

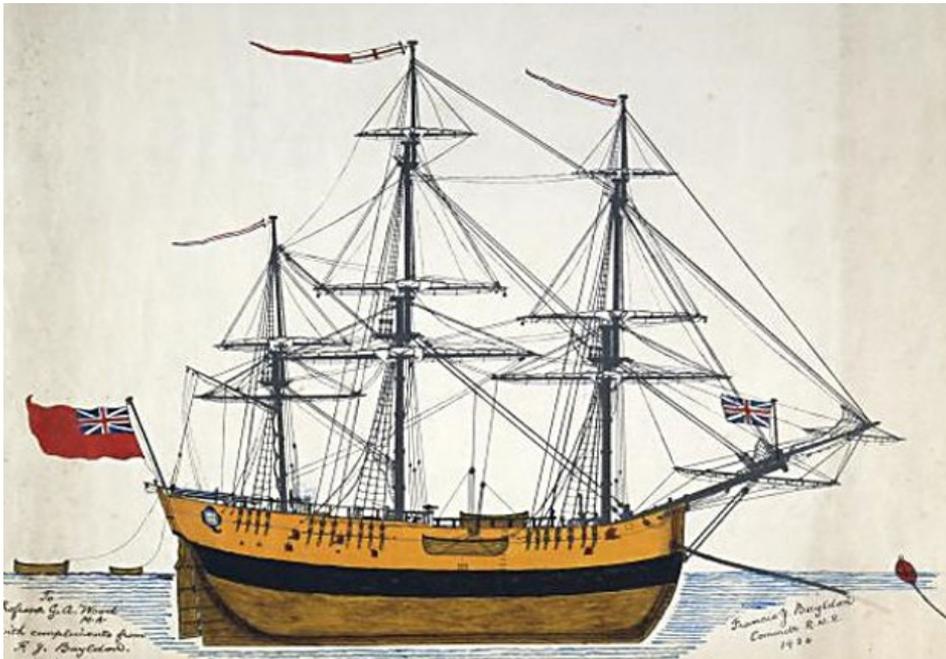
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july 23, 2009

Myth of the Invisible Ships

BY BARRY EVANS



James Cook's 370-ton bark Endeavour, launched 1764, scuttled 1778. (Public domain.)

Have you heard of the *invisible ships* phenomenon, cited in several new-age books and movies? It goes like this: When Captain Cook/Columbus/Magellan (depending on the version of the story you're hearing) arrived at the coast of Australia/Cuba/South America, the native people completely ignored them, presumably because huge ships were so alien to their experience that "... their highly filtered perceptions couldn't register what was happening, and they literally failed to 'see' the ships." (Quoting here from JZ Knight's *What the Bleep Do We Know?*)

The story seems to have originated with Joseph Banks, botanist on Captain James Cook's 1770 voyage. On several occasions while they were off the coast of Australia, he commented that the natives paid virtually no attention to the 106-foot long *Endeavour*. On April 28, sailing north along the east coast of Australia, he recorded in his diary that fishermen "... seemd to be totaly engag'd in what they were about: the ship passd within a quarter of a mile of them and yet they scarce lifted their eyes from their employment ..."

Banks seemed to be troubled by not being the star attraction: "Not one was once observd to stop and look towards the ship; they pursued their way in all appearance intirely unmovd by the neighbourhood of so remarkable an object as a ship must necessarily be to people who have never seen one."

However, as soon as the explorers approached the shore in longboats, their attempts at landing were resisted. For instance, "... as soon as we approachd the rocks two of the men

about the author



Barry Evans

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Bio:

Barry Evans lives in Old Town Eureka with his girlfriend (and wife) Louisa Rogers, several kayaks and bikes, and a stuffed gorilla named "Nameless." A recovering civil engineer, he is the author of two McGraw-Hill popular science books and has taught science and history. His Field Notes anthologies are available... more

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came down upon them, each armed with a lance."

There's a more obvious answer for the odd times when Cook's ship didn't spur a reaction from people on the shore. While we can't disprove the extraordinary notion that the ships were indeed invisible, I think the more prosaic solution is that the natives were living on the edge of survival, and that anything that wasn't a threat or didn't contribute to their well-being could be safely ignored.

And as panhandlers and wheelchair users can tell you, just because you're ignored doesn't mean you're invisible.

Barry Evans' own attempts at captaining sailboats have mostly been unfortunate, so far-- there's always the next time. He lives in Old Town Eureka.

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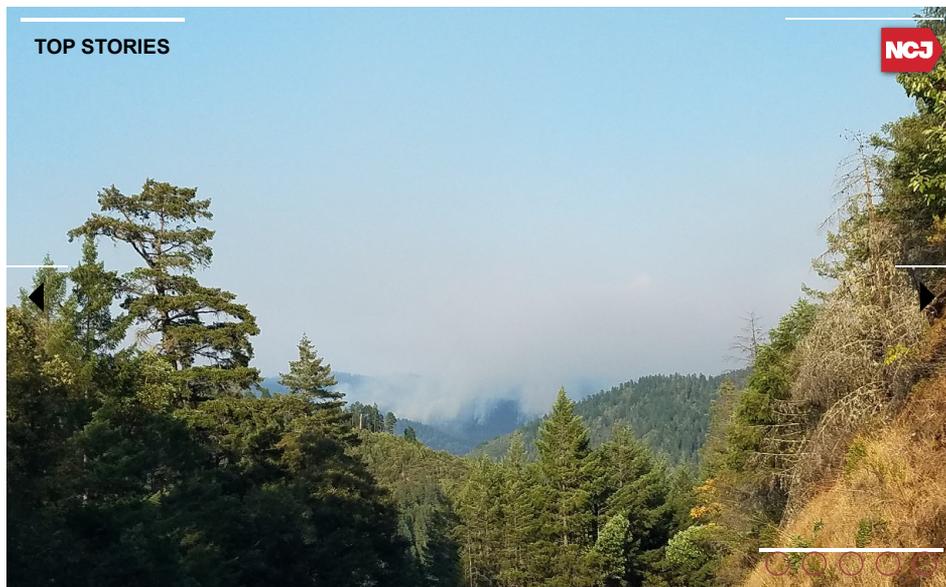
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The author accepted an assumption (belief) that the person that was there saw something other than what he wrote...but you were not there. You could be correct of course, but to completely dismiss that the natives couldn't see a ship because they were not at the vibrational frequency as the sailors to see that object is to state that matter can exist without an observer present - a dismissal of Quantum Mechanics law. Reality isn't what exists. It is what is agreed to exist. This can come from belief (an acceptance of an assumption) or from the truth (what works for oneself and the majority of all concerned). Look, we know from Quantum Physics that it isn't a theory but tested thousands of times by people disgustingly smarter than most of us. If what you decide to see - not 'want' to see (that is why wanting something just gives you more things to want for) but what you think is real - manifests into reality - then how do you know for sure that a reality the natives could never imagine was manifested? You can dream bigger and 'see' bigger than your ancestors 10,000 years ago and what you take for granted now would shock to death (literally) your ancestors. A simple laser fire starter could make you a god back in those days because they would not see the tiny device in your hand but light coming from your hand turned into fire. Even if what I say isn't backed by science - the possibility that maybe - the natives couldn't see that ship is the same thinking that tortured and killed people that found out the world was not the center of the Universe. It could be true, it could be not true but you need to prove it, not believe it either way or you will never find the truth. Stop believing and start finding what really is - but only you can do that for truth must be something you observe to be true - never what others say. If you do this - you will find the truth - and truth is not what is holy or good or correct or right - but that which works - want what works helps your survival potential and the majority of all concerned.

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Posted by **Wes Tafoya** on 07/07/2020 at 3:42 PM



in 1998 I was coming out of a busy grocery store in the evening and saw a spaceship above the gas station across the street I stood in the doorway yelling "what the heck is that 'what the heck is that'. And I'm pointing at it and nobody else seems to notice it but me . I watched as IT seemed to notice me and started to drift across the street .I followed it I watched as it changed Shape and disappear into the sky. To this day I have no idea why nobody else seemed to notice it .When I look back on it now I think that because of that is perhaps the reason that today I see so many of them is it possible that the brain only recognizes things it's already aware of? Are we conditioned that way? I don't know. Just food for thought . Also I've captured some on camera some that I could not see but the camera could .

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Posted by **unikly mine@gmail.com** on 08/12/2019 at 8:49 AM



In 1998 I was exiting a busy supermarket in New Mexico . I stepped out of the entrance and heard a creaking sound of something heavy and metal. I looked in the direction of the sound. Across the street from the store was a gas station and much to my suprise was a large spaceship it hovered right above the gas station by just a few feet . I stood in the doorway of the store POINTING and screaming "what the f.. Is that?" Over and over I yelled out but NOBODY else seemed to be looking I have no idea how the people around could ignore the camotion I was causing . STILL to this day I wonder.The ship NOTICED me and began to move I chased it and watched it take off . I then went to my boyfriend's house and told him what I saw .when he heard my discription of how it sounded he said " I heard that.I just didn't look up" . I now live in Texas but have seen many more I watched one fly right by me at the park the NOBODY else seemed to see .I absolutely think that I can see them because of having allready saw one . Its my theory . Believe it or not I truly want others to share these expirences with .Another interesting point is that I have captured some on camera some that my EYES could NOT see but the CAMERA could, what do you think about that? Could it be that the camera sees More than we do because it has no conchince and no objection? This is 100 % true .

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Posted by **unikly mine@gmail.com** on 08/12/2019 at 8:24 AM



If you don't know what a ship is you can't see a ship but you can see an identical set of shapes and colors and know it's something unknown. The light still reaches your eyes. Your eyes still gather it in. tiny.cc/realityis

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Posted by **Kaiser Basileus** on 06/17/2019 at 6:28 AM



This is all pure speculation. The only data we actually have is that they did not seem to look at the ship or take an interest in it. The idea that the natives were on the edge of survival is not supported by anthropologists and accounts we have. It seems likely from what is know of other natives they had excellent eyesight. If you saw a large foreign object 1/4 mile offshore or anywhere (in the sky?) would you look it? Something was definitely going on there to prevent that.

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Posted by **alset alset** on 05/01/2019 at 9:14 PM



this is all fake news! Just because they had no knowledge on the ships does not mean that they couldn't see them. If a dog didn't know what something was it could still see it and know to run away or not. THEREFORE THIS IS FAKE NEWS!!!

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Posted by **Riley Crozier** on 05/23/2018 at 11:25 AM



Ps Not to mention..., when you first see something on the horizon, it's a mere speck, essentially shapeless. It could have been a bird up close, (relatively speaking), so this notion that because they'd never seen anything like it, it was invisible does not make sense. - CCH

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4 likes, 1 dislike  like  dislike

Posted by **Capt Rogue** on 12/20/2017 at 3:03 AM 



Another explanation could be that they very well sighted the ship but interpreted it as something "supernatural" of an evil kind and therefore regarded it dangerous to focus with their eyes.

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Posted by **Lars Vegus** on 11/03/2017 at 3:52 AM



I am not really satisfied by the writer's explanation. The problem is that those ships were FOREIGN enough to activate the Anxiety System in our brain. And that triggers orientation reactions. So, the ships must have triggered some reactions, most of them involuntary, and yes, orientation reactions include turning the head and focusing attention on the foreign enough object.

On the other side i am not completely taken by the "it is so foreign it was invisible" explanation either. It smells of Paul Feyerabends studies in cultural relativism.

What we have here is a classic clash of psychology (orientation responses) with philosophy (cultural relativism)

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Posted by **Marco Jajac** on 09/28/2017 at 7:56 AM



By the way, I also like the explanation where the person says they wood question their sanity, because no one else was looking, and therefore stay silent. There was a famous sociological perception experiment with Confederates where the Confederates stated that two lines were different in size when they were really the same, and most people agreed with them!
This would be another more consistent hypothesis than humans not noticing the ships!

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Posted by **MtVelveteen** on 06/04/2017 at 8:52 AM 



Well, my comment is that ignoring and survival mode are contradictory , so therefore, one can't have it both ways:
To begin with, Humans are one of the most curious species on the planet.
If they were on "survival mode", it's inherent hyper-focus triggered by the brain's amygdala would actually add to curiosity to the point of hyper-vigilance. The possibility that is brought up in the other post regarding them being aboriginals who is phenomenology include seeing spirits all the time is also a good point. But you can trust that under those circumstances they would have been very aware. Maybe not help early responsive, but very aware. Their survival depends on that awareness in a wild environment.
Of course, the truth is we bring confirmatory bias from our own belief systems to any situation, so I don't know that my analysis is anymore correct.
ButIMO, the natural state of the human - especially spiritually - at that in history, combines with survival brain physiology, to conclude that the invisible hypothesis, or the "they are spirits, and we just hope they will keep moving on" are the more likely explanations.

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5 likes, 1 dislike  like  dislike

Posted by **MtVelveteen** on 06/04/2017 at 8:50 AM 



PS: A further consideration.... If I were ever in some analogous circumstance, and if I were near others, I would probably do four things:

1. Question my own sanity.
2. Look around me to see if anyone else was seeing what I was seeing.
3. If nobody else seemed to see it, you figure out the rest.
4. Mayby, if I was brave enough, and a close family member had happened to be nearby when I thought I had the 'hallucination,' at the end of the day I might privately and carefully ask, "did you see what I saw?"

Kinda funny if you ask me :-)

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Posted by **Scott Warren Perry** on 04/23/2017 at 9:11 AM

I think I might be able to somehow "imagine" their mindset. I would say that surely these people who believed in, and probably saw, spirits of all shapes on a regular basis, "saw" the relatively silent sailing ship, but they obviously must have initially considered it to be a spirit



of some sort, and initially deserving of the same level of attention that other such "spirits" normally received. As with other such "spirits," they probably were hoping and praying that if they ignored it, perhaps it would simply "go away," and leave them alone in peace.

Hey, I must confess I have actually "seen" some of these in my own day, and that is exactly how I tend to respond to most of them. As in a zoo with the sign, "don't feed the animals," most folks, when confronted with something that almost appears as a hallucination, will tend to try to "not feed" it.

However, should the "hallucination" begin to deploy longboats (much easier for a native to understand), and to begin heading in my direction with strangely colored and clothed men inside of them, you had better believe it, I would suddenly realize that my first strategy was simply not working, and I had better do something better, and quick!

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21 likes, 0 dislikes like dislike

Posted by **Scott Warren Perry** on 04/23/2017 at 9:03 AM



visible, or invisible, recognized or unrecognized, interesting or not, one thing was true. They could not imagine the imminent and clear danger they were in until it was too late. This is the lesson for us today. It is the same apathy, carelessness or ignorance about the destructive forces in our lives. for ex proxy wars that can turn into a nuclear war any day now, or irreversible damaging and depletion of natural resources like tropical forests, oceans, water streams or atmosphere. This is happening everyday we see or hear about it but, we go on with our business in the same manner everyday because we only care about our senses and convenience but not enough about our children's future or how we are going die one day.

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Posted by **TC Artemis Aygen** on 10/05/2016 at 9:34 AM

Hi, just wanted to question the assumption of these peoples "living on the edge of survival". I believe quite the opposite was true.

It's fun to consider the possibility this reaction (if accurately reported) is similar to what you may expect from people who've seen similar ships before.

Enjoyed article, thank you.

CH

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Posted by **CH** on 09/05/2016 at 4:26 PM



Excellent point! True, passive acts are normally ignored and not something "invisible" under the Webster's dictionary's definition, or are they? "Invisible" means: "(1a) incapable of nature of being seen." Any decent attorney could spin that definition towards their own argument with ease. Although that doesn't prove that the ships were invisible, it also doesn't prove that the ships were simply ignored, as you state. It may be helpful to re-examine your "prosaic" conclusion as the exact stance you attempted to refute. In all honesty though, keep up the good work Barry!

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Posted by **Jeff_La** on 03/15/2016 at 10:28 AM

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