FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

**A Voyage Around The World**
George Forster
University of Hawaii Press
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Captain Cook's three great voyages of exploration between 1768 and 1775 are unrivaled in achievement. The harvest of geographical discovery, from Alaska to New Zealand, from New Guinea to Hawaii, with associated cartographic work, is rich beyond compare. Also unmatched are the collections of fauna and flora and the journals for each voyage with their far-ranging compilations of ethnographic and anthropological information.

While Cook's own journals remain the primary source of information and the official record of the voyages, other participants' journals are often more engaging, particularly for general readers. On his second voyage (1772-1775) made to discover or deny a Great Southern Continent, Cook took as natural scientists the brilliant, irascible polymath Johann Forster and his highly intelligent and diplomatic son George. He was only twenty-four years old in 1777, when his splendid narrative, *A Voyage Around the World*, was published. This handsome two-volume re-issue of the Voyage (the first in English) is certain to find an appreciative primary readership among scholars of late eighteenth century exploration and settlement; natural science and anthropology; and navigation, cartography and related topics. Editors Nicholas Thomas, Oliver Berghof and Jennifer Newell provide a highly informative introduction that contextualizes the voyage and its aims and expectations; they also discuss the Forsters' intellectual and scientific perspectives. These underlie the categorizations and differentiations George Forster makes about the many Polynesian and Micronesian peoples encountered or re-encountered during the three-year voyage.

The volumes are likely (and most certainly deserve) to win a wide secondary readership-people attracted to exploration at its finest, in which incident, adventure and narrow escapes from death abound. The set will greatly reward enthusiasts prepared to exchange the seductive, fictional lure of the South Seas and exotic island societies for a far more interesting social reality; it will also extend any reader's knowledge of Enlightenment science and sensibilities. Shipboard and on-shore life, responses to health and sickness and to danger and escape are

vividly handled-though many analyses of indigenous social systems are now superseded. Not least in interest are Forster's political asides, classical allusions and comments on the dynamics of commanding men overlong at sea.

The editors incisively describe the power politics surrounding publication of the Voyage. Johann Forster believed he was contracted to provide the official account; the Admiralty ruled against him and for Cook, permitting Forster to write a commentary on the expedition's scientific achievements. As a free agent, George Forster wrote the Voyage, meeting the accusation that his father was the major contributor. Regardless of authorship, the voyage is a remarkable, living, captivating account, plunging the reader into every sort of situation that nature and humankind can offer.

*Peter Skinner*