just seven days before.<sup>70</sup>

With the mast removed from the *Resolution* by February 12, and a carpenter’s workshop established on land for the repairs, former animosities resumed. Rock-throwing villagers besieged a water-gathering crew in an unprovoked attack. Cook ordered Lt. King to “give orders to the Corporal (Ledyard), to have the Centries pieces loaded with

Ball instead of Shot.”<sup>71</sup> A blast of small shot is designed as a warning, but a musket ball could mean death. Ledyard writes that “What we anticipated was true . . . our former friendship was at an end, and that we had nothing to do but to hasten our departure to some different island where our vices were not known . . .”<sup>72</sup>

The 13th of February was the darkest day since Cook’s return to the bay. A set of armorer’s thongs stolen from the *Discovery*, along with a chisel and a lid off of a water cask, created a fracas. Hearing the skirmish from the carpenters’ tents on shore, Cook, King, Ledyard, and a marine private armed with a musket ran toward the thief to intercept him as he swam ashore. Aided by comrades, the Hawaiian was too quick and escaped into the hills. Cook and his party pursued the man for several miles, constantly fed false directions by the natives and laughed at from the bushes. Beaglehole bemoans, “Where now was the respect, where now were the prostrations before Lono, the murmurs of awe?”<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, the master of the *Discovery* had rowed the ship’s cutter ashore with a small crew, including midshipman George Vancouver, in an attempt to join the search. They were met on the beach, however, by the same chief mistakenly accused of complicity in “stealing” the *Discovery*’s small rowboat on February 4. The chief gave the master a beating, while natives pelted the crew with rocks and broke their oars, sending them back to the ship severely wounded.<sup>74</sup>

That night the officers of both ships met to discuss their safety until repairs could be completed on the *Resolution*’s mast. They awoke to find the cutter from the *Discovery* missing. By all accounts and journals reviewed, Cook decided to use his standard strategy for recovering stolen property by taking one of the chiefs hostage. Cook and ten marines arrived on land in a pinnace, as a launch filled with ten more marines accompanied them. The *Resolution*’s cutter, with Ledyard on board, and two smaller boats filled with marines and sailors from the *Discovery* fanned out across the water to blockade the bay. But the Hawaiians knew that something was afoot. The large village appeared deserted as Cook and his armed escort, to avoid suspicion, took a meandering route to the house of Kireekakoa, [Kalei’opu’u/Kalani’opu’u] an older and revered chief. The scheme failed when Kireekakoa’s wife began to wail loudly as the Englishmen took her husband down to the boats. The villages’ houses quickly emptied as

thousands of Hawaiians rushed the beach to aid the old chief. Cook fired one round of his double-barreled musket at an advancing native dressed in a thickly matted vest, worn for protection in battle.<sup>75</sup> Unfortunately for Cook, his first barrel contained small shot which had no impact on the Hawaiian whatever. Assuming themselves invincible now to the white man's fire power, the crowd rushed Cook's party. Cook fired his other barrel, loaded with ball, striking his assailant, and then turned to the boats off shore which had begun to open fire on the Hawaiians.<sup>76</sup> Ledyard records that Cook attempted to instruct the marines in the boats to cease fire and come ashore, presumably in an effort to charge the beach with muskets loaded.<sup>77</sup> As Cook turned his back away from the enraged mob, a warrior thrust him clean through with one of the long, iron-bladed knives that Cook had traded to Kamehameha only three days earlier. The famous explorer fell dead, face down into the water, and four marines were killed while attempting to reach their longboat. The rest fled to the ships.

It is critical to point out the details of these events because of the nuances of what occurred. First, the Hawaiian who charged Cook, and was subsequently shot, had dressed for battle far enough in advance of this provocation to be on the front line of the assault. Was he the only one dressed in this manner, or was he simply the only one noted because of his actions against Cook? The fact that over 15,000 people were hidden from sight until Kireekakoa's wife cried out, and the first person to approach Cook was a warrior in battle dress, lends to the idea that the islanders were prepared for the worst. Second, Cook signaled for his marines to come ashore with the intent of using deadly force, which indicates that they prepared for such an engagement prior to leaving the ships. Were it not for Cook's over-confidence in the success of his kidnapping scheme, the entire British contingent might have come ashore with their captain and turned the beach into a bloody battlefield.

Ledyard's journal is vital in that it documents numerous incidents that demonstrated the crescendo of outrage that led to the events of February 14. Premeditated military conflict does not erupt after just three days of hazing and rock throwing. Among many other egregious insults, Cook and his men affronted ancient taboos, participated in holy ceremonies with no attempt to understand the full significance

or impact of the rituals in which they were involved, and desecrated the temple of a proud and fierce people.

The mob removed the bodies of the dead Englishmen to the village, much to the dismay and chagrin of those on board the *Resolution* and *Discovery*. Clerke sent another charge of marines onto the beach who were able to recover the *Resolution's* mast while Lt. John Gore kept a volley of canon fire heaping hot lead onto the village to cover their efforts.<sup>78</sup> That night, after dark, a canoe approached the *Discovery* to return Cook's hat, and a bundle containing the great explorer's thigh: "And when we enquired what had become of the remaining part of him, he gnashed his teeth and said it was to be eaten that night."<sup>79</sup> The young chief then promised to return as much of Cook's body as he could manage, as soon as possible. According to William Bligh, the other officers set to work that night concocting a mutual conspiracy for the purpose of cloaking their cowardice in leaving Cook alone on the beach.<sup>80</sup> On February 19, the canoe returned with a small box containing "the scalp, all the long bones, thighs, legs, arms, and the skull; the jawbone of the latter was missing, as were the feet, and the hands were separate. All had been scraped clean except the hands, which had been preserved with salt stuffed into a number of gashes."<sup>81</sup> The right hand bore an identifiable scar which forced the men of the expedition to face the fact of the disposition of their captain's body.

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As stated before, the intention of this article is not to analyze how James Cook was killed, but why. Granted, to endeavor to discuss any circumstances surrounding his demise virtually mandates an accounting of the details of his death; there is very little disagreement on that subject. It is only in the interpretation of what happened once the ships sailed into Kealakekua Bay that we see any great distinctions in the journals of note. However, it is at this juncture that the journals not only differ, but force the reader to consider the discrepancies, deviations, and blatant inconsistencies of the various accounts. As with many interpretations of historical events, Ledyard's is but another perception of what caused the tragic events surrounding the death of Captain Cook in Hawai'i—though it is an account that provides explanations to questions with which historians have struggled for years.

Ledyard had documented instance upon instance of ill feelings and hostilities from the Hawaiians as early as January 18. He discussed eight separate instances of contention between Cook, the crew, and the Hawaiians, which included such violations of relationship as scourgings, blasphemy, desecration, false accusations, armed encounters, rock throwing, mockery, and the appalling realization that, in spite of their participation in the holiest of Hawaiian religious ceremonies, these white gods were indeed mortal men. Regardless, each of these instances occurred prior to the ships sailing away in early February, and certainly prior to February 13, when Beaglehole bewails the presumed sudden shift in Hawaiian attitudes toward Cook and his men.

Beaglehole goes to great lengths not only to disregard Ledyard's input on these subjects, but he even attempts to discredit Ledyard's claim that Cook committed blasphemy in the eyes of the Hawaiians when he tore down the fencing at the Hikiau *heiau*. Salmond lists several grievances that the Hawaiians and other islanders held against Cook and his crew. "It has been documented that Cook was killed because he returned to Hawaii at the wrong time in the Makahiki cycle . . . however, the Hawaiians had many reasons for their anger."<sup>82</sup> John Ledyard clearly documents the instances of the Hawaiians' loss of reverence for Captain Cook and his crew. From reading Ledyard's journal, it is apparent that a very distinct crescendo of annoyance and agitation had built among the islanders. As it is noted, Ledyard believed that it was only sheer shock on that fateful day concerning the fence at the Hikiau *heiau* that kept the Hawaiians from killing Cook sooner than they did.

Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind when reading John Ledyard's *Journal* is that his accounts are not merely opinions but eye-witness observations. The man was physically present, to the same extent as King, Clerke, Gore, Vancouver, and Bligh. His views are honest and open, quite often pointing an accusatory finger at himself concerning the injustices he transcribes. It should also be noted that his *Journal* was accepted as truth in its day and this view as to why Cook was killed in Hawai'i circulated long ago in prestigious circles. Evidence of this exists in the autobiography of Thomas Jefferson: "[John Ledyard] had accompanied Capt Cook in his voyage to the Pacific, had distinguished himself on several occasions by an unri-

valled intrepidity, and published an account of that voyage with detail unfavorable to Cook's deportment towards the savages, and lessening our regrets at [Cook's] fate."<sup>83</sup>

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Cawte Beaglehole was a professor of British Commonwealth History at the Victoria University College in Wellington, New Zealand. He earned his Ph.D. at the London School of Economics before returning to his native New Zealand to teach. Beaglehole invested over three decades of his life researching the life of James Cook.
- <sup>2</sup> J.C. Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974), 663.
- <sup>3</sup> John Ledyard, James Zug, ed, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook: The Collected Writings of John Ledyard*, National Geographic Adventure Classics (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2005), xviii.
- <sup>4</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, xxi.
- <sup>5</sup> James Cook, J.C. Beaglehole, ed., Phillip Edwards, and Hakluyt Society. *The Journals*, Penguin Classics (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 431.
- <sup>6</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of James Cook*, 503–04.
- <sup>7</sup> Beaglehole, 631.
- <sup>8</sup> Cook, *The Journals*, xii.
- <sup>9</sup> An award winning author, James Zug is a Dartmouth College graduate who became enamored of Ledyard's story while at the school. Ledyard attended Dartmouth for one year only, yet his celebrity is noted with an annual canoe race and is the namesake for several local landmarks, including the Ledyard State Bank, Ledyard Bridge, Ledyard Hall, and an annual canoe race sponsored by the Ledyard Canoe Club. Ledyard is also credited with the inspiration for the school's team mascot name as a result of a term Ledyard used in a letter to Eleazer Wheelock, founder of Dartmouth: "May you ever flourish in immortal green. . . ."
- <sup>10</sup> There have been five Ledyard biographers, beginning in 1828, with the writings of Harvard president and Revolutionary War historian, Jared Sparks. Sparks' account glowed with romanticism and represented a semi-fictional description of his hometown hero. Ledyard was chronicled again in 1939, by Kenneth Munford, and 1946, by Helen Augur. "Ledyard's mythical status weighed so heavily that [Sparks, Munford, and Augur] revised, abridged, and edited his journals



and letters, even creating imaginary scenes.” Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, xiv.

- <sup>11</sup> James Zug, *American Traveler: The Life and Adventures of John Ledyard, The Man Who Dreamed of Walking the World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 92.
- <sup>12</sup> Zug, *American Traveler*, 124.
- <sup>13</sup> Zug, 132.
- <sup>14</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, xxii.
- <sup>15</sup> Zug, *American Traveler*, 124.
- <sup>16</sup> Zug, xxiii.
- <sup>17</sup> Edward G. Gray, “Go East, Young Man,” Common-place The Interactive Journal of Early American Life, Inc., vol.5, no.2, January 2005, p.11. <<http://www.common-place.org/vol-05/no-02/gray/index.shtml>>
- <sup>18</sup> Many of Cook’s visitations from his first two voyages were repeated on the third voyage.
- <sup>19</sup> Some scholars, like E.J. Hobsbawm, teach the concept of primary/secondary/tertiary documentation, meaning that a primary document is one that is recorded precisely at the time of the event by the participant. Secondary documents would be those written by the participant after the fact, even if just minutes later. Tertiary documents are those written by historians that relate back to the primary text. This means that all depictions of historical events written by the participant at any point following, but not during, the event is a memoir. With the exception of Francis Scott Key’s “Star Spangled Banner,” it would be difficult to label anything as a primary document according to this interpretation. Ed White, Professor of English Literature, University of Florida lecture, January 17, 2006.
- <sup>20</sup> Anne Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2003), 393–94. Salmond includes an appendix (p. 433–37) emphasizing the increased punishments authorized by Cook on the third voyage. While the number of lashes administered was reduced from the first to the second voyage, 354 to 288, the numbers dramatically increased on the third voyage to 684. Cook, *The Journals*, 612.
- <sup>21</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 640.
- <sup>22</sup> Cook referred to the crew as mutinous when they refused to drink his concoction of sugar cane beer for their beloved grog. Beaglehole, 640, 642; Zug, *American Traveler*, 93.
- <sup>23</sup> Cook, *The Journals*, 595.
- <sup>24</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 640.
- <sup>25</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 68–69.
- <sup>26</sup> Cook, *The Journals*, 430.
- <sup>27</sup> This would have been a serious charge of corruption, accusing the English Navy, and therefore the Empire, of cutting costs by stocking royal ships with cheaply manufactured rigging supplies. Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 644–45.
- <sup>28</sup> Beaglehole, 649; Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 69–71.

- <sup>29</sup> Cook, *The Journals*, 534.
- <sup>30</sup> Marshall Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, For Example* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 202.
- <sup>31</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 652.
- <sup>32</sup> Lono. One of the four great gods, the last to come from Kahiki, considered a god of clouds, winds, the sea, agriculture, and fertility. He had also the form of the pig man, Kama-pua'a. He was the patron of the annual harvest makahiki festivals and his image (Lono-makua) was carried on tax-collecting circuits of the main islands. Some fifty Lono gods were worshiped. Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert. *Hawaiian Dictionary*. Honolulu: UP of Hawai'i, 1971, 392.
- <sup>33</sup> Obeyesekere and Sahlins are excellent examples of the new outlook scholars have taken on the subject of James Cook and how they have moved away from Cook, the hero of Pacific explorations, to more sociological studies on the impact of European culture on indigenous people. Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1992); Marshall Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, For Example* (Chicago: University of Chicago P, 1995).
- <sup>34</sup> Salmond, *The Trial of the Canibal Dog*, 403.
- <sup>35</sup> This quote first came to my attention on the jacket cover of Sahlins' book, and again on page one, demonstrating the degree of acrimony between these two scholars. Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think*, 1.
- <sup>36</sup> Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, xiii.
- <sup>37</sup> Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think*, 26; Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 658.
- <sup>38</sup> Five hundred feet above the Pacific Ocean, in Cape Foulweather, Oregon, there is an historical marker placed by the Lincoln County Historical Society marking the place where Captain Cook first landed in North America on March 7, 1778. The marker notes: "On board was John Ledyard of Connecticut, Corporal of British arms. Both Cook's and Ledyard's accounts of this voyage were published, world interest was aroused, fur trade followed."
- <sup>39</sup> This amazing "who's who" of Revolutionary-era dignitaries and historical figures, and their dealings with John Ledyard, has been chronicled by all Ledyard biographers.
- <sup>40</sup> Zug, *American Traveler*, 227
- <sup>41</sup> "Tapu" is the Polynesian form of the Creole word 'taboo,' according to Beaglehole, and carries the same meaning. In Hawaiian, the correct word is "*kapu*." Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 654.
- <sup>42</sup> Ledyard, having received most of his understanding of the Polynesian languages in Tahiti and other South Pacific islands, incorrectly utilized the Maori word 'Morai' for what we now know to be *heiau* in the Hawaiian language. Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 73.
- <sup>43</sup> Ledyard, 73.
- <sup>44</sup> Ledyard, 83-85; Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 656.
- <sup>45</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 85.

- <sup>46</sup> Zug, *American Traveler*, 93.
- <sup>47</sup> E.M. Halliday, James Parton, "Captain Cook's American" *American Heritage: The Magazine of History*. Vol. XIII, number 1 (New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1961), 85.
- <sup>48</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 91.
- <sup>49</sup> Ledyard, 73, 92.
- <sup>50</sup> Salmond is one of the few recent historians who mention this incident, using Kenneth Munford's biography of Ledyard to note the facts—though the event becomes trivialized by her description of the incident as a "scuffle." Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog*, 406.
- <sup>51</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 92.
- <sup>52</sup> Halliday, *American Heritage*, 85.
- <sup>53</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 655.
- <sup>54</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 81.
- <sup>55</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 655.
- <sup>56</sup> Beaglehole, 655.
- <sup>57</sup> Cook, *The Journals*, 608.
- <sup>58</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 92.
- <sup>59</sup> Ledyard, 92–93.
- <sup>60</sup> Ledyard, 93.
- <sup>61</sup> Ledyard, 93.
- <sup>62</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 655–56.
- <sup>63</sup> Beaglehole, 657–660.
- <sup>64</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 92.
- <sup>65</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 660.
- <sup>66</sup> Due to the observance of maritime methods of timekeeping, Salmond writes that the ships departed Kealakekua Bay on February 4 but Beaglehole's compilations and Ledyard state that it was the 5th. This is not an actual discrepancy.
- <sup>67</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 657.
- <sup>68</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 94.
- <sup>69</sup> Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog*, 409.
- <sup>70</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 95.
- <sup>71</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 664.
- <sup>72</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 96.
- <sup>73</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 665.
- <sup>74</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 96.
- <sup>75</sup> The question should be raised at this notation as to why the Hawaiian who charged Cook, and was subsequently shot, was dressed for battle far enough in advance of this provocation to be on the front line of the assault? Was he the only one? Unfortunately we have no written documents from the islanders themselves to answer these questions and it can only be presumed that these people had been pushed to the point of war by Cook and his crew.
- <sup>76</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 100; Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 671.

- <sup>77</sup> Beaglehole tried to discredit Ledyard's account of Cook's actions by adding a footnote to this portion of his works that said, "There is no justification for the statement commonly made that he was waving to the boats to stop firing." Salmond has supported Ledyard's interpretation of Cook's actions, pointing out that only Lt. Williamson—whom most officers accused of abandoning Cook on the beach out of cowardice—recorded the scene differently. Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 99; Beaglehole, *The Life of James Cook*, 672; Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog*, 413.
- <sup>78</sup> Ledyard, *The Last Voyage of Captain Cook*, 100.
- <sup>79</sup> Ledyard, 102.
- <sup>80</sup> Caroline Alexander, *The Bounty: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Bounty* (New York: Viking, 2003), 45–46.
- <sup>81</sup> Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, 676.
- <sup>82</sup> Oddly, the offense at the Hikiau *heiau* was not one of the offenses she lists. Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog*, 414.
- <sup>83</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson* (Raleigh, N.C.: Alex Catalogue; Boulder, CO.: 1997), 47. Made available on e-book by the University of Florida Libraries. <http://www.netlibrary.com.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/Reader/>