(non)human islands: Environmental Critical Responses to Contemporary Robinsonades

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Abstract

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) has inspired numerous adaptations, reiterations, and, more recently, radical revisions. My work investigates post-1945 contemporary Robinsonades that critique, challenge, and present alternatives to the conventions of Defoe's canonical text. The re-visions I focus on in this thesis are as follows; William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* (1984), Michel Tournier's *Friday, or the Other Island* (1967), J.G. Ballard's *Concrete Island* (1974), and Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* Trilogy (2003 – 2013). Although these re-visions present radical alternatives and severe critiques of the conventional Robinsonade, the novels in question still narrate attempts to humanise the island itself. My thesis explores the possible limits of this engagement with nonhuman spaces, a line of questioning that is echoed in the title of thesis—(non)human islands.

The ideology expounded by *Robinson Crusoe* is still observable in our current practices in the Anthropocene, particularly in the Western world, where we are failing to eliminate the vestiges of colonialism, Anglocentrism, exploitation of subjugated people, the exploitation of other animals and environments, and the anthropocentric rule reinforced through 'Man vs Nature' binaries. Contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade overturn the sovereign rule of (what I have termed) the Crusoe-figure through their engagement and subversion of Defoe's colonial and capitalist narrative. The narrative of solitary ownership of the fantasy island kingdom is parodied and satirised but Robinsonade revisions also demonstrate that the severance a castaway suffers in the shipwreck presents a unique opportunity to reinvent our relationship to world without being burdened by societal constraint.

My project is located in the emerging interdisciplinary field of environmental criticism (also referred to as ecotheory and ecocriticism). I examine selected contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade to explore our relationships with the nonhuman world and the conditions we face in the Anthropocene.

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General introduction

Contemporary castaways and ecotheory

In the expanse of space, in the vast ocean, surfacing in the imagination: there are islands. They are defined by plurality—ambiguous worlds, porous but solid, intangible and corporeal, divergent in their possibilities. An island's shape is multifaceted, the topography and features sometimes entirely alien or eerily familiar. With all the possible island and castaway narratives available, my thesis focuses on a significant form of island story, the Robinsonade, and highlights developments in the three-hundred-year-old genre since Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) concerning human interaction with nonhuman animals and environments from 1950 onward.[1] Castaway and island narratives have a long history stretching back thousands of years preceding Defoe. As such, Robinsonades are—more often than not—castaway narratives, but castaway narratives are not always necessarily Robinsonades. Distinguishing the difference becomes more complicated in contemporary castaway narratives as numerous different Robinsonades have been produced and the Crusoe-myth itself has been disseminated through various media beyond the novel.

The idea of islands offers the opportunity to create something radically different from mainland life through physical and psychological separation. Conversely, this schism can also cause us to cling to conformity and reinforce dichotomous ways of thinking about the nonhuman world. Fundamental to the Robinsonade are the human and nonhuman relationships explored through the immediate proximity to the 'other' in the isolation of desert islands. My thesis examines the representation of human/nonhuman interaction from an environmental critical perspective developed through a selection of contemporary novel re-writings of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* that indicate changes to our wider understanding of

[1] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, ed. by Thomas Keymer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

nonhumanness. Though this thesis is primarily concerned with novelistic re-visions of the Robinsonade, it is crucial to recognise that the genre extends beyond the novel, outside of other media even, to become a cultural myth. As Ian Watt attests, '*Robinson Crusoe* falls most naturally into place, not with other novels, but with the great myths of Western civilization, with *Faust*, *Don Juan*, and *Don Quixote* […] the island offers the fullest opportunity for [Crusoe] to realize three associated tendencies of modern civilization – absolute economic, social, and intellectual freedom for the individual'.[2] Rather than split from mainland conformity, Crusoe continues to relentlessly pursue hegemonic ideologies, becoming the embodiment of individualism emphasised by the novel as a genre in its anthropocentric form.[3] Though the novel has persisted in popularity throughout the centuries, its privileging of human narratives is symptomatic of its limitations in representing nonhuman life. This is a reality felt throughout *Robinson Crusoe* and an aspect explored by contemporary Robinsonades that question humancentric representations of the world.

The title of this thesis, (non)human islands, represents and visualises a dissolution of strict binary divisions and the hierarchical relationships they reinforce between humans and nonhumans. By refraining from capitalisation and utilising parentheses neither human nor nonhuman as a word or concept is entirely separate, distinct, or differentiated but rather they exist simultaneously. The decision to use parentheses rather than a forward slash (i.e., non/human islands) is due in part to the representation of the nonhuman in the novelisation of islands that often favours human interpretations and perception, but always existing parallel to ostensibly solitary human narratives is the nonhuman world. Defoe's Crusoe, and subsequent emulations in the Crusoedian mode, narrate a totalising sense of isolation and loneliness before other humans enter the island as they fail to see the animacy of

[2] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), p. 88 – 89.
[3] Brett C. McInelly, 'Expanding Empires, Expanding Selves: Colonialism, the Novel, and *Robinson Crusoe*', *Studies in the Novel*, 35 (2003), pp. 1 – 21.

nonhumanity. However, contemporary re-readings of *Robinson Crusoe* can recognise the existence and presence of nonhuman life in Defoe's narrative even as Crusoe fails to step outside his anthropocentric mindset. Challenging this human focused attitude introduces another essential facet of removing the capital letter in 'islands'. As I will discuss further in my methodology, islands have been ubiquitously fictionalised and subsequently theorised. As such, this runs the risk of reducing unique and distinct environments into a single metaphor of islandness. The islands discussed in this thesis are all products of the imagination, they are what we think of when we think of islands, but they are also informed by real places. By avoiding the more static capitalised 'Islands', I try to also avoid a total gravitation towards theorising about islands as only humanised symbolic spaces.

The enduring interest in *Robinson Crusoe* has transcended its distinctly English origins to be re-interpreted by international audiences. As Ann Marie Fallon indicates, '*Robinson Crusoe*, which has been so influential and widely translated since its publication, has taken on a global significance at the end of the twentieth century'.[4] The Robinsonade's origins find new relevance in our contemporary period, as Fallon states:

> the issues Defoe narrates in *Robinson Crusoe* (colonialism, the subjugation of the American Indian, the slave trade, merchant capitalism, the rise of individualism) fundamentally altered the globe Crusoe traverses […] the traumatic history Defoe alludes to in his novels continues to shape the consciousness and the experiences of writers of both the postcolonial and the postmodern spheres.[5]

My thesis builds on existing postcolonial criticism that challenges *Robinson Crusoe*'s imperial narrative to develop ecocritical and environmental critical readings of contemporary Robinsonades. The exploitative dichotomous relationship between Crusoe and Friday has

[4] Ann Marie Fallon, *Global Crusoe: Comparative Literature, Postcolonial Theory and Transnational Aesthetics* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), p. 29.
[5] Fallon, p. 28.

been thoroughly examined by postcolonial critics but my specific focus explores the Crusoedian colonial and capitalist exploitation of nonhuman environments. Though there is a consistent focus in *Robinson Crusoe* and later re-visions on human interactions with the nonhuman, there are comparatively few ecotheoretical interpretations of the Robinsonade. Ecocritical interventions have emerged from Mathilde Bataillé, Athane Adrahane, and Rita Ghesquiere, who have separately focused on twentieth-century French Robinsonades, specifically Michel Tournier's *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique*—in English translation as *Friday, or the Other Island* (1967). They provide a basis for ecocritical approaches to reading contemporary Robinsonade fiction. My thesis provides a wider contextual and ecotheoretical approach to demonstrate the Robinsonade's enduring relevance to contemporary readers. My thesis synthesises new and emerging approaches to human and nonhuman relationships by utilising interrelated and interdisciplinary theoretical methods to provide a book-length study of contemporary desert island stories from what I am defining as an 'environmental critical approach' to gain insights into our relationships with nonhumanity in the Anthropocene.

I primarily address post-1945 Robinsonades with contextual references to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* from an environmental critical perspective and apply the contextual framework of the 'Anthropocene' to assist in understanding nonhuman dimensions of the Robinsonade Crusoe-myth. My thesis does not work to ignore vital questions of race and indigeneity in the Robinsonade but rather contributes to literary critical interventions in the genre by investigating representations of the nonhuman. The methods of imperialist and capitalist exploitation are entangled with the current and historical enslavement, exploitation, and mass murder of marginalised populations. Concurrent with the exploitation of disenfranchised people is the exploitation of the nonhuman world. The issues we face regarding the climate crisis, for instance, originate in the dichotomous ideologies of

colonialism and capitalism that insist on oppositional binary distinctions. The devastating global exploitation of a diverse and irreplaceable array of environments emerges in how we value nonhuman life only in reference to their utility to humanity.[6] This mindset has its origins in a colonial and exploitative past. The following extract is from Defoe's *An essay upon projects* that demonstrates the proto-capitalist ideology that recurs in *Robinson Crusoe*. He states that:

> we have on most of the High-Roads a great deal of waste-Land thrown in as it were […] which though it be us'd of course by Cattle and Travellers on occasion, is indeed no Benefit at all […] upon it grows neither Timber nor Grass, in any quantity answerable to the Land; but, tho to no purpose, is trodden down, poach'd, and overrun by Drifts of Cattle in the Winter, or spoil'd with the Dust in the Summer: And this I have observ'd in many parts of England to be as good Land as any of the Neighbouring Enclosures, as capable of Improvement, and to as good purpose.[7]

Defoe's anthropocentric attitude towards the physical and moral waste of 'non-productive' space informs issues we face in the Anthropocene, where the pursuit of productivity has become inordinate and globally damaging. Re-visionary Robinsonades in the twentieth and twenty-first century critique Crusoe's exploitative patterns of behaviour and violently upheld individualism and present alternatives to anthropocentric attitudes. As Emmanuelle Peraldo states, 'rewriting *Robinson Crusoe* in the postmodern era consists in questioning that great myth of modernity and most postmodern Robinsonades criticize, subvert or even deconstruct the myth they are rewriting'.[8] Using a figure as imperialistic, anthropocentric, and hyper-masculine as Crusoe makes re-visioning his narrative even more essential as we consider the challenges we face in the Anthropocene.

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[6] As I will discuss in the methodology, 'humanity' here references to the colonial and imperialist conceptions of the 'human' that only includes certain humans (e.g., European, white, middle to upper class men). The human/nonhuman binary itself emerges from this exclusionary way of thinking.
[7] Daniel Defoe, *An essay upon projects* (London: printed by R. R. for Tho. Cockerill, 1697), p. 80 – 81.
[8] Emmanuelle Peraldo, 'Introduction', in *300 Years of Robinsonades*, ed. by Emmanuelle Peraldo (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020), p. 9.

As stated, the Robinsonade genre spans over three-hundred years. To narrow down this vast body of work, my thesis explores contemporary re-visions post-1945. This is due, in part, to the slow dissolution of a formal British Empire following World War Two that encourages further critiques concerning colonialism and its patterns of exploitation. Post-1945 is also a key date for the Anthropocene. As will be discussed in my methodology, we might want to consider an earlier date for the beginning of the Anthropocene and the measurable global anthropogenic impacts in light of colonialism and global human trafficking of enslaved people that relates to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. However, the post-WWII era, also known as 'Great Acceleration', is also another viable date. This is where we will begin our exploration of re-vision with William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* in 1954 and work our way to the final chapter that examines the speculative future of the Anthropocene in Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy (2003 – 2013). The texts selected for the thesis move forward towards this point, but they are also grouped thematically around the key aspects of conventional Robinsonades and explore how ideas such as eating, killing, dwelling, and masculinity among other topics have been re-visioned in contemporary Robinsonades. The following summarises the outline of each chapter and provides my rationale behind the selection of texts in relation to how they exemplify and revise traits of the canonical Robinsonade.

The first texts we encounter are Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) and Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* (1984). This chapter explores their relation to the conventional Robinsonade's depiction of masculinised violence that is inflicted on an often feminised, racialised, or otherwise othered environment. Both texts are intimately concerned with the Crusoedian preoccupation with literal and figurative consuming. In this chapter, I indicate the significance of the masculinised and colonial desire to consume paralleled by the fear that the consumer themselves will be swallowed bodily and spiritually. These antagonistic,

patriarchal, exploitative relationships underscore a colonial urge for control that becomes a recurrent obsession for Crusoedian characters. The condition of the castaway is tenuous; they are swept ashore by a torrential sea; experience totalising isolation; they are surrounded by unfamiliar sights and sounds—all of which may signal potential threats and danger. The loss of control is the apparent inspiration for the castaway-to-coloniser narrative, but Crusoe soon begins to relish his isolation that inspires feelings of sovereignty over the island and its beastly inhabitants—a process replicated with Friday's arrival on the island. This hierarchical structure is a fantasy of colonial control that provides seemingly endless opportunities for consumption but also contains within it the fear this pattern of exploitation could be reversed.

Golding and Banks both explicitly critique the implicit violence of imperial boyhood adventure novels. Their work challenges the entrenched antagonistic relationships between masculine identity and nonhumans. Golding's re-vision depicts the impact institutionalised violence has on adolescents attempting to fulfil societal norms. An island's state of separation allows for divergent, permissive, or prohibited actions, but it can also be used to amplify everyday societal behaviours. The island allows re-visionary writers to re-contextualise normalised practices regarding other animals to cause those same practices to appear abhorrent.

Banks' narrator Frank is hyperbolically violent. The absurdist and cartoonishly brutal murders parody the Crusoedian violence used to maintain human order. Symbolic and literal violence are crucial tools for Frank in *The Wasp Factory* as sacrifice is used to instil anthropocentric order and control over an unruly nonhuman world. On first inspection, it may not be immediately apparent that *The Wasp Factory* is indeed a Robinsonade, the primary point of contention for its inclusion in the genre being the island's physical connection to the mainland via a bridge. However, I argue that this connection does not undermine my inclusion of *The Wasp Factory* as a contemporary Robinsonade. Frank's infrequent journeys

to the mainland ratify his connection to the island and underscore his estrangement from society that highlights the isolation expected of castaway fiction. Frank describes the pull the island has over his imagination as a place that he is magnetically drawn to. Imagining the island as isolated from mainland society informs Frank's Crusoe-like sense of self that is dependent on a definitive sense of sovereignty over the environment and a pervasive fear of invasion (from people, other animals, and 'natural' forces). Frank's characterisation explores the Crusoedian obsession with individualism. I explore the effect this isolated and hermetic individual subjectivity has on the construction of human identity as without recognising the necessity of human/nonhuman interconnectivity the 'deserted' island becomes an echo chamber of a single insular human identity. As Christopher Palmer highlights, 'the island is increasingly subjectified; to dominate one's island in Ballard's *Concrete Island* or Banks' *The Wasp Factory* is to imagine it into existence as island (a secluded place in which actions and desires have new scope) and even as the embodiment of one's own, now expanded, psyche'.[9] Frank emulates the Crusoedian relation to place through this sense of personal and anthropocentric ownership. As such, the island is viewed as an extension of self rather than a separate entity. This leads the thesis into a discussion of dwelling in the Robinsonade and how we re-vision our relationship with the nonhuman.

The second set of contemporary Robinsonades I address in the thesis are Michel Tournier's *Friday, or the Other Island* and J.G. Ballard's *Concrete Island* through approaches to dwelling in the context of the desert island. These texts were selected to demonstrate the extent to which authors might adapt the Crusoe-figure, as well as the narrative structure and setting, and to gauge the effects of these alterations in regard to re-vision. To demonstrate the extent of his transformation, Tournier's Crusoe-figure (Robinson)

[9] Christopher Palmer, *Castaway Tales: From Robinson Crusoe to Life of Pi* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2016), p. 53

goes on an apparently transformative decades-long metaphysical journey on the island, beginning with a reductive Crusoedian view of the world to then push the limits of human engagement with space and place. Robinson's initial response to the nonhuman environment is mediated through oppositional human/nonhuman binaries based on human superiority.[10] The desert island is perceived as a moral and physical wasteland that must be altered to make it fit for human habitation. The state of isolation on desert islands precludes a human social world. The absence of society becomes an existential terror in conventional Robinsonades combatted through ceaseless work and building seen as correlative with the castaway's morality. Tournier's Robinson enshrines the newly erected buildings with special significance as they become stand-ins for an absent society.

Though Touriner's Robinson attempts several different ways of engaging with the island, they are all ultimately predicated on the same patriarchal and colonial process of dwelling until he is forced to find a new relation to space and recognise the island itself as a separate identity outside of the need for a human point of reference. Where Golding and Banks amplify the pre-existing patterns of exploitative violence in the Robinsonade, Tournier begins to offer an alternative vision of the island—though whether it entirely breaks from anthropocentric ideologies is uncertain, it nevertheless presents alternative engagements. Imagining alternatives to our current way of living is vital to realising new relationships with the nonhuman in the Anthropocene. Island narratives present a chance to establish different behaviours in a new context unburdened by authoritarian conventions.

Ballard's *Concrete Island* challenges the Robinsonades' relation to space. Though Ballard's Crusoe-figure, Maitland, demonstrates a similar parodic quality as in *The Wasp Factory*, there is also a detailed examination of how we dwell and imagine familiar but

[10] For convenience, I will be referring to Tournier's protagonist as 'Robinson' and Defoe's protagonist as 'Crusoe' throughout the thesis to avoid confusion.

neglected spaces around us. Ballard's urban traffic island re-configures Robinsonade's conventional island wilderness that undergoes a process of colonisation. The wasteland/traffic island exists adjacent to the capitalist metropolis but resists the narrative of linear progression. The topography of Ballard's island draws the violent, uncanny, abject sensations depicted in other Robinsonades closer to home—literally and figuratively. Golding's *Lord of the Flies* explores the institutionalised violence at the heart of British imperialism that is lauded in early castaway fiction in an environment reminiscent of earlier Robinsonades: a *tropical* island. Ballard produces a more pronounced comparison by moving the island from a remote and exotic world to an eerily familiar city space. This precludes any possible interpretation that the castaway is somehow inflected with violent tendencies from the tropical environment, a view that is indicative of a xenophobic fear of otherness. Instead, Maitland's violent tendencies originate in the capitalist mechanisms at work in the surrounding city.

Concrete Island directs our attention to a critical issue in the canonical Robinsonade by emphasising the issues arising from human selfhood and individuation. Human self-identity is imposed onto the nonhuman world to create an impression of humanity—the Crusoe-esque island is remodelled to create a human semblance of 'order'. Maitland struggles to impose his will in the same manner as other Crusoe-figures that he resembles in other ways (male, white, European, middle-class). Unable to dwell through building physical constructs, Maitland attempts a psychological colonisation of the island through a projection of self that creates an unheimlich double. This doubling effect is echoed in the traffic island's physical composition that reflects the city's abject parts as it collects the discarded and unwanted waste products of an overconsuming society. Despite its alienation, or because of it, Ballard's island unfolds otherworldly unmappable contours distinct from the monotony of the city. As a disused 'wasteland', it resists the narrative of linear productivity expounded by hegemonic

ideologies that insist nonhumans be made useful to humanity. The state of unproductivity as a 'desert' or 'wasteland' recalls canonical Robinsonades' supposedly languishing nonhuman environment before the castaway attempts to enforce societal norms onto the environment. Even after a desert island is apparently civilised, mapped, and made knowable it continues to elude definition and contains within it the potential to destabilise human authority and subvert expectation.

The final chapter of my thesis discusses Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy, including *Oryx and Crake* (2003), *The Year of the Flood* (2009), *MaddAddam* (2013) in relation to the Anthropocene and the future of the Robinsonade. Re-visions of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* indicate a colonial origin for contemporary issues. Atwood's trilogy invites us to consider how we can adapt our response to the present to affect the future and uses the Robinsonade to bring about a more radical narrative relevant to emerging issues in the Anthropocene. The *MaddAddam* trilogy revises our understanding of the Robinsonade as a literary form, its relationship with a colonial past, and the impact that legacy has on the present regarding our definitions of other animals and the environment. Each separate text can function as a castaway narrative individually and as a trilogy. The Crusoe-figure is represented by several different characters, each drawing out another aspect of the Robinsonade's central themes. My final chapter focuses on Snowman, Crake, and Toby to consider the changing role of the Crusoe-figure.

Snowman assumes the role of the archetypal marooned castaway in a physical and cultural 'wasteland' after a devastating shipwreck. Atwood shifts our understanding of these tropes to encompass new meanings that encapsulate the anxieties of the Anthropocene. The shipwreck becomes a civilisation-ending human-engineered pandemic, the wreck itself is the remnants of society and its ruinous empty cities, and the helpful flotsam Crusoe salvages is the useless detritus left by consumerism. The desert described is not a 'natural' wilderness

full of untapped resources but rather a wasteland that emerges from capitalist excess and exploitation. Even without the virus's intervention, the world Atwood depicts pre-pandemic is poised on the edge of collapse; they are plagued by global inequity; modern slavery; climate crisis; and controlled by amoral corporations. Snowman's relationship with other animals and the animals themselves challenges the conventions of the Robinsonade. Archetypal Robinsonades include a cavalcade of animals such as domesticated pets, draught animals, the edible and inedible, exotic unknown wild species, and the occasional carnivorous beast lurking out of view or at a distance. In *Robinson Crusoe*, nonhuman animals are considered hierarchically in relation to anthropocentric concerns, i.e., their utility for humans, their potential threat to human order etc., and animals that step outside their prescribed roles are punished violently to restore human sovereignty. By their very nature, Atwood's bio-engineered transgenic animals disrupt the boundary between humans and nonhuman others, preventing the conventional dichotomous basis for human identity that exists in opposition to nonhumans.

By splitting the Crusoe-figure into several representations, Atwood emphasises different aspects of the castaway characterisation and examines these facets separately. Crake is ambiguous and elusive but also a hyperbolic caricature of an amoral scientist reminiscent of Victorian Robinsonades. Crake embodies Crusoe's reductionist and binary mindset, but this divisional way of thinking leads instead to the eradication of civilisation rather than anthropocentrically privileging humanity. Science and technology in the Robinsonade are used to secure the castaway against the dangers of the nonhuman world and enable their transition towards becoming a coloniser that resolves the world into an observable, knowable, and therefore exploitable collection of resources. Conversely, Crake's experiments in transgenics disturb the consecrated boundary between species, making previously solid notions disputable or obsolete. Though Crake disrupts the Crusoedian view of the nonhuman

world through transgenics, he maintains an inflexible binary worldview. His genocidal manufactured virus places the world technologically back into a pre-Bronze Age state. Crake's plan to rid the world of humanity to be replaced with the Crakers, a small colony of peaceful transgenic people, continues an exaggerated egotistical entitlement that takes Crusoe's control of the island that maps onto the rest of the world. Crake's plan also assumes that all humans are equally culpable for mass extinction, climate change, and deforestation, rather than the majority of those contributing towards climate change emerging from the world's wealthiest one per cent.

Toby presents a more radical version of the Robinsonade and the Crusoe-figure to substantially change the oppositional 'Man vs Nature' mindset. Unlike other re-visions examined in this thesis, Toby detaches from Crusoe's burdenous relationship with the nonhuman world. Critique of colonial and capitalist ideological positions manifest through the example Toby gives that promotes an alternative to Crusoe rather than deriving parody or exaggeration. Envisioning an alternative to the repressive and repressed state of Crusoe's island is necessary for a generation of people considering an uncertain future in the Anthropocene. The narratives of human exceptionalism and superiority woven over the centuries are becoming increasingly irrelevant to the conditions we face today. Atwood's speculative fiction imagines future possibilities based on current realities, from technological breakthroughs to social conditions. Even though the world imagined seems dire and on the brink of collapse, Toby's re-invention of the castaway role supplies a hopeful eventuality.

My selection of re-visionary Robinsonades explore the limits of the genre and their ability to represent alternative narratives. The focus of this thesis is not to bolster a humanist position, nor to promote humancentric attitudes, neglect representing the innate agency of nonhuman life, or continue to reinforce the binaries between what we consider human and nonhuman. However, with all this in mind, a major part of this thesis is concerned with

human action and reaction to the island environment rather than explicitly analysing the agency of these environments themselves. The primary reason behind this particular focus is that novelistic renditions of Crusoe are largely concerned with human actors and, more specifically, solitary middle-class European men. The thesis deconstructs the anthropocentric elitist Crusoedian character and explores the works of re-vision that parody, critique, or create alternatives to the exploitative relationships in *Robinson Crusoe*. I also question the extent to which those Crusoe-figures can have their relationships with nonhumanity meaningfully reformed in contemporary re-visions. As such, this requires more of a focus on humanity to understand our motivations, imaginations, and responses concerning the nonhuman. I employ this focus in exploring the Robinsonade to better understand how we have come to a moment of environmental crisis in the Anthropocene as Defoe's Crusoe models the anthropocentric entitlement and consumeristic capitalistic and colonial attitudes we still harbour.

Chapter one
Methodology

(1.1) The Robinsonade: Origins, revivals, re-visions

As Ruth Menzies highlights, 'perhaps one of the strangest and most surprising of Robinson Crusoe's adventures is that which has befallen the novel since its initial publication, as it has become one of the most rewritten, adapted and otherwise appropriated texts in literary history'.[1] The motivations behind these re-adaptations and revivals demonstrate a steady movement away from viewing Crusoe as a model of human ingenuity, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau asserts in *Emile*: *Or On Education* (1762). The traction the conventional Robinsonade gained in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries following Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* corresponds with a rise in ethnocentric Western, specifically British, imperialism. Crusoe's castaway-to-coloniser narrative appealed to patriarchal ideologies in its depiction of a middle-class white man overcoming the perils of the wilderness through work, technological prowess, and guile. As Watt observes, all of Defoe's protagonists are 'an embodiment of economic individualism [and] […] whatever the circumstance of their birth and education […] have it in their blood'.[2] In *Robinson Crusoe*, this early capitalist desire for economic independence is pursued at the expense of others' misery. Robinson's fortune is amassed by forcing marginalised people into slavery and exploiting the nonhuman world. Regarding *Robinson Crusoe,* postcolonial ecocritics Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin write that 'such powerful and popular narratives not only establish obdurate stereotypes but also – repeating Said – "block other narratives from forming and emerging"'.[3] It is necessary to

[1] Ruth Menzies, 'From *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* to *Le Vrai Robinson*: Literary and Virtual Journeys Through Time and Text', in *300 Years of Robinsonades*, ed. by Emmanuelle Peraldo (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020), p. 110.
[2] Watt, p. 65.
[3] Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonialism Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), p. 169.

challenge the dominance of the Crusoe-myth, that the human superiority narrative only includes a select few humans in its scope.

Re-visioning the Robinsonade requires pre-existing knowledge of the form and its historical context—though this is admittedly a given, it acknowledges that writers of contemporary Robinsonades are required to first be readers before making their own contribution to the genre. Eighteenth-century and Victorian Robinsonades may provide different social and geographical contexts, new and more elaborate scenarios, and different castaways. Still, they essentially retain the essence of Defoe's imperialistic discourse, which furthers the Man vs Nature narrative to emphasise human—though in reality, white, middle-class, and male—superiority achieved primarily through violence and technological dominance. These familiar renditions are more accurately described as *rewritings* of Robinsonades, whereas contemporary *re-visions* aim to provide a critique of core Crusoedian conventions. This intertextual or hypo/hypertextual relationship is certainly not unique to the Robinsonade, but the number of rewritings and re-visions provide ample examples of intertextual processes and allow us to analyse the impetus behind their creation.

Contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade redress, reform, and disinherit the sovereignty of the Crusoe-figure. I have elected to use 're-vision' rather than the unhyphenated 'revision' in a similar vein to Adrienne Rich's influential work on re-visionary writing. As Rich states, 're-vision – the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction – is for us more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival. Until we can understand the assumptions in which we are drenched we cannot know ourselves'.[4] Though Rich's work relates to developments in feminist theory, this process can be applied to other types of re-writing that challenge

[4] Adrienne Rich, 'When We Dead Awaken – Writing as Re-vision', *College English*, 34 (1972), 18 – 20 (p. 18).

hegemonic discourse. For my thesis, the hyphenation resembles the definitive break from the source material that becomes open to analysis. Re-visionary texts relating to *Robinson Crusoe* cover a spectrum of ideas that write against dominant societal norms—this is due to Crusoe's anthropocentric, Eurocentric, and androcentric assertion of 'sovereignty' that views so many different groups as 'Others'. This is highlighted in Jacques Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume* II as Derrida describes how Crusoe has:

> compared himself jubilantly to a sovereign surrounded by his subjects [...] on an island that was his kingdom [...] the relation to savages as well as to women and beasts was the condescending, descending, vertical relation of a superior master to his slaves, other sovereign to his submissive subjects—submissive or submissible, mastered or to be mastered, by violence if need be—subjected.[5]

Re-visioning the Robinsonade necessitates an understanding of its imperial and patriarchal roots, origins that cannot be disentangled from the violence that caused the suffering of millions of subjugated people and the exploitation of nonhuman animals and the environment that furthered colonial ventures that continue to influence the present day. The contemporary re-visions that I have selected utilise diverse methods to actively refute the Robinsonade's canonical narrative. Some of my chosen texts demonstrate colonialism's failures by initially adhering to Crusoe's characteristics before creating a sudden turning point that inspires a new relation to place and 'otherness'. Alternatively, re-visions create parodic and hyperbolised versions of Crusoedian core conventions, such as Crusoe's propensity towards violence, the desire for order, and a need for control to highlight their constraints.

The contemporary Robinsonade as a form of re-vision is not limited to retrospectively challenging historical colonial acts but demonstrates how an imperialistic past inflects our present, how current exploitative practices parallel the colonial model and consider the future

[5] Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Vol II*, ed. by Michel Lisse, Marie- Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 278.

to speculate whether substantial change is possible. Our contemporary period still struggles under the burdenous presence of colonialism as the history of imperial expansion *Robinson Crusoe* glorifies develops into the narrative of constant linear progression, consumption, and 'productivity' in capitalist ideologies. The issues we face today might appear removed from Defoe's world, but the origins of our current interconnected problems date back to the cementation of ideologically motivated binary oppositions.

To understand the re-visions of the Robinsonade, we should keep in mind the original structure of *Robinson Crusoe*'s narrative. *Robinson Crusoe* itself goes through various adaptations immediately following its publication; Crusoe's exploits before and after his shipwreck are often omitted to only feature the island narrative. As Jakub Lipski queries:

> What is the Robinsonade? In narrative terms, it is a work of fiction including some recognizable plot elements, such as shipwreck (or a different kind of travel accident), an island (literally or metaphorically speaking), the challenges of castaway existence, an encounter with Others and rescue.[6]

Tailoring this definition for an environmental critical approach that focuses on the figure of Crusoe, a pared-down canonical narrative includes: an initial voyage → a shipwreck → despair at isolation → appropriation of the island → increased exploitation of human and nonhuman inhabitants → a final decision to remain on the island or escape. There are specific events inside the island narrative that are parodied as a pastiche, such as Crusoe's discovery of a mysterious footprint or Friday's apparent 'rescue'. I have omitted these events from the above overview as, although frequently used, their absence does not exclude a specific text's connection to the genre. Re-visionary Robinsonades interpret the above events in different sequences and iterations, sometimes depicting symbolic representations of events rather than their literal equivalent. The contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade selected for this

[6] Jakub Lipski, 'Studies in the English-language Robinsonade at the Crusoe tercentenary', *Literature Compass*, 19 (2022), 1 – 9 (p. 1).

thesis employ the canonical structure of *Robinson Crusoe* in diverse ways to produce new outcomes and effects. As Derrida speculates, there is not:

> only one Robinson, or one Robinsonade in general, but there's a big family there among whom we should recognize common traits, similarities, family resemblances, without hastening to ignore their differential traits and their irreducible singularity.[7]

For example, as indicated in my introduction, Banks' *The Wasp Factory* does not adhere to all the conventions of typical castaway fiction with respect to narrative or chronology but remains distinctly a Robinsonade. Frank does not embark on an initial voyage, there is no definitive moment of shipwreck, and there is not necessarily a character that resembles Friday. The island is not Crusoe's tropical 'wilderness' environment but on the Scottish coast. Despite the absence of some of *Robinson Crusoe*'s narrative features, Frank's connection with the conventions of the Crusoe-figure solidifies *The Wasp Factory*'s inclusion in the Robinsonade genre to reveal further parallels.

Throughout this thesis, I refer to protagonists that either emulate or adhere to Robinson Crusoe's characteristics as 'Crusoe-figures' or under the moniker 'Crusoedian'.[8] Each chapter explores aspects of Crusoedian traits and how these are inverted, changed, or questioned by contemporary re-visions. This raises the question of what defines a Crusoedian character. Derrida provides this summary to determine:

> the contour of an island in which a Robinsonian man relates to the animal only for himself, with a view to himself, from his point of view, in his being-for-self. This is how he relates to the animal that he eats, that he domesticates, that he masters, enslaves or exploits as a thing poor in world, that he makes speak like a parrot, whose carnivorous voracity that would devour him alive and without remains he fears, or

[7] Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*: Volume II, p. 198 – 199.
[8] Other terms have been previously utilised to describe the core conventions of Crusoe's character. Gérard Genette uses 'Robinsonian' (*Palimpsests*, p. 230) a term also used by Derrida (*The Beast and the Sovereign*: Volume II, p. 23) who also uses 'Robinsonianism' (*The Beast and the Sovereign*: Volume II, p. 228) as well as Ballard's 'Crusoeism' (as in 'Inverted Crusoeism' that describes a protagonist's deliberate attempts to maroon themselves). I have elected to use Crusoedian to differentiate my definitions.

> even the animal he loves, etc. These would be the structural limits of an insular contour, in a word, the limits of a *Homo Robinsoniensis* who would perceive, who would interpret, who would project everything, the animal in particular, solitarily […] in proportion to the insularity of his interest or his need, even his desire, in any case to his anthropocentric and Robinson-centred phantasm.[9]

Derrida defines Robinsonian as someone or something intrinsically insular and egotistic who experiences the world as a series of exploitable units mediated through self-interest. The nonhuman is viewed as either an extension of self or a threat to self. Human-centric individualism is also at the centre of what I define as Crusoedian, alongside the violence and the threat of violence directed towards otherness. In the final chapter of this thesis, I discuss how the Crusoe-figure or Crusoe character can be remade to favour a holistic worldview that encompasses experiences outside of an individualistic and fundamentally solitary existence. Atwood's Toby is distinct as a Crusoe-figure; she is a castaway and experiences isolation; she is self-reliant, resilient, and a survivalist but Toby's character also purposely diverges from Crusoe's other character traits to move away from the masculine privileged middle-class background.

The texts I have selected for analysis are unified through their relation to the Robinsonade without adhering to specific stylistic guidelines. Gérard Genette's influential *Palimpsests* refers to rewriting Robinsonades as 'the habitual movement of diegetic transposition […] the hypertext transposes the diegesis of its hypotext to bring it up to date and closer to its own audience (in temporal, geographic, or social terms)'.[10] Each primary text

[9] Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*: Volume II, p. 198 – 199.
[10] Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p. 304.

I have selected provides new contexts to understand the Robinsonade and explore its capacity to engage with nonhuman animals and environments.[11]

(1.2) Critical Fields

Predominant critical attention devoted to *Robinson Crusoe* and the Robinsonade has emerged from postcolonial theory with recurring subjects of study including the global economy, sovereignty, individualism, plantations, slavery, and technology. These all factor into my environmental critical reading of the Robinsonade as the issues identified by postcolonial studies inform ecocritical and environmental approaches to contemporary problems. Both fields overlap significantly, as demonstrated by Huggan and Tiffin's *Postcolonial Ecocriticism* and Malcolm Ferdinand's *Decolonial Ecology*. My thesis does not reassess postcolonial scholarship on Robinsonades but instead seeks to add an environmental dimension often overlooked or gestured at in reference to other significant issues.

As Rosi Braidotti indicates regarding Guattari's proposal for 'three fundamental ecologies: that of the environment, of the social nexus, and of the psyche', there is a 'need to create transversal lines through all three of them […] it is crucial, for instance, to see the interconnections among the greenhouse effect, the status of women, racism and xenophobia and frantic consumerism'.[12] There are demonstrable and substantial interlinking issues between environmental criticism and multiple intersecting theories. For example, as Val Plumwood and other ecofeminist theorists indicate, there is a great deal of overlap with gender theories. Plumwood states that:

[11] As Genette highlights, *Robinson Crusoe* is itself a kind of rewriting as Defoe likely took inspiration from the accounts of Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish castaway who lived for four years on a Pacific island called "Más a Tierra". Regardless of this specific origin, *Crusoe* takes other previous castaway narratives intertextually into account. As Defoe was an early exponent of the novel form and *Robinson Crusoe* can be seen as a hypotext for subsequent re-writings and re-visions that use the generic novelistic functions.

[12] Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), p. 93.

> western culture has treated the human/nature relation as a dualism [...] which underlie the environmental crisis, especially the western construction of human identity as 'outside' of nature [...] Reason in the western tradition has been constructed as the privileged domain of the master, who has conceived nature as a wife or subordinate other encompassing and representing the sphere of materiality, subsistence and the feminine which the master has split off and constructed as beneath him. The continual and cumulative overcoming of the domain of nature by reason engenders the western concept of progress and development.[13]

The nonhuman world is the archetypal other to which hegemonic systems used to disenfranchise and disempower marginalised people. The links between ecotheory and other critical approaches encourage an interdisciplinary approach. As such, I have chosen to follow Lawrence Buell's lead by positioning this thesis as 'environmental criticism' rather than strictly 'ecocriticism'. Buell summarises the decision to opt for 'environmental' rather than 'eco–' as:

> "environmental criticism" is a strategic ambiguity […] "environmental" approximates better than "eco" the hybridity of the subject at issue - all "environments" in practice involving fusions of "natural" and "constructed" elements - as well as […] increasing engagements with metropolitan and/or toxified landscapes and with issues of environmental equity […] "environmental criticism" somewhat better captures the interdisciplinary mix of literature-and-environment studies, which has always drawn on the human as well as the natural sciences.[14]

The element of ambiguity Buell indicates allows for wider theoretical application to source from diverse perspectives that might not initially appear to be specifically environmental in their approach. Ecocriticism and other branches of ecotheory develop into other areas of study such as ecofeminist, Marxist ecocriticism, postcolonial ecocriticism, ecopsychology and interrelated geocriticism – all of which provide crucial context to my thesis. As such, it is

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[13] Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 2 – 3.
[14] Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. viii.

more accurate to describe my work as environmental criticism rather than any *one* of the above. I also use other interrelated cultural theorists/philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, and research into animal studies and island studies to provide a more holistic analysis of the Robinsonade. Rather than apply a solely ecocritical approach, I aim to be more flexible. This is partly born from the nature of Robinsonade and the variety of literary styles and periods the genre encompasses.

(1.3) What (and when) is 'The Anthropocene'?

I refer to the 'Anthropocene' throughout the thesis to define a period of human impact on other species and environments chronicled by conventional Robinsonades. However, a definitive consensus on the Anthropocene remains elusive. The current scientifically accepted epoch is the Holocene, which spans over 11 thousand years beginning after the last glacial period and acknowledges the impact of human activity. However, since the Holocene was defined in 1867, anthropogenic change has increased, which calls for a reframing of the current epoch.[15] The term 'The Anthropocene' has become increasingly prominent following the work of Eugene Stoermer and Paul Crutzen in 2000. Crutzen and Stoermer considered the 'still growing impacts of human activities on earth and atmosphere [...] to emphasize the central role of mankind in geology and ecology by proposing to use the term "Anthropocene" for the current geological epoch'.[16] By refocusing our attention on human-generated ecological, atmospheric, and geological changes we are in a better position to stem the tide of anthropogenic effects. This is the impetus behind defining a new epoch with a human signifier.

[15] An epoch defined by human activity has been proposed in various incarnations. The exploration of human and nonhuman relationships in George Perkins's *Man and Nature* (1864) that led to Antonio Stoppani proposing the Anthropozoic Era in 1873. In 1926, Vernadsky, Teilhard de Chardin, and Le Roy propose the Noösphere to describe the role human thought and technology have in shaping the environment and the Earth's future.
[16] Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, 'The "Anthropocene"', *Global Change Newsletter*, 41 (2000), p. 17.

However, the Anthropocene has become a catch-all term with its own issues and ramifications. Alternative terms have been proposed, such as Chthulucene, Capitalocene, and the Plantationocene to refocus attention on the origins of the current ecological crisis as opposed to the more generalised *Anthropos* in Anthropocene.[17] These terms provide useful insights into interspecies relationships in the context of the Robinsonade and critique the widespread use of the 'Anthropocene' that directly challenges the imperialist conventional Robinsonade narrative. Each term has merits that I utilise in the thesis, though each chapter's themes require a broader signifier to encompass the issues explored in the Robinsonade. This makes the Anthropocene useful for environmental criticism as it is a flexible interdisciplinary term. In the final chapter, I discuss the other issues surrounding the Anthropocene in more detail. Though shifting focus towards human changes includes humanity in the interrelated relations between all life, it is essential not to place humans at the centre of life on earth. This inadvertently introduces the same array of problems inherent in the binary human/nonhuman dichotomy that views humanity as a separate entity from nonhuman life. There are other issues with the prefix *Anthropos* in Anthropocene, as Rosi Braidotti indicates, in reference to Dispesh Chakrabarty, if we 'consider the difference in carbon print between richer and poorer nations, is it really fair to speak of the climate change crisis as a common 'human' concern? I would push this further and ask: is it not risky to accept the construction of a negative formation of humanity as a category that stretches to all human beings, *all other difference notwithstanding*?'[18] The prefix *Anthropos* implicitly implicates all of humanity as equally culpable in the ongoing environmental crisis and climate catastrophe despite most harmful practices emerging from the extremely wealthy or private global corporations.

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[17] Jason W. Moore, 'The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 44 (2017), 594-630.
Donna Haraway, Noboru Ishikawa, Gilbert Scott, Kenneth Olwig, Anna L. Tsing & Nils Bubandt, 'Anthropologists Are Talking – About the Anthropocene', *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* (2015).
[18] Braidotti, p. 88.

Alongside the ideological issues with the Anthropocene, it is contestable whether it can function as a specific geological age. Due to the difficulties in defining a specific timeframe, there is currently no agreed-upon commencement point. My thesis does not privilege or attempt to determine any one timeframe, as the proposed dates have their own merits and challenges. For example, considering Defoe's colonial narrative, the 1610 Orbis Spike as a provisional date for the beginning of the Anthropocene isolates a turning point for a new epoch. The Orbis Spike refers to the dip in carbon dioxide caused by the genocide of 50 million Indigenous people in the Americas due to smallpox introduced by European colonists. The subsequent period after the Orbis Spike saw the development of international trade routes, large-scale enslavement and movement of people intercontinentally, the beginnings of a global marketplace and global agriculture, and the transnational movement of nonindigenous plants, animals, diseases, etc. all of which have an impact on Defoe's narrative during increased colonial activity in the 1700s.

As Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin highlight, deciding on a specific date creates an implicit narrative about the Anthropocene. They state that deciding on 'the Orbis spike implies that colonialism, global trade and coal brought about the Anthropocene [...] this highlights social concerns, particularly the unequal power relationships between different groups of people, economic growth, the impacts of globalised trade, and our current reliance on fossil fuels'.[19] This directly parallels *Robinson Crusoe* and the wider Robinsonade, as we witness the effects of colonialism integral to Defoe's narrative have ramifications that are still felt in the present day.

[19] Simon L. Lewis & Mark A. Maslin, 'Defining the Anthropocene', *Nature*, 519 (2015), 171 – 180 (p. 177-178).

(1.4) Human(s), Nonhuman(s), Other(s)

Throughout the thesis, I use the word 'other' to refer to nonhuman animals and environments, but the term is also used to describe othered and marginalised people. I wanted to explore the meaning of 'other' further here and its use as a method of oppression as well as its potential for subversion. Similar comparisons can be found in 'nonhuman' in its implication that all other animals are, in effect, the opposite of humanity. With this in mind, it might seem contrary to the purposes of this thesis to continue using words like other, othered, otherly as well as nonhuman.

Language is limited in what it can express since, as Ferdinand de Saussure asserts, language is 'outside of the individual who can never create nor modify it […] it exists as a sort of contract signed by the members of a community'.[20] This structure impacts our consideration of everything we encounter in the world including notions of the human and nonhuman as well as what is meant by an 'other'. As Saussure argues in reference to 'the idea "father" and the idea "mother"; two signs, each having a signified and a signifier, are not different but only distinct. Between them there is only *opposition*. The entire mechanism of language […] is based on oppositions of this kind and on the phonic and conceptual differences that they imply'.[21] A world constructed through language in the system Saussure describes is polarising, the emphasis placed on distinction—something essentially set apart, rather than simply or only different. In reference to 'semiological difference' Derrida asks:

> what was it that Saussure in particular reminded us of? That "language [which consists only of differences] is not a function of the speaking subject". This implies that the subject (self-identical or even conscious of self-identity, self-conscious) is

[20] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), ed. by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye and trans. by Wade Baskin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), p. 14.
[21] Saussure, p. 25.

> inscribed in the language, that he is a "function" of language. He becomes a speaking subject only by conforming his speech.[22]

Baked into the core of our systems of language is the distinction between people and other animals. As Karen Barad indicates, the 'knowing subject is enmeshed in a thick web of representations such that the mind cannot see its way to objects that are now forever out of reach and all that is visible is the sticky problem of humanity's own captivity within language'.[23] Humanist philosophy, which has dominated Western thought since before the Enlightenment period and has continued into the modern day, asserts human/nonhuman binary. This distinction has been fundamental in establishing human identity and human exceptionalism as separate from other animals—as such there is not an authoritative or official alternative term for 'nonhuman' that conveys our differences to other animals without reinforcing a distinction.

Alternatives such as more-than-human, posthuman, beyond-human, and transhuman have been proposed to describe animals other than the humanistic human. However, in the context of the Robinsonade, I have elected to continue with nonhuman/nonhumanity to explore the binary division further to question its purpose and origin as well as what its application means today. Generally, nonhumanity does not have the capacity to describe itself in human terms. Language becomes a self-defining tool for people and in that process, other animals are used to self-identify through opposition. I use 'nonhuman' as a means of recognising distinctiveness rather than an absolute difference from humanity, even though this often necessitates referring to other animals and environments in the collective.

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[22] Jacques Derrida, 'Différance', in *Margins of Philosophy* trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 5.
[23] Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28 (2008), 801 – 831 (p. 811).

As Donna Haraway asserts, 'the Animal is forever positioned on the other side of an unbridgeable gap, a gap that reassures the Human of his excellence by the very ontological impoverishment of a lifeworld that cannot be its own end or know its own condition'.[24] Creating an ideologically dichotomous 'other' affects every aspect of how we construct the world materially and conceptually as well as how we formulate individual identities. Authoritarian hegemonic orders ideologically insist on a binary 'us' and 'them', using the 'other' as someone and something to define what is ostensibly the norm. This process of interpellation assumes we have some sort of standard to contrast 'Other(s)' against. Western hierarchical binary opposites (e.g., Man/Woman; Man/Animal; Culture/Nature; East/West; Rich/Poor, etc.) habitually privilege white, wealthy men (resembling, in essence, a canonical Crusoe). As we are aware, what is allegedly the standard to model our way of being on is in reality only a small portion of wider society and what and who are seen as 'other' constitute a global majority.

Describing and defining alterity can impose a conceptual framework that insists on some sort of inherent hegemonic blueprint that is opposed to an innate other. But this process is not innate or instinctive, rather it is an ideological tool used to privilege one part of the above oppositional binaries. In this social model, identity is largely predicated on negation, i.e., Crusoe is human because he is *not* nonhuman. There is clearly a fundamental flaw in this style of self-identification, one that manifests itself on the desert island—intentionally or unintentionally. The hard lines drawn between ostensible diametric groups are muddied, more than this they are permeable, shifting, and unsuitable to life outside of the boundaries of human-made society. Defoe's Crusoe is quick to try and re-establish the distinction between himself and the nonhuman, but the foundations of a once secure identity are forever destabilised. The exploration of this destabilisation is a recurrent preoccupation for

[24] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), p. 77.

contemporary Robinsonade re-visions—whether they explore alternatives or interrogate Crusoedian perspectives by demonstrating their limitations.

The societal structures and power dynamics described above are maintained through language but reinforced through violence.[25] Dehumanising and animalising language is used, both historically and currently, to justify violence and exploitation of any number of different people. This requires nonhuman animals to be kept as the opposite of humanity to ensure the marginalising and repressive effect of denying another person's humanity. Huggan and Tiffin recognise this process along with its specific difficulties, stating that:

> dominant European discourses have expressed that dominance by constructing others—both people and animals—as animal, both philosophically and representationally. The history of western racism and its imbrication with discourses of speciesism; the use of animals as a basis for human social division; and, above all perhaps, the metaphorisation and deployment of 'animal' as a derogatory term in genocidal and marginalising discourses – all of these make it difficult even to discuss animals without generating a profound unease […] in many postcolonial contexts today.[26]

Being othered is an alienating process of marginalisation that culminates in disenfranchisement, threat of violence and actualised violence. Western misconceptions of human exceptionalism base their identity on being *not* nonhuman and, as Huggan and Tiffin indicate, these distinctions are used to justify atrocities to other humans. Structures of power rely on the absolute separation and antagonism between humanity and nonhumanity that is posited as 'natural' to explain their exploitation of the 'other'. As Robert T. Tally Jr. notes:

> The long arc of history demonstrates the degree to which the natural-versus-human distinction is untenable at best; worse, it is an intentionally obfuscatory tactic

[25] Antonio Gramsci, 'Hegemony (1930 – 32)', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology* ed. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), p. 673.
Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (1968)', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology* ed. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), p. 693.
[26] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 135.

> designed to prevent meaningful consideration of the inextricably intertwined fates of natural and social spaces.[27]

Maintaining the status quo inside hegemonic structures of oppression means limiting the possibility of societal progress. By splitting from these structures and considering the benefits of alterity, we can explore other ways of being that do not necessitate existing inside repressive systems of control. In the conventional Robinsonade, Crusoe is the societal 'norm' (white, middle-class, male) and chooses to recreate the hierarchical society he has been cut off from. Contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade offer alternatives to Crusoe's insular world while also mapping the limits of its interiority.[28]

Accepting that language is limited in its capacity to represent different forms of life is a necessary step in re-visioning and approaching an anthropocentric genre like the Robinsonade from a new critical perspective. People are one part of a wider network of interactions and to understand those interactions we narrate our experiences. Almost inevitably, ideas of islands—particularly the literary representations of the desert island—are in many ways humanised but are not always necessarily human-centric.

(1.5) Out-of-placeness, an Anatopia

In chapter three, I use two new terms—anatopia and anatopic—that I have devised from a pre-existing term, Anatopism. The following is a brief definition of the two terms as chapter three goes into more detail regarding their application in relation to desert island fiction. I define an anatopia as both a world out-of-place and as the sensation of out-of-placeness. It can describe things that appear incongruous with their surrounding context and a person who

[27] Robert T. Tally Jr., *Ecocriticism and Geocriticism: Overlapping Territories in Environmental and Spatial Literary Studies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 5.
[28] As I indicate in the following chapters, contemporary re-visions of the Robinsonade use the structures and narrative devices of the conventional Robinsonade in order to critique the capitalist and colonial vision of the world expounded in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

is not in place (not at home or comfortable) within a given environment. The castaway on a desert island experiences a definitive sense of severance from their previous society and attempts are made to repair their lost connection to familiarity by constructing things that now appear out-of-place, that stand as nostalgic reminders of loss. As such, the island itself is rendered into an anatopia.

Being anatopic and the processes that create an anatopia have multiple ramifications that are useful in understanding unheimlich sensations that are experienced in specific spaces and by particular people or groups of people outside of the fictional desert island. The terms can be applied to a variety of physical, psychological, and virtual spaces to help us understand the changing world that we live in today. The rate of climate change renders some environments unrecognisable and unfamiliar and causes both people and other animals to become dislodged from their previous homes and thrown into a transient state of out-of-placeness and homelessness. As well as global climate change, the rate of development and building evidently has a dramatic effect on the environment (such as declines in biodiversity, severe weather, climate change etc.) and creates an anatopic world in a state of flux and impermanence.

Anatopia/anatopic are also useful terms when we consider how we dwell, both physically and psychologically, and how these states inform each other as well as the wider ecological impact of that exchange. A home and all its associated meanings of security, comfort, and belonging are vital to all life. How we construct a home, where we live, what it is physically made from as well as the more invisible emotional threads that hold it together should not come at a cost to other life. I consider how Crusoe dwells through his conceptualisation of a home and how the physical construction of that home damages the environment around him. This becomes analogous to our own attempts to secure wholly human spaces that refute the presence of the nonhuman outside of controlled variables. In

relation to racialised language and processes of othering, theorist Sara Ahmed identifies that 'in everyday language […] when we don't recognize people, they are called strangers […] I offer an alternative model that suggests we recognize some people *as* strangers, and that "some bodies" more than others are recognizable as strangers, as bodies that are "out of place"'.[29] We can apply a similar process to our understanding of nonhuman animals who are positioned as definitive others, the antithesis of humanity.

Currently, homes and buildings establish an extension of a human self that consecrates a conceptual and physical division between the human and nonhuman to formally separate what we consider homely, comfortable, and known with what may be unheimlich, wild, and unknown. Buildings, though technically nonhuman in a literal sense, are consistently anthropomorphised and mark the barriers between the inner self and the outer world. In cementing a concrete distinction between human and nonhuman, inside and outside, an abject uncanny other is formed to become the manifestation of human anxieties. To give a specific example, if we consider a typical garden—a space in which we should be encouraging nonhuman life—they are often sealed, hermetic, and fenced off. Allowing a small gap in the fence, literally and metaphorically, for nonhumans to use does not undermine its physical integrity but it appears as a conceptual gap that lets a world outside in, a world that currently appears as a stranger surrounding a home's interior. By dissolving perimeters that mark out human-only spaces which expand at the expense of the nonhuman we may begin to find new ways to co-habit space and remove the anatopic disconnection to the world around us.

[29] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (London: Duke University Press, 2006), p. 141.

(1.6) Islands: solitary/multiplicity, connection/severance

Thinking about islands can open new possible ways of being and offer a chance at reinvention as evidenced by the many variations of fictionalised desert islands that are continually re-imagined. Its contours change shape continually, but literary and cultural desert islands are dominated by a unifying theme: isolation. The notion that *all* islands, specifically actual geographical islands, are defined by their isolation imposed by a 'hard' boundary between land and sea has been repeatedly contested. Definimg islands primarily by their isolation leads to real islanders being stereotyped as insular, conservative, and 'backward'.[30] Current research in island studies emphasises relational and connective themes that move away from the potentially regressive associations above.[31] How we encounter islands literally and literarily impacts our perception of them as a physical and psychological space, particularly if we are viewing them from an outside perspective.

In desert island narratives, the sea presents a literal borderline for a captive castaway who has no immediate means of escape. The sea establishes an imaginary or conceptual boundary. The shoreline, though very much physically connected to the rest of the world, formalises distinctive human notions of an interior and exterior. Though as Elizabeth DeLoughrey highlights, 'no island is an isolated isle […] a system of archipelagraphy—that is, a historiography that considers chains of islands in fluctuating relationship to their surrounding seas, islands and continents—provides a more appropriate metaphor for reading island cultures'.[32] To paraphrase John Donne, no one is an island entirely of itself, and no island is alone in the reciprocal archipelago. Even on the Robinsonade's deserted island that

[30] Sarah Nimführ and Laura Otto, 'Doing research on, with and about the island: Reflections on Islandscape', *Island Studies Journal*, 15 (2020), 185 – 204.
[31] Jonathan Pugh, 'Relationality and island studies in the Anthropocene', *Island Studies Journal*, 13 (2018), 93 – 110.
[32] Elizabeth DeLoughrey, "The litany of islands, the rosary of Archipelagoes": Caribbean and Pacific archipelagraphy', *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, 32 (2001), 22 – 51, p. 23.

is seemingly enclosing, imprisoning, and solitary, the interconnection between Crusoe's island and the rest of the globe is uncovered when we consider the history of colonialism, global economies/trade routes, mass enslavement and forced migration.

Speaking of islands in a purely symbolic and totalising sense risks reducing specific and special environments to superficial surface metaphors that do not accurately encapsulate the reality of a given place—if any objective or universal representation could be assumed. This is pertinent for our understanding of any environment but is acutely relevant regarding islands that have been ubiquitously fictionalised. Developments in island studies emphasise the identities and the specificities of place that might inadvertently be subsumed in attempts to make a larger framework that denotes a broader notion of 'islandness'. Pete Hay stresses the risks involved in the inclination to 'over-theorize, and in the doing smear out real lives and real islands into the bland non-being of abstraction'.[33] In differentiating material islands from the 'island-idea' or the 'island effect', Hay asserts that these symbolic 'sites are, however, hard – and distinctly – edged, their borders constituting barriers that are not easily crossed, and such island signifiers as 'isolated', 'vulnerable', 'contained', and 'disconnected' are deemed applicable'.[34] It is vital not to negate the unique conditions, cultures, and experiences of real islands. Hay's attempt to differentiate the geographical island and the metaphorical island may help to maintain some distinction between the island-idea and the island reality. On the metaphorical island, the intersection of the sea and land creates a seemingly immutable and encircling boundary that separates the island from the rest of the world. However, Hay's discussion does not account for castaway fiction where enclosure and isolation on the deserted island is almost *the* recurrent theme where discussions of relationality and connectivity are initially blocked by the quality of desertedness. For

[33] Pete Hay, 'What the Sea Portends: A Reconsideration of Contested Island Tropes', *Island Studies Journal*, 2 (2013) 209 – 232, p. 212.
[34] Ibid, p. 214.

Robinsonades that are still connected to a landmass, such as *The Wasp Factory*, authors still depict the urge to pull away from the mainland to return to the isolation of the island.

Developments in the *Island Studies Journal* emphasise the importance of interdisciplinary research, including literary humanities. However, largely absent from the Journal's vast body of work is a sustained discussion responding to the Robinsonade, *Robinson Crusoe,* and castaway narratives more generally. This may be in part because the *Island Studies Journal* focuses on dispelling the stereotype that islands are insular by addressing the reciprocal relationship islands have with the rest of the world, whereas the literary tradition of the conventional Robinsonade accentuates the relation between isolation and islands. As discussed in reference to Hay, island studies have also resisted overly theoretical or symbolic representations of islands in order to focus on the individual and unique existence of place. My thesis addresses these insular representations and the significance of desert islands and castaway narratives in relation to our responses to the material world. In order to better understand our relationship to islands and the nonhuman world, we must analyse the ways in which they have been imagined.

The different types of textual islands that exist in twentieth and twenty-first century Robinsonades are many and varied. As such, they may not conform to a formal and rigorous geographical definition of an island but rather reply on our imaginative associations of what an island is. Robinsonade islands range from the tropical 'wasteland' Crusoe is marooned on (replete with palm trees) to alien planets, abandoned space stations, nuclear test sites, suburban houses, and traffic islands. They take on the associations of islandness gleaned from Crusoe-esque castaway narratives such as isolation, separation, and a return to the supposedly primordial. Focusing on these themes might seem contrary to my aims in writing this thesis as well as the agenda of Island Studies and ecotheoretical positions, both disciplines currently practicing a more 'relational' turn that moves away from viewing nonhumanity as a static

concept or symbol. More specifically, Island Studies challenge the perception of islands as hermetic and adrift from the continental world. As such, my interpretation of islands and their textual representations endeavours to recognise their existence outside of a representation of human self-identity as their own separate entity. Nevertheless, the Crusoedian desire to be separate and exceptional is reflected in the way Crusoe-esque characters view the island, as separate and isolated, and requires analysis.

For example, as I explore in the following chapter, the representation of the island in Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is often dependent on the boy-castaway's perception of space. The dialogue indicates a depiction of space that oscillates between viewing the island as ownable and malleable to something hostile, threatening, and malignant. It is important to read these representations *as* representations rather than faithful or accurate accounts of material places. As Elizabeth McMahon and André Bénédicte indicate 'spatiality is always culturally mediated. Like all human experiences […] channelled through the perceptive apparatus of language systems and the rhetorical Unconscious, bringing material and imaginary domains into a relational dynamic of relentless co-constitution'.[35] The extent to which these representations have any bearing on the agency of real spaces is in how they reveal the human perception of space and how this can be used to adapt approaches to space and place. Understanding where the motivations behind these representations emanate from is crucial to my approach to ecotheory and Island Studies. In analysing these motivations, we can begin to challenge our preconceptions and restore our connection to the nonhuman in the material world. It is necessary then to engage with the imaginative conception of islands.

In antithesis to Hay, who is reluctant to over-empower the 'island-idea', Deleuze asserts that 'the essence of the deserted island is imaginary and not actual, mythological and

[35] Elizabeth McMahon and André Bénédicte, 'Literature and the literary gaze', in *The Routledge International Handbook of Island Studies* ed. by Godfrey Baldacchino (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), p. 296.

not geographical […] literature is the attempt to interpret […] the myths we no longer understand, at the moment we no longer understand them, since we no longer know how to dream them or reproduce them'.[36] The desert island's mythological essence has a powerful hold over the human imagination. Examining our fascination with spaces like islands allows for further insight into the human and nonhuman as literary desert islands are attempts to articulate the changes in our relationships with other animals and environments. Deleuze articulates the allure of desert islands:

> Dreaming of islands—whether with joy or in fear, it doesn't matter—is dreaming of pulling away, of being already separate, far from any continent, but the island is also that toward which one drifts; other islands originated in the ocean, but *the island is also the origin*, radical and absolute.[37]

I explore the abjection regarding islands, the draw they hold over the human imagination that inspires joy and/or fear, in my third chapter. They possess this ambiguity while remaining, as Deleuze highlights, radical and absolute—something total, definite, and unconditional but also revisionary. My thesis is primarily concerned with the literary island. There are references to our actual experience of real-world material equivalents, but the main purpose of the thesis is to explore our imaginative engagement with the nonhuman world without the restriction of narrowing down a specific geographical location. There is no real 'Robinson Crusoe Island', besides the book's namesake (formerly called Más a Tierra).[38] Defoe's literary island is imagined at the base of the Orinoco River between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic, but its true location is of course imaginary, a fantasy in which colonial desires and fears are displaced. *Robinson Crusoe* enacts the anthropocentric impulse to be

[36] Gilles Deleuze, 'Desert Islands', in *Desert Islands and Other Texts* 1953 – 1974, ed. by David Lapoujade and trans. by Michael Taormina (Paris: Semiotext(e), 2004), p. 12.
[37] Deleuze, 'Desert Islands', p. 10. Deleuze underscores the different ways islands are formed and their relation to their spirit or *élan* e.g., the emergence of oceanic islands and the drift of continental formations alters our perception of them.
[38] Más a Tierra was the island the mariner, and possible inspiration for *Robinson Crusoe*, Alexander Selkirk was marooned on—though its location is over 2,000 miles from Defoe's fictional location.

exceptional, separate, and in sovereign control of the immediate environment. Subsequent adaptations of the Robinsonade explore new visions of islands and animal relations based on this same state of separation.

In considering islands we return to the idea of plurality. As Pippa Marland indicates, the literary desert island can summon a series of seemingly conflicting binary associations:

> they include utopia/dystopia; paradise/prison; Eden/Hell; generative spaces/islands of death; places of spiritual transformation/sites of savagery; fully-formed microcosms of ideal societies/tabulae rasae upon which our ideas can be imprinted; sites of discovery/sites of experimentation, and so on.[39]

What we are initially met with on desert islands stems from preconceptions that have been brought from the mainland—what stays with us after the shipwreck depends on our desire for change or need for conformity. As Jonathan Pugh and David Chandler indicate 'islands are understood as potential amplifying sites which hold differences and relations often in tension or contradiction'.[40] Material and literary islands contain within them seemingly endless possibility and enable us to envision new realities or play out old fantasies. The next chapter of this thesis explores Golding's critique of the colonial fantasy island as well as Banks' gothic exploration of hypermasculinity in conventional Robinsonades.

[39] Pippa Marland, 'The Island imagination: An Ecocritical Study of 'Islandness' in Selected Literature of the British and Irish Archipelago', (Doctoral Thesis, University of Worcester, 2016), p. 47.
[40] Jonathan Pugh and David Chandler, *Anthropocene Islands: Entangled Worlds* (London: University of Westminster Press, 2021), p. 143.

Chapter two
Violence in the Robinsonade
Hunting, sacrifice, and ecophobia

In the conventional Robinsonade, violence directed towards nonhuman animals and environments may begin as a means of survival but extends beyond subsistence to reveal hidden motives. A prevailing preoccupation for Crusoe-esque characters is the need to dominate and control their immediate environment. As Derrida recognises, *Robinson Crusoe* narrates an 'assertion of mastery (of self, over slaves, over savages and over beasts […] without speaking of women)'.[1] Derrida isolates Crusoe's desire for androcentric sovereign rule, a recurrent fixation in subsequent examples of the conventional Robinsonade, a rule maintained by systematic violence. In contemporary re-visions, the stimulus behind killing is reassessed. Crusoe-figures in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* interrogate motives behind killing that develop beyond resource objectives to include ritualistic sacrifice, sexualised violence, and phobic anxiety prompted by a fear of otherness.[2]

The primary reason for killing might initially be for food as conventional castaways are often deprived of dependable food sources and rely instead on a diet of hunted animals, foraged fruit, and salvaged provisions to subsist.[3] Although the hunt for other animals as sustenance is at the forefront of the castaway's concerns, Golding's boy-castaways in *Lord of the Flies* reveal a cultural—not only physical—reliance on meat. They signify a dependency on flesh as a symbol of anthropocentric and masculine dominance over the nonhuman world. This changes how we approach the question of who is eating and who is eaten, who becomes

[1] Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign volume II*, p. 28.
[2] William Golding, *Lord of Flies* (London: Faber & Faber, 2005).
Iain Banks, *The Wasp Factory* (London: Abacus, 2000).
[3] The subsequent chapter, 'Aspects of dwelling, Anatopia in the Robinsonade', explores the introduction of arable crops and farming that is a recurrent theme in both conventional and re-visionary Robinsonades.

food to sustain the consumer's physical body as well as emblematic of their authority. This is central to our understanding of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and subsequent Robinsonades that aspire to emulate colonial adventure novels. Desert islands exist outside of societal rules and as such the distinction between the consumed and the consumer becomes tenuous. Without the supporting structure of civilisation to enforce a boundary between humans and nonhumans, the Crusoedian castaway asserts authority through several different devices such as violence and the performative threat of violence. The fixation with securing meat in *Lord of the Flies* goes beyond the basic need to survive and is fetishised to the extent that the act of consuming and the assimilation of animal flesh is prioritised over other survival skills that ensure safety or enable escape.

Derrida describes the fetishisation of meat in the term carnophallogocentrism, which conveys the imbalanced human and nonhuman relationships that remain biased in favour of human wants.[4] As this chapter will demonstrate, the performative act of meat-eating is laden with masculine symbolism that values individual desire and becomes an assertion of power over the 'other'. In *Lord of the Flies*, hunting fuses with masculine anthropocentric attitudes as the hunted animal is subjected to culturally reinforced and accepted violence. Removing familiar cultural practices like hunting and meat-eating to the desert island highlights the imbalance in human/nonhuman relations that relies on subjugation. The abject space of the island and Golding's visceral descriptions of sexualised violence performed by adolescents recontextualise accepted behaviours to appear horrifying. Jack and his hunters in *Lord of the Flies* manifest an obsession with killing under the guise of hunting for food that reaches beyond the resource objective of meat. This is also true for Frank in *The Wasp Factory*, who never hunts to eat as all food consumed over the course of the narrative is delivered from the

[4] Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority', in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice,* ed. by Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld & David Carlson (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 38.

mainland. By removing Frank's need to subsist on hunted animals, Banks underscores how the physical act of eating is not the only motivation for killing and not the only method of consuming. Hunting is decontextualised from the meat-as-sustenance reasoning and becomes an imposition of human will onto other animals and the environment.

As well as the depiction of hunting, this chapter assesses Banks and Golding's use of sacrifice and ritual that explores the Crusoedian desire for control over the nonhuman world oriented around a central human figure. This chapter explores the symbolic significance of blood as a shared consanguinity, or blood-relation, between humans and other animals that is utilised to perform sacrificial practices. This blood-bond is highlighted by Tobias Menely and Margaret Ronda in their term 'red ecology'. They state that 'while other species differ from humans in their behaviours and bodily forms, their essential likeness becomes vividly evident when the shared substance of life spills from the body'.[5] Menely and Ronda draw on the work of the anthropologist Walter Burkert and his text *Homo Necans* to explore the links between human psychology, sacrifice, and hunting. As Burkert recognises, the 'similarity of animals with man is recognized in killing and slaughtering […] most of all, the warm running of blood was the same'.[6] In the canonical Robinsonade, blood does not engender this sense of creaturely affinity, but either catalyses the desire to hunt or else is expunged from the narrative to create the illusion of bloodlessness. This aspect of the Robinsonade is explored in contemporary re-visions that empathically emphasise the shared animal capacity to bleed while highlighting the Crusoedian fear of being consumed physically and symbolically.

Considering consanguinity promotes two competing concepts. It recognises our similarity to other nonhuman life, our own future death and the fragility of our life as a

[5] Tobias Menely & Margaret Ronda, 'Red', in *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2013), p. 25.
[6] Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, trans. by Peter Bing (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 84.

consumer that can just as easily tip into being consumed, all of which may encourage a more empathetic relationship with other life.[7] As Beth Carruthers indicates, 'part of dwelling within such a system of reciprocity is that all life, all living beings, are also always more than food, more than their potential use to another being'.[8] Conversely, this bloody realisation encourages us to strive to overcome our animal origins and refute any possibility of an inevitable consumption. As Carruthers explains, 'the dual fears of death and of being eaten […] seem particularly strong in Western culture, or perhaps this is because in this culture we have done so much to deny, disarm, cheat, or otherwise manipulate natural systems with a goal of eventually never experiencing death, and certainly of never being eaten'.[9] Conventional Robinsonades demonstrate a pervasive fear of being consumed that culminates in a recurrent vein of ecophobic violence. Fear of consumption encourages Crusoe-like castaways to use various devices to enforce human order and ensure their position of sovereignty over the nonhuman. However, acknowledging that we are part of a wider ecological system and are also capable of being consumed may inspire changes in the relationship between humans and nonhumans as the boundaries constructed around separate species are dissolved. This is explored by contemporary Robinsonades that use this fear of consumption to question our relationships with the nonhuman.

The loss of control, or the potential threat that it could be lost, is a manifestation of ecophobic narratives in the conventional Robinsonade that reacts against the unknown world of the desert island. This facet is interrogated by contemporary re-visions, in *The Wasp Factory* Frank's hatred of the sea exemplifies how fear emerges from a loss of control or the knowledge that there are uncontrollable forces. Frank's sacrificial practices attempt to combat

[7] Val Plumwood, 'Human vulnerability and the experience of being prey', *Quadrant*, 39 (1995), 29 – 34.
[8] Beth Carruthers, 'Intimate Strife: The Unbearable Intimacy of Human–Animal Relations', in *Leonardo's Choice: Genetic Technologies and Animals*, ed. by Carol Gigliotti (New York: Springer, 2009), p. 50.
[9] Ibid, p. 49.

the possibility of being consumed by an overpowering nonhuman force by manifesting human will through sacrifice. Another pervasive anxiety related to consumption in the Robinsonade is the fear of forests. Golding's critique of imperialistic Robinsonades explores the anxieties related to forests/jungles in light of the connection between imperialism and children's castaway fiction. As Diana Loxley highlights, there is a 'fundamental ideological relationship between island fictions […] and children's literature […] the importance of this correspondence lies in the overtly educational purposes to which these texts were put'.[10] There is a significant xenophobic and racial component to the environments described in conventional Robinsonades that project ecophobic fears onto the pre-colonial island. *Lord of the Flies* articulates culturally inherited prejudices examined through the boy-castaways' fear of the island's jungle expressed through ecophobic language and imagery. Golding's depiction of the forest accentuates the tenuous distinction in the prey and predator binary that becomes fluid and subject to change on the desert island. The figure of 'the beast' in *Lord of the Flies* also attracts ecophobic language as an amalgamation of nonhuman animals associated with common phobias such as a giant snake, a huge bat, or a monstrous sea creature. The boys' imaginative anxious projections are linked with culturally reinforced human fears that the nonhuman environment conceals a hidden and deadly threat. The perception of nonhumanity as demonic or otherly—inhuman as well as nonhuman—relates to a distrust of nonhuman animals in Christian theology and a postlapsarian fear of an destabilised human/nonhuman hierarchy.

The fear of nonhumanness is a driving motivation for Crusoedian characters to instil human order onto a non-compliant environment. Fundamental to the assertion of human

[10] Diana Loxley, *Problematic Shores: The Literature of Islands* (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), p. 73.

authority and order in the canonical Robinsonade is authoritarian violence. As Christopher Loar underscores:

> Crusoe repeats the process of violent display and disavowal. As his efforts on the island gradually move from mere survival towards Christian virtue and the civilizing mission […] violence remains at the core of his civilizing project, despite his own protests to the contrary.[11]

Characteristic of the conventional Robinsonade, the image of the so-called wilderness is born from a culturally learnt xenophobia and ecophobia associated with the unknown dangers of the exoticized desert island that is innately 'immoral' and in need of civilising. As Alex Mackintosh recognises, in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* a power vacuum opens through 'the absence of political and human sovereignty' as such 'the very land itself becomes a source of anxiety'.[12] Both Banks and Golding's exploration of hunting and sacrificial practices foreground Crusoedian attempts to imaginatively affix the impression of control onto the environment. The anxiety in both texts in regard to the sea, forests, and nonhuman animals emphasises the Crusoedian fear of being both physically eaten as well as psychologically consumed.

Section one: Hunting

Conventional Robinsonades are predominately androcentric with some notable exceptions.[13] However, these 'female Crusoes' are primarily gendered interpretations that rely on idealised versions of femininity. As Michelle Smith indicates, early female Robinsonades 'exhibit domestic skills, aesthetic appreciation of nature, and little capacity to adapt to rugged

[11] Christopher Loar, 'How to Say Things with Guns: Military Technology and the Politics of *Robinson Crusoe*', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 19 (2006), 1 – 20 (p. 13).
[12] Alex Mackintosh, 'Crusoe's Abattoir: Cannibalism and Animal Slaughter in *Robinson Crusoe*', *Critical Quarterly*, 53 (2011), 24 – 43 (p. 26).
[13] Michelle J. Smith, 'Nineteenth-century Female Crusoes: Rewriting the Robinsonade for Girls', in *Victorian Settler Narratives* ed. by Tamara S. Wagner (London: Pickering & Chatto Ltd., 2011), pp. 165 – 176.

environments'.[14] Similarly, conventional Robinsonades that feature male protagonists follow heteronormative gendered interpretations of masculinity that use hunting and meat-eating to confirm their protagonists' male identity. Throughout *Robinson Crusoe,* profits are derived from hunting as Crusoe gains wealth, food, and clothing in an exploitative pattern that prioritises the wants and desires of male European colonists over the lives of nonhuman animals, environments, and non-European people.[15] The treatment of hunting and its descriptions in earlier examples of the Robinsonade differ from contemporary re-visions. Golding and Banks recentre our attention on the visceral viscera hunting and sacrifice produce, whereas earlier Robinsonades illustrate a more bloodless depiction of killing.

Crusoe and Crusoe-like figures are self-interested, anthropocentric, and embody a disregard for the lives of 'others' who are viewed as expendable. Defoe's Crusoe hunts pragmatically for skins and food, yet also kills without any specified or outwardly expressed purpose. As Mackintosh highlights, finding himself stranded on the desert island, 'Crusoe begins to reassert his sovereignty over the brute creation with a powerfully symbolic act. He shoots 'a great Bird' sitting on a tree, remarking: 'I believe it was the first Gun that had been fir'd there since the Creation of the World'.[16] This final phrase indicates the repercussions of firing of a gun, the amalgamation of human engineering and violence, in a space that was previously free from European colonialism. It issues an aggressive assertion of Crusoe's sovereignty over the island and its inhabitants. As Friday is indoctrinated into the ideological structure of Crusoe's island hierarchy, Crusoe shoots a domesticated parrot to demonstrate

[14] Smith, p. 171.
[15] These patterns of exploitation will be explored further in chapter four, 'The Robinsonade in the Anthropocene'. I discuss the role of plantation (in both the colonial period as well as in a current contemporary context) in furthering the current climate emergency and perpetrating slavery and genocide.
[16] Mackintosh, p. 26.

how to use a gun. The following passage from Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* illustrates how violence is used physically and symbolically as Crusoe relates that:

> I loaded my Gun […] I call'd [Friday] to me again […] pointing to the Parrot, and to my Gun, and to the Ground under the Parrot […] immediately he saw the Parrot fall, he stood like one frighted […] because he did not see me put any Thing into the Gun; but thought that there must be some wonderful Fund of Death and Destruction in that Thing, able to kill Man, Beast, Bird, or any Thing near, or far off […] if I would have let him, he would have worshipp'd me and my Gun: As for the Gun it self, he would not so much as touch it for several Days after; but would speak to it […] which, as I afterwards learn'd of him, was to desire it not to kill him.[17]

This marks Friday's indoctrination into the ideology of colonial violence as Crusoe and his gun deliver death to anything opposing his rule over the island. Violence is used to subdue threats to Crusoe's sovereignty and, as Mackintosh states, 'any consideration of sovereignty in *Robinson Crusoe* must take account of the nonhuman animals who are Crusoe's first "subjects" […] political sovereignty is often linked to the divinely ordained sovereignty of humans over other species, expressed above all in the right to kill them for meat'.[18] Exercising the supposed sovereign right to kill and eat other animals can function on a purely practical level but also indicates further significance as the symbolic consumption of meat is emblematic of human dominance.

In conventional Robinsonades, factors of morality are not considered in matters concerning the nonhuman. In this manner, Defoe's Crusoe typifies the colonial narrative of appropriation and exploitation concerning colonised spaces. As Joseph Bristow indicates, the connection between colonialism and the depiction of non-Europeans in adolescent adventure stories prejudiced young European readers' views of colonised people and places.[19] In the

[17] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 178.
[18] Mackintosh, p. 25.
[19] Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventure in a Man's World* (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991), p. 93.

conventional Robinsonade, Crusoe's assault on nonhuman animals and environments stems from a disregard for the nonhuman as well as a phobic reaction to the 'other' and a desire to assert Euro-centric sovereignty.

Both Golding and Banks depart from earlier Robinsonades through their depiction of the psychological reaction to killing other animals that draws on our reaction to the abject by-products killing creates. Golding critiques imperialistic adventure fiction in the harrowing depictions of animal viscera and the psychological changes the young castaways undergo in their pursuit of anthropocentric desires enshrined in adolescent adventure fiction. In *The Wasp Factory,* Frank's relationship with the environment and other animals is exaggeratedly antagonistic, parodying earlier Robinsonades that embody Crusoe-esque masculine violence typified by attempts to control the space around them through force.

(2.1) **Hunting**
masculinised meat-eating cultures in *Lord of the Flies*

Lord of the Flies accentuates the Robinsonade's emphasis on obtaining and eating meat.[20] Before encountering any other animal life, the boys express a propensity towards hunting. The isolated island—reminiscent of so many familiar boyhood adventure stories—is identified as an ideal space to enact their urge to hunt. As John Mackenzie recognises, the hunting narrative located in 'the natural world, particularly the exotic natural world of foreign climes […] offered seemingly endless opportunities for adventure […] to offer violence, gore and death in what seemed to be an acceptable context, the assertion of human will and power in the animal kingdom'.[21] The boys' initial eagerness to hunt and master the environment recalls R. M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858) and similar adventure stories critiqued

[20] This section will predominately focus on hunting and meat-eating cultures present in *Lord of the Flies,* as Frank in *The Wasp Factory* never hunts for food. Frank's motivations will be addressed in later in this chapter.
[21] John M. Mackenzie, 'Hunting and the natural world in juvenile literature', in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature,* ed. by Jeffery Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 147.

through Golding's depiction of imperialistic 'boys-own' narratives. As Minnie Singh elaborates, Golding 'seeks to dispel this intertextual glamour with grim realism; it both participates in and criticizes the history of the adventure story, whose originating canonical text is *Robinson Crusoe*'.[22] Golding complicates the acceptability of masculine violence and desire conveyed through hunting and meat-eating in his animate description of nonhuman animals that chafes against the concrete distinctions between humans and nonhumans established in anthropocentric conventional Robinsonades.

In *Lord of the Flies,* the boys' arguments in favour of hunting emphasise the 'need' and 'want' for meat. Following their first contact with a piglet on the island, these feelings intensify to become *the* prevailing preoccupation that side-lines ideas of rescue and escape.[23] Despite their enthusiasm to begin hunting, the boys' first encounter with a piglet ends in failure as they find themselves unable to kill. In the following extract, Golding draws our attention to the piglet as a living, feeling animal capable of experiencing terror and suffering. The actual consequences of killing are brought to our attention as the boys process the ramifications killing might have:

> They found a piglet caught in a curtain of creepers […] in all the madness of extreme terror. Its voice was thin, needle-sharp and insistent. The three boys rushed forward and Jack drew his knife again with a flourish […] There came a pause, a hiatus, the pig continued to scream […] the blade continued to flash […] the pause was only long enough for them to understand what an enormity the downward stroke would be.[24]

This extract reassesses our understanding of nonhuman animals in the context of earlier Robinsonades such as *The Coral Island* or Jules Verne's *Two Years' Vacation* (1888) whose

[22] Minnie Singh, 'The Government of Boys: Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Ballantyne's *Coral Island*', *Children Literature,* 25 (1997), 205 – 213 (p. 206).
[23] Golding's use of a piglet creates analogues with the boys' own youth and inexperience. We will see later that Golding deploys a similar technique in his depiction of masculine violence and a sow as the scene has extensive violent sexual imagery.
[24] Golding, p, 30.

adolescent protagonists respond to the nonhuman with typical Crusoedian pragmatism that simultaneously idealises youth and sanctions violence.[25] In *Lord of the Flies*, the idea of killing is shown to have psychological and social ramifications. The boys are aware of their desire for meat and the cultural acceptability of killing nonhuman animals. Jack rushes forward and draws a knife with the intention of killing and subsequently eating the piglet. Golding draws attention to an initial sense of enjoyment. The sensation of power and control is epitomised by the flourish with which Jack draws his knife, indicative of anthropocentric entitlement. However, killing the piglet is more difficult than the boys envisioned; it is not a static and willing victim who is equally willingly consumed. Instead, it is imbued with real feelings and abject terror, providing a sudden confrontation with another animal that underscores the sense of creaturely affinity discussed earlier and emphasises the 'enormity' of their actions. This is felt through a sense of abjection. The apprehension to stab the pig and breach a literal and figurative border is in response to the ubiquitous presence of blood becoming suddenly and violently evident. At this point in the narrative, the reality of witnessing blood and what that would mean for them psychologically and socially is enough to cause Jack to pause.

To critique the imperialistic narrative, Golding raises moral issues absent from conventional Robinsonades before his boy-castaways eventually fulfil their desire for meat. The inclusion of emotive nonhuman animals complicates their apparently straightforward consumption in earlier Robinsonades. Representing nonhumanity with emotions usually reserved for humans draws our attention to the distinctions made between animals and the food that animal later becomes to sanction their consumption.[26] *Lord of the Flies* removes the mediating processes that transform animals into meat as the boys' relationship with food is

[25] R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island* (Edinburgh: T. Nelson & Sons, 1858).
Jules Verne, *Two Years' Vacation* (Paris: Pierre-Jules Hetzel, 1888).
[26] This distancing effect has further parallels with sacrifice which will be discussed later.

now characterised by immediacy. As Karin Siegel indicates, 'Jack still hesitates to stab it [as] blood-shedding is a taboo of civilized life'.[27] As I will discuss in the section on sacrifice, blood causes abject emotional responses partly because we are forced to confront our own fragility. However, although blood may be thought of as taboo, it is an ever-present reality that vitally often remains hidden. As Noëlie Vialles asserts, animal killing has become 'an invisible, exiled, almost clandestine activity' kept out of sight.[28] This illusion of bloodlessness transforms nonhuman animals into a reducible, material, and cultural product. The attempts at concealing our mutual corporeality with other animals in the Anthropocene echoes the earlier conventional Robinsonades that asserted the binary distinction between humans and nonhumans by denying animal animacy in their narratives. Golding's re-vision highlights nonhuman agency to demonstrate the boys' initial struggle with the reality of hunting and then consuming as the boundary between humans and other animals is disrupted by the inevitable presence of blood and the evidence of animal emotion. They must confront and consume another animal without the sanctifying bloodlessness needed to maintain a conceptual, moral, and physical distance to killing.

The boy castaways of Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* have a comparable encounter with pigs to the above extract from Golding. On approaching a tree, *Coral Island*'s narrator Ralph remarks, 'the ground […] was thickly strewn with the fallen fruit, in the midst of which lay sleeping […] at least twenty hogs of all ages and sizes, apparently quite surfeited with a recent banquet […] Jack and I could scarce restrain our laughter as we gazed at these coarse, fat, ill-looking animals, while they lay groaning and snoring heavily amid the remains of their supper'.[29] This scene is bookended by the word 'supper' and implicitly explores food

[27] Karin Siegel, *The Robinsonade Tradition in Robert Michael Ballantyne's* 'The Coral Island' *and William Golding's* 'Lord of the Flies' (Salzburg: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), p. 63.
[28] Noélie Vialles, *Animal to Edible*, trans. by J.A. Underwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 27.
[29] Ballantyne, p. 100 – 101.

politics and the anthropocentric consumption of other animals. The pigs' recumbency leads Ralph to ask whether it is 'cruel' to kill the pigs in this position but is told that if they "wanted *sport* […] I would certainly set them up; but as we only want *pork*, we'll let them lie".[30] The possibility for ethical consideration is filtered through the idea of the hunt being either sporting or unsporting, conduct that is socially informed by British hunting cultures. The narrative may draw a distinction between hunting to eat and hunting for sport, but despite this the boys find the same emotions as hunting for pleasure that is only intensified by their need and want for meat. The attack is unsuccessful, a rock from Ralph's sling hits a boar and reverberates 'as if against the head of a drum […] causing the animal to start to its feet, with a frightful yell of surprise, and scamper away'.[31] The scene becomes comical in the exaggerated drum sound of a rock striking the pig's torso and the pig's flight for its life diminished to a scamper. The yell of surprise instils some ambiguity as whether to ascribe the word 'frightful' to the pig's yell or the feeling it incites in the boys. Their response to the hunt's failure is characteristically muted with the pig's temporary escape described only as "very provoking".[32] The provocation is elicited by the subversion of expectation, the promise of food is removed, and there is a definite deflation at the hunt's outcome. As they return to camp, they hear a commotion during a search for their third companion only to discover he has killed the escaped pig. They find 'Peterkin walking along the beach towards us with a little pig transfixed on the end of his long spear […] We now set about preparing supper; and, truly, a good display of viands we made'.[33] As Peterkin relates that he is 'uncommonly hungry', the scene's ending mirrors the pig's initial supper but with the assertion of human consumer sovereignty. Considering the use of 'transfixed' rather than fixed or affixed from an ecocritical perspective reveals both the manner the pig has been caught (pierced by a

[30] Ballantyne, p. 101.
[31] Ibid, p. 101.
[32] Ibid, p. 101.
[33] Ibid, p. 102 – 103.

weapon) but is also indicative of the emotive sense of the word (a state of shock or awe) that inadvertently underscores the boys' fixation with meat while describing the pig's horrified motionlessness.

Earlier conventional Robinsonades often depict wild and agricultural animals as unintelligent and unfeeling, described as only mechanically reacting to threat with their deaths related in unemotive factual terms. We can take one of Jules Verne's Robinsonades *The Mysterious Island* as an example of this mechanical account of animal behaviour in the scene where the islanders club seals to death. Verne uses fact-based terms without the expected viscera in relating that 'they […] cut off their retreat and knocked them on the head […] two of the animals soon lay dead on the sand, but the rest regained the sea to safety'.[34] There is no indication of the level of force needed to kill a seal, the description makes the kill seem clean without any indication of blood or impact, a purely practical activity that denies the entry of ethical questions into the narrative. Conversely, the extract from Golding quoted above demonstrates the manifold implications killing has as well as the level of violent intent needed to strike at the piglet that cries out in a thin 'voice'. The inclusion of a voice reduces the presumed distance supposedly separating human and nonhuman animals. The lack of a distinctive voice has often been cited as a fundamental distinction between humans and other animals, as Kate Soper iterates 'Western thought has […] regarded the animal as the antithesis to the human and done so very largely on account of its lack of speech'.[35] The inclusion of an individual voice is crucial in representing the piglet as a thinking and feeling being. It develops past the ostensibly comic 'yell' Ballantyne's pig issues and ascribes an emotive power that resonates with a visceral response to danger to highlight nonhuman animals' capacity to feel and react in a manner conservatively reserved for humans.

[34] Jules Verne, *The Mysterious Island* (Paris: Pierre-Jules Hetzel, 1875), p. 129-30.
[35] Kate Soper, 'Nature, Friend and Foe', in *What Is Nature?* (Oxford: Blackwell publishers ltd., 1995), p. 81.

Despite the initial failure of the hunt, the boy castaways of *Lord of the Flies* persist in confirming their masculinity within the conventions of boyhood adventure stories. They swap culturally learnt methods of killing and eating other animals to validate their status as effective hunters and consumers—despite evidence to the contrary. Their conversation draws attention to the semantic differences established between people and nonhuman animals, in this instance, the distinction between the actions of stabbing and sticking. Jack justifies his hesitation by claiming he was looking for a place to 'stab' the pig. Ralph retorts that "you should stick a pig […] *they* always talk about sticking pigs".[36] This exchange highlights two separate actions, one for killing nonhuman animals and one for killing humans. While attempting to establish the absolute difference between humans and nonhumans, the conversation recognises that the distinction is principally semantic. Ralph's reference to a collective 'they' acknowledges that this human/nonhuman separation is culturally learnt and has an ideological, rather than actual, origin. Sticking rather than stabbing a pig transforms how the boys conceive of killing other animals. By conceptually distancing themselves from the severity of stabbing, the other animal's death becomes psychologically palatable. Derrida questions this same semiotic distance from the nonhuman in anthropocentric discourse, stating that 'one would not speak of injustice or violence toward an animal […] an animal can be made to suffer, but we would never say […] that it is a wronged subject, the victim of a crime, of a murder, of a rape or a theft'.[37] Reconceptualising the manner and severity of the injuries inflicted on other animals removes the possibility of these actions being conceived of as a potential crime and squarely affirms the boundary separating humans from other animals. Substituting certain words enables the boys to conceive of killing and eating other animals as a right and mitigates ethical considerations. As the boys move away from any sympathetic

[36] Golding, p. 29 [emphasis added].
[37] Derrida, 'Force of Law', p. 18.

reaction to other animals, Golding's third-person narration moves the reader closer to recognising animal agency and animacy.

Entitlement to other animals as meat expresses a hierarchical relationship between humans and nonhumans, between who is the consumer and who will be consumed. Jane Bennett informs us that 'the mundane act of eating reveals something about the very order of Creation: it reveals a natural hierarchy of bodies, with matter on the bottom, organisms in the middle, and humans on top'.[38] Hunting enacts this hierarchical structure, as hunted animals become conceptualised as passive dead matter to be consumed by humans in what Bennett terms 'a conquest model of human eating'.[39] In this process, animals are transformed into edible material but also become extensions of the consumer's desire to assert human sovereignty and maintain the aforementioned hierarchical system. Within this power structure, eating other animals becomes a symbol of human authority. Derrida's concept of carnophallogocentrism indicates how nonhuman bodies are digested physically and symbolically. Derrida states that consuming flesh affirms 'the virile strength of the adult male' and 'belongs to the schema that dominates the concept of the subject. The subject does not want just to master and possess nature actively. In our culture, he accepts sacrifice and eats flesh'.[40] We will return to the idea of sacrifice as we progress through the chapter, but Derrida's terminology is relevant here to our understanding of consuming and hunting as a vehicle for the conceptual as well as the physical domination of nonhuman bodies. Derrida recognises the above as a masculine practice, though this does not preclude that it is exclusively performed by men. Meat-eating as described in *Lord of the Flies* in the context of the boyhood adventure novel becomes a process ideologically laden with masculine

[38] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 47.
[39] Ibid, p. 48.
[40] Jacques Derrida, '"Eating well', or the calculation of the subject: an interview with Jacques Derrida', in *Who Comes After the Subject* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 99.

symbolism used to maintain explicitly masculine power structures. In this process, nonhuman animals are not recognised as individual agents, rather they exist as edible cultural symbols used to assert authority over other humans as much as other nonhumans. David Baumeister clarifies Derrida's carnophallogocentrism and its relation to power and masculinity stating that it 'connects phallocentric authority with the ingestion of animal flesh, literal or symbolic. On this formulation, the domination of women implies the domination of animality, within a schema of subjectivity that is preferentially both human and male by default'.[41] *Lord of the Flies* highlights how this process is an assertion of power over explicitly feminised nonhuman animals and environments that ideologically transforms the 'natural world' into a proving ground for violent masculinity.

In *Lord of the Flies*, after the first failed hunt the boys reconceptualise nonhuman animal killing and successfully kill a pig. In doing so they undergo a psychological transformation that intensifies their need for meat. The immediacy of blood they initially recoiled from becomes a site of enjoyment and thrill as well as a way of confirming and congratulating their masculinity. The meat they consume is transformed to take on further signification that extends beyond practical reasons. As postcolonial ecocritics Huggan and Tiffin recognise, 'animal meat eating by humans [is] a symbolic practice rather than a necessity […] most human meat eating is ultimately an expression of power over others, in particular women, animals, and the poor'.[42] Huggan and Tiffin's argument aligns with Derrida and Bennett's separate assertions that meat-eating as a practice is linked to the domination of others (human and nonhuman alike) rather than solely existing as a source of nourishment.

[41] David Baumeister, 'Derrida on Carnophallogocentrism and the Primal Parricide', *Derrida Today*, 10 (2017), 51 – 66 (p. 54).
[42] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 176.

Though in the context of the realist Robinsonade narrative it is arguably a necessity to depict eating meat—certainly in the context of the desert island—it is not the only source of food available. Golding's island is Edenic in its description of abundant fresh fruit to forage but subsisting on fruit grates against the boys' expectation of the castaway adventure and is neglected due to a cultural reliance on meals centred around meat. The boys' hunting consistently outstrips their needs, indicating that a fervent desire to hunt/consume is a necessary part of Golding's critique of imperialist narratives. As Huggan and Tiffin suggest, there is an 'inevitable association between meat eating and male power'.[43] By killing and eating animals, the boys attempt to assert their adolescent masculinity and solidify their new status as hunters. As Nick Fiddes recognises, 'meat is almost ubiquitously put to use as a medium through which men express their 'natural' control, of women as well as of animals'.[44] Jack's ability to hunt correlates with a desire to control the island and its human and nonhuman inhabitants. In the conventional adolescent Robinsonade, hunting and meat-eating are prerequisites for leadership and masculine power. Any move away from hunting by a member of the group is deemed unmasculine and becomes a source of derision.

The relationship between meat-eating and male dominance divides Golding's castaways, stratifying the differences between hunters and nonhunters. We see these politics at play during their first feast featuring meat after a successful hunt. In this scene, Jack is in a position of power despite having prevented their escape from the island by neglecting the signal fire in favour of going hunting. In the world of masculine adventure stories, the ability to obtain meat carries an unequal amount of cultural capital. Golding acknowledges the hierarchical masculine power structure that has divided their group into hunters and nonhunters. It is no coincidence that the unfortunately named Piggy is placed near the bottom

[43] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 178.
[44] Nick Fiddes, *Meat: A Natural Symbol* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 146.

of the boys' social order. During the feast, Piggy asks if he is to be denied meat. The narration relates that 'Jack had meant to leave [Piggy] in doubt, as an assertion of power; but Piggy by advertising his omission made more cruelty necessary. "You didn't hunt".[45] This accusation highlights that meat and hunting denote status and become tools Jack wields politically. No one questions Jack's right in denying Piggy, who is already significantly socially ostracised from the group. Jack is singled out as a dominant leader by being able to kill and provide meat. This is highlighted in the following quotation, 'Jack looked round for understanding but found only respect. Ralph stood among the ashes of the signal fire, his hands full of meat, saying nothing'.[46] Ralph, in accepting the meat that he did not hunt, loses his status as the elected leader of the already divided community. As Mackenzie argues, hunting narratives offer their adolescent protagonists 'a series of tests […] through which boys become men'.[47] Jack reiterates his status as a hunter throughout *Lord of the Flies* to solidify his new role as both a leader and an adolescent turned man. The decline in Ralph's status is correlative with Jack's accusations that Ralph is unmasculine and cowardly as he rarely wishes to hunt and cannot provide meat to the group. *Lord of the Flies* narrates how rule over other humans is maintained through the domination of nonhuman animals and food politics.

As the narrative progresses, the violence directed towards other animals steadily becomes easier to translate to other humans. As Palmer notes, Ralph attempts to maintain the structures of democracy but it is 'Jack who wants to enter into the life of the island, and who defines what that is to be—hunting pigs, forming a tribe'.[48] *Lord of the Flies* explicitly challenges British colonial rule and is not only, as Palmer suggests, an example of the

[45] Golding, p.78.
[46] Ibid, p. 81.
[47] Mackenzie, p. 147.
[48] Palmer, p. 62

'Veneer Theory of human nature, in which violence and cruelty is seen as waiting just beneath a veneer of civilized behaviour' but a more systematic deconstruction of Anglo-centric ideologies.[49] Jack's vision of life as an islander is as a racist's re-imagining of indigeneity as Golding's characterisation only emphasises pre-existent British colonial norms as the exploitative dichotomous relationship capitalist and colonial ideologies maintain with the nonhuman world and marginalised people is, from the outset, distinctly uncivilised.

(2.2) Hunting

Masculinised violence in *Lord of the Flies*

In the Robinsonade, the narrative pretext of securing resources provides a reasonable excuse to explore a masculinised impulse to hunt. As we have seen, there are more complex motivations present in hunting than simply striving to survive on desert islands as the compulsion to consume overtakes the need for survival alone and is associated with dominance and power beyond meeting a demand for food. The Crusoedian castaway finds pleasure in masculinised violence directed towards the nonhuman, which is often implicitly and explicitly feminised. Victoria Davion summarises this ideology as 'the domination of nature by human beings comes from a patriarchal world view, the same world view that justifies the domination of women'.[50] As discussed, this influences meat-eating cultures and directs the assimilation of power through consumption. Crusoedian sovereignty is an assertion of andro/anthropocentric beliefs enforced through violence indicative of capitalist society's interlinking exploitative relationships with respect to femininity, race, wealth, the environment, and nonhuman animals.

The existence of these power structures is established in *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to hunting for pleasure. Although Rita Ghesquiere suggests that for Defoe's Crusoe 'animals

[49] Palmer, p. 61.
[50] Victoria Davion, 'Is Ecofeminism Feminist?', in *Ecological Feminism: Environmental Philosophies*, ed. by Karen J. Warren (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 10.

are merely seen as food and [he] thinks in a very functional way about them' and that he kills animals 'without any feeling of remorse [for] the inconvenience they cause', I would also suggest there are other motivations for Crusoe and his relation with nonhuman animals.[51] Although Crusoe certainly considers other animals in practical terms, I contend that he also kills out of an ecophobic fear of the nonhuman and also crucially derives enjoyment from killing, nuances that are essential to our understanding of the Crusoedian character from an environmental critical perspective. Crusoe's pleasure at shooting 'big game' off the coast of West Africa embodies a characteristically colonial vision of hunting that asserts Eurocentric and anthropocentric attitudes onto an exotically othered environment. After sighting a lion reclining in the shade near the coast, Crusoe prepares his guns with no objective other than sport, stating 'I took up a second piece […] fired again and shot him in the head, and had the pleasure to see him drop, and make but little noise, struggling for life'.[52] Immediately following the lion's death, Crusoe comments that 'this was game indeed to us, but no food'.[53] It is only after the lion is killed that he considers using the skin to trade with, a secondary purpose after he has satiated the desire to violently assert his sovereignty and bypass his own fundamental fear of being consumed.

Following the lion's death, Crusoe allows the local people to use its flesh for food but has no desire to eat it himself. The list of acceptable animals fit for consumption has far-reaching ramifications beyond what can be adequately addressed in this thesis alone. As Julia Kristeva indicates, there are pre-existing religious doctrines that prohibit the eating of certain animals, such as 'in Deuteronomy 14, is the establishment of a *logical field* preventing man from *eating carnivorous animals*. One needs to preserve oneself from murder, not incorporate

[51] Rita Ghesquiere, 'Rereading *Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe) and *Friday* (Tournier) – An Ecocritical Approach', in *Integral Ecology and Sustainable Business* ed. by Ove Jakobsen and Laszlo Zsolnai (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Ltd, 2017), p. 130.
[52] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 21.
[53] Ibid, p. 21.

carnivorous or rapacious animals, and there is only one prescription for that: eating herbivorous, cud-chewing animals'.[54] Prohibitions for eating or not eating certain animals may be indicative of the function those animals are put to—i.e., not eating working animals as their labour is used by humans. However, in this case, the lion as an apex predator may harbour too many similarities to human beings as consumers themselves and as such brushes too close to cannibalism for Crusoe's preconceived sensibilities as well as his own fears of being himself consumed.

As adventure stories, eighteenth and nineteenth century Robinsonades both influenced and enacted the desires of their readership. Martin Green's exploration of masculinity as a performative role recognises that, in Western society, 'hunting […] takes place in permissive space where social laws can be flouted. A fundamentally adventurous activity that leads to bloodshed and meat-eating, hunting is linked to war, another activity that is morally reproved but imaginatively endorsed by civilised culture'.[55] In this manner, Robinsonades appealed to the colonial fantasy as repressed desires are acted upon, and also require, the otherly space of desert islands. In the Robinsonade, recurrent themes of control and domination over the nonhuman world correspond with the European colonial narrative. The physical and psychic separation from the mainland and mainstream society presents the necessary isolation to engage in violent fantasies. I will return to the physical and psychological separation of the island throughout the thesis. While the dislocation afforded by the island allows Crusoedian characters to live out their anthropocentric desires it also enables more radical behaviour that questions our relationship to nonhumanity as the castaway is freed from societal constraints.

[54] Julia Kristeva, *The Power of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 98
[55] Martin Green, *The Adventurous Male: Chapters in the History of the White Male Mind* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 18.

Golding's re-vision of the Robinsonade uses the island space to reassess the desire for domination that fuels the boys' need to hunt and critique the ideological conditioning of conventional Robinsonades. As Richard Phillips notes, 'Golding, in *Lord of the Flies,* sought to reposition himself in a decolonising world, to decolonise metropolitan masculinity'.[56] While the island allows the boys to explore the societally sanctioned violence in a permissive space, it also prompts the reader to recontextualise these behaviours outside of the authoritative presence of the metropolis. Ian Kinane (in reference to Robert De La Croix's *Mysteries of the Islands*) states that 'De La Croix has suggested that islands are "symbols of all men's subconscious longing," and that they represent for the collective cultural imagination a "door of escape into the unknown"'.[57] The island enables the boys to emulate adult society, such as establishing a rudimentary democracy, but also act on their desire to be recognised as men through hunting which leads to ever-escalating levels of violence. Although their actions are not far removed from the same acts of hunting and killing sanctioned by Western society, they appear transgressive in isolation from society's structure.

Golding's presentation of hunting questions the subjugation of nonhuman animals and speculates where this need for control emanates from. The recontextualisation of the desert island queries the acceptable exploitation of other animals as well as the pervasiveness of androcentric narratives that continue to endorse imperialistic domination. Golding exemplifies the psychological changes that take root in Jack following his first kill. The below extract demonstrates the impact hunting has on Jack and its intoxicating effects:

> [Jack's] mind was crowded with […] memories of the knowledge that had come to them when they had closed on the struggling pig, knowledge that they had outwitted a

[56] Richard Phillips, *Mapping Men & Empire: A Geography of Adventure* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 146.
[57] Ian Kinane, *Theorising Literary Islands: The Island Trope in Contemporary Robinsonade Narratives (Rethinking the Island)* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), p. 137.
Robert De La Croix, *Mysteries of the Islands* (London: Frederick Muller ltd., 1960), p. 8.

> living thing, imposed their will upon it, taken away its life like a long satisfying drink […] He spread his arms wide, "You should have seen the blood!" [58]

Killing has a powerful effect on Jack and the other members of the hunting party as their sense of enjoyment has a direct correlation with the imposition of androcentric Crusoe-esque human desire. He no longer recoils at the presence of blood, on the contrary, the amount of blood is emphasised positively. The comparison between ending the pig's life and taking a 'satisfying drink' followed by Jack's exclamation regarding blood is disturbingly vampiric. The presence of blood becomes an essential part of the experience, as the hunting party smear each other with the pig's vital fluids in emulation of the social practice referred to as 'blooding'. In contrast to the extract quoted earlier, the thought of the pig's struggle for life does not arouse a sympathetic hesitation. Rather, the fact that the pig is struggling and vulnerable enhances their sense of domination and control where the imposition of individual will becomes a violent source of pleasure.

The above associations between exploitation and gratification relates to the violent subjugation of both nonhumanity and women. The overlapping androcentric imagery used to describe women and the nonhuman world illustrates the imposition of masculine ideological control over others' bodies that are exploited as a resource. As previously highlighted, there are correlations between meat-eating and the objectification of women and nonhumans. As Carol Adams recognises, there exists 'a cycle of objectification, fragmentation, and consumption [...] [that] links butchering and sexual violence in our culture [...] this process allows fragmentation, or brutal dismemberment and finally consumption'.[59] Fragmenting and reducing the body is a vital tool for the coloniser in their exploitation of the environment, animals, and other humans. This process is explicit in canonical Robinsonades that narrate

[58] Golding, p. 74.
[59] Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1990), p. 47.

the establishment of plantations and the formulation of reductionist attitudes this system engenders.[60]

In *Lord of the Flies,* sexualised violence directed towards other animals is concurrent with patriarchal attempts to dominate women and the nonhuman. Siegel recognises the correlation between hunting and sexual violence in *Lord of the Flies* in the boys' 'orgiastic pig hunt […] the actual killing of the sow is described in terms directly correlated with sexual intercourse'.[61] The following is an abridged version of the scene Siegel is referring to that indicates the intersection of sexualised language and masculine violence:

> The hunters followed, wedded to her in lust, excited by the long chase and the dropped blood […] the sow fell and the hunters hurled themselves at her. This dreadful eruption from an unknown world made her frantic; she squealed and buckled and the air was full of sweat and noise and blood and terror […] Jack was on top of the sow […] Roger found a lodgement for his point and began to push […] then Jack found her throat and the hot blood spouted over his hands. The sow collapsed under them and they were heavy and fulfilled upon her.[62]

The age and sex of the pig are crucial in our interpretation of sexual violence and the subversion of the boy-to-man adventure narrative Golding critiques. Notably, the earlier failed attempt to kill involved a piglet, emblematic of the boys' own initial naivety and youth, whereas in the above extract the pig is both female as well as a mother who has recently given birth. This explicitly relates the sow to the feminine, the heteronormative obsession with fecundity, and underscores the sexualisation of the boys' assault. Golding explicitly frames the hunt in a sexual context from the outset through the phrase 'wedded to her in lust' in a perverse consummation of marriage. The excitement of the hunt and their overwhelming

[60] The connections between reductionism and the plantation will be explored further in my final chapter, 'The Robinsonade in the Anthropocene'.
[61] Siegel, p. 49 – 50.
[62] Golding, p. 148 – 149.

'lust' is intensified by the presence of blood, linking the hunt to violence, domination, and fetishisation as well as the exploitation of women and the nonhuman.

The pig's responses to the assault are distinctly human, her extreme distress and fear are immediately evident. The boys, who are now self-consciously referred to as 'hunters', take a frightening pleasure in explicitly sexualised violence. The connotations of 'fulfilled', 'eruption', and 'spouted' iterate that the hunting experience in this context is explicitly linked to sexual gratification and ejaculation. After the sow has been killed, the boys realise that Roger has stabbed her with his spear rectally to which the boys repeat the chorus of "Right up her ass!", solidifying the analogous sexual violence. Although the substitution of 'point' for spear is possibly incidentally sexual, given the explicit correlations between sex and hunting in this scene it becomes a phallic symbol and an extension of penetrative violence. The boys consciously register that the pig is female and throughout the text repeat the mantra 'Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood' specifically utilises a feminine pronoun. As Adams indicates, the interrelated metaphorical language of meat-eating and sex identifies a connection between the exploitation of nonhuman and feminised bodies. Images of hunting and prey are mobilised as terms that denote sexual pursuit and sexualised violence. Women are derogatively described in nonhuman terms; either in language that fragments the body (such as pieces of meat that focus on specific body parts) or as female animals (Adams directs us to terms such as cow, sow, nag, and bitch). Golding's disturbing scene interchanges images of hunting, rape, and sexual innuendo that, through its horror, critiques misogynistic and anthropocentric attitudes that force both women and the nonhuman world into subjugation.

The masculinised violence Golding's schoolboys emulate has its origins in the structure of colonial rule. Palmer suggests that the violence and fear embodied in the final hunting scene in which Ralph flees hopelessly through the jungle 'is a long way from

Robinson Crusoe's pleasure in process and improvisation and reinvention of the civilized'.[63] I contend that Crusoe's island is not a civilised space of reinvention but rather treads a path of conventional violence that asserts pre-existing European norms through force and subjugation. Violence and the threat of violence become a cornerstone to Crusoe's control of the island and these elements are emphasised in Golding's critique of British imperialism in *Lord of the Flies*.

(2.3) Hunting

Hyperbolic violence in *The Wasp Factory*

Golding directs our attention to the processes of interpellation that reinforce patterns of violence governing masculine behaviour represented in eighteenth and nineteenth century Robinsonades. Through this revaluation of violence, we are asked to reassess our understanding of established attitudes towards the nonhuman in the Anthropocene and speculate on what can change to redress this unequal power balance. Masculinised violence is also a fundamental part of Banks' *The Wasp Factory* as the text's Crusoe-figure, Frank, embodies hyper-masculine power structures and attitudes. Further analysis of *The Wasp Factory* and its relation to violence is the subject of the following section regarding sacrifice. However, it is necessary to recognise the ways in which Banks challenges our perception of hunting and the role of masculinity in the Robinsonade.

Following the narrative of conventional Robinsonades, Frank views himself as a sovereign authority presiding over the island. Banks' portrayal is self-consciously masculine as Frank inhabits exaggerated masculine norms that parody early Robinsonades to emphasise culturally inherited patterns of violence. Like Crusoe, Frank considers his actions to be justifiable and purposeful but, as we have seen, Crusoe has a more complicated relationship

[63] Palmer, p. 64.

with killing nonhuman animals than pure pragmatism as Crusoe-esque characters derive pleasure and enjoyment directly related to their control over nonhumanity.

The hunting scene in the Rabbit Grounds demonstrates more complicated motivations that reach beyond food or resources as Banks explores violent ecophobic reactions to perceived threats from a subjugated nonhuman world. This scene is a parodic re-writing of the Robinsonade and links the related areas of hunting, domination, and masculine violence. Although the situation itself can be viewed as comic, as Thom Nairn notes 'Banks manages to make a battle between Frank and a seriously disgruntled rabbit fraught with tension, gore—and credibility'.[64] The genuine sense of danger alongside the ironic tone critiques masculine violence in the Robinsonade and ridicules the assertion of anthropocentric masculinity that depends on biased hierarchical relationships with other animals to preserve ostensibly absolute differences between humans and nonhumans. I will explore this idea further in the section devoted to acts of sacrifice that demonstrates the need for a scapegoat to secure human identities by casting out the nonhuman as the abject antithesis of humanity.

Reacting to the disobedient rabbit's attack and its disorderly behaviour that inverts prey/predator dichotomies, Frank violently and hyperbolically re-establishes human order. To understand the expectation that the nonhuman should conform to prescribed roles, we can look to Mary Douglas who highlights how:

> animal and vegetable life cannot help but play their role in the order of the universe. They have little choice but to live as it is their nature to behave. Occasionally the odd species or individual gets out of line and humans react by avoidance of one kind or

[64] Thom Nairn, 'Iain Banks and the Fiction Factory', in *The Scottish Novel Since the Seventies*, ed. by Gavin Wallace and Randall Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), p. 128.

> another. The very reaction to ambiguous behaviour expresses the expectation that all things shall normally conform to the principles which govern the world.[65]

Douglas' account asserts that there is a standard of acceptable nonhuman animal behaviour, something that functions separately to the theatre of human activity that we either passively observe or actively interrupt. They instinctively and mechanically perform their lives at the periphery of our daily attention, or else occasionally and suddenly come into focus when they act against expectation. The Rabbit Grounds scene interrogates a violent reaction to nonhumans acting outside of set expectations and a propensity towards anthropocentric order. Concurrent to the satisfaction Frank feels in extreme violence, he has carried out punitive measures against a disobedient animal that has challenged the order of human/nonhuman hierarchies. He reflects that 'the buck – or what it meant, its spirit […] soiled and degraded, taught a hard lesson, and I felt good'; he then departs the Rabbit Grounds 'with that lovely, sated feeling inside me'.[66] There is a direct correlation between animal suffering, the assertion of androcentric and anthropocentric violence, and pleasure. The buck rabbit represents nonhuman encroachment on human sovereignty and an attempt to disrupt established binaries. The buck symbolises disobedient nonhumanity who—if they perform outside of human expectations—threaten to destabilise human identities predicated on hierarchical binary opposition. The challenge to rabbits' categorisation as prey animals and humans as predators is a source of distress and indignation for Frank. To reassert humanity's sovereign rule at the head of the hierarchy, the buck rabbit is soiled and degraded for its challenge to human control. Frank's improvised flamethrower exacts exaggerated and disturbing revenge against the nonhuman world. The buck's rebelliousness is punished with

[65] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), p.179.
[66] Banks, p. 28.

the tortuous eradication of its warren to re-establish Frank's dominant position over the nonhuman animals and the island.

As in *Lord of the Flies*, Banks depicts masculinised violence as an overlapping misogynistic and anthropocentric hatred and distrust for the feminine and nonhuman. However, Palmer questions whether we can read *The Wasp Factory* as a gender study that posits gender as a cultural product conditioned by society. Although Palmer agrees Frank embodies masculine traits and 'acted in a very masculine fashion, building, patrolling, killing, destroying', he asserts this is complicated by Frank's belief that he has been castrated as well as the revelation at the end of the novel that Frank was born biologically female.[67] Palmer asserts that 'what is cancelled or overwritten is both the masculinity of many castaway stories and the revision of the masculinity of these stories in novels about female castaways […] the castaway story here reaches a kind of null point, in which categories such as male and female […] cancel each other out'.[68] I would contend that *The Wasp Factory* is not attempting to appear in the category of female Robinsonades—Banks' narrative is distinctly masculine and functions as a subversion of the canonical Robinsonade's conservative gender norms. Frank's hypermasculine worldview, reinforced by his misogynistic father, is not cancelled from the narrative—the patriarchal hatred of the 'other' is only emphasised. However, Banks' self-conscious twist ending presents other problems than the nullification Palmer asserts that require addressing in the context of gender identity that goes unanswered by the text.

The major point of contention we face as a reader that affects the psychological realism of the text is Frank's sudden acceptance of his birth gender following the discovery that supposedly invalidates the sixteen years of lived experience as a boy and then a young man. In this instance, *The Wasp Factory* is a product of the time it was written, as Banks does

[67] Palmer, p. 87.
[68] Ibid, p. 88.

not have the understanding or language to accurately represent the ramifications of the text's ending. Frank has lived life as male without any knowledge of being a transgender person. The Crusoedian masculine violence he embodies throughout the text is as a man and the sense of parody enters the text through the presentation of adventure fiction and the re-vision of hypermasculinity as well as the element of absurdism in Frank's elaborate murders. *The Wasp Factory*'s 'twist' ending complicates its existence as a re-vision of the Robinsonade and the binary representation of heteronormativity as Frank's sudden assumption of a female identity and the suggestion that they may leave the island seemingly reverts to traditional gender norms. We might read Frank's sudden need to leave the island as an extension of patriarchal norms as the conventional Robinsonade island is often synonymous with the sovereign space of masculine self-identity and, with this identity seemingly in question, Frank is not able to remain on the island. For the purposes of my analysis, Banks' narrative presents the methods by which masculinity, in a conservative understanding of gender conditions, attempts to produce in men an acceptance of violence and a distrust towards otherness.

The below extract exemplifies Frank's internalisation of patriarchal ideology as violent masculinity is described as a natural state rather than as a process of interpellation and indoctrination that is a product of dogmatic learnt behaviour. Frank compares his life's trajectory with his brother Eric, stating that:

> we have both killed […] that is what men are really *for*. Both sexes can do one thing specially well; women can give birth and men can kill […] We strike out, push through, thrust and take. The fact that it is only an analogue of all this sexual terminology I am capable of does not discourage me. I can feel it in my bones, in my uncastrated genes.[69]

[69] Banks, p. 118.

It would be reductive and redundant to scrutinise the revelation at the end of *The Wasp Factory* that might persuade us to re-read the above extract with an unnecessary retrospective ironic edge. Although Frank was not born male, he identifies with male and masculine norms. Not only this, but as stated Frank has lived his life as a boy and then a young man and has absorbed an androcentric narrative that has led him to believe that destructive behaviours are the logical conclusion of masculinity and exercising these violent urges on nonhumans and the vulnerable is the male prerogative. The binaries Frank asserts, that men are suited best to exploitation marshalled through violence and women are best suited to creating life, emulate the patterns of patriarchal exploitation. Throughout the main body of the narrative, Frank is described as a man—not as a woman or someone who is transgender—and the hyperbolic escalation of Crusoedian violence should be the sole source of parody in *The Wasp Factory*.

Returning to an analysis of Crusoe-esque patterns and behaviours, Frank emulates Crusoe's need for control which manifests through compulsive and repetitive activities that result in ritualistic sacrifice. For example, Crusoe's obsessive list-making, the reiteration of his stores, and the daily performance of productivity become a mantra that assures his sense of security. Frank's ritualistic actions follow a similar train of thought that manifests through the medium of sacrifice, which will be the focus of the next section of this chapter.

Section two: Sacrifice

Sacrificial acts indicate a desire to instil a supposedly chaotic environment with the impression of anthropocentric control in the face of imposing 'natural forces'. The boys in *Lord of the Flies* encounter an unfamiliar island and struggle to impose human order onto a seemingly otherly world. The need for control is a dominant preoccupation for Frank in *The Wasp Factory.* This section will explore where this desire emerges from and how it manifests. Sacrifice is used as a tool to subdue a phobic reaction to the nonhuman and induce

human order that originates from a sense of ecophobia—a phrase coined by George F. Will and further developed by Simon Estok. In an ecophobic mindset, Estok states that 'nature becomes the hateful object in need of our control, the loathed and feared thing that can only result in tragedy if left in control'.[70] This mindset correlates with Crusoedian ideologies that attempts to pacify the nonhuman, women, and racial others.

Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Wasp Factory* explore how nonhuman animals and their respective body parts are used in a sacrificial context. The use of sacrifice in re-visionary texts pertains to environmental critical interpretations of the Robinsonade as the Crusoedian character's obsessive desire to control the nonhuman is formalised. Sacrifice as a device in the Robinsonade underscores the anthropocentric and ecophobic fear human privileged hierarchies might be subverted. Although sacrifice differs physically from processes of hunting/eating encountered in the previous section, there are analogues when we consider them as methods of consuming nonhumans and the accompanying symbolism. In both instances, nonhuman animals are abstracted from their whole forms and are transformed into cultural products to be subsumed.

Sacrifice uses nonhuman animals to produce cultural artefacts. As archaeologist James Morris notes, 'humans […] interact with our environment and the other species inhabiting it in a variety of ways. Animals not only provide a source of sustenance, but a means for humans to express their social concepts through interaction'.[71] As Morris recognises, nonhuman animals undergo a variety of transformative processes during their life, but their symbolic 'value' is realised in death. In the sacrificial process, they cease to be whole or individual beings but instead become disarticulated symbols representative of the

[70] Simon C. Estok, 'Theorizing in a Space of Ambivalent Openness: Ecocriticism and Ecophobia', *ISLE*: *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 16 (2009), 203 – 225 (p. 210).
[71] James Morris, 'Animal "Ritual" Killing: from Remains to Meanings', in *The Ritual Killing and Burial of Animals: European Perspectives*, ed. by Aleksander Pluskowski (Oxford: Oxford Books, 2012), p. 8.

sacrificer's will or a specific concept that is being sacrificed. As Barbara Creed iterates, 'ritual becomes a means by which societies both renew their initial contact with the abject element and then exclude that element […] through ritual, the demarcation lines between human and nonhuman are drawn up anew and presumably made all the stronger for that process'.[72] The important proviso Creed makes in the 'presumable' strengthening of human/nonhuman binaries should be emphasised. Though ritual and sacrifice are meant to demarcate the boundary between the human and nonhuman by excluding the abject, the act itself necessitates a transformation of the human mind and body by destabilising the border between binaries (human/nonhuman, profane/holy etc.,). The question remains whether these lines are redrawn stronger through contact with abject subjects and substances or whether it only pulls these distinctions into further dispute. As I will go on to demonstrate, considering nonhuman animals in terms of abjection can reassess our relationship with our own animality and the wider nonhuman world.

In the sacrificial process, nonhuman animals become extensions of the sacrificer. This is emphasised in *The Wasp Factory*, as Frank uses sacrifice as a means of instilling order, validating a masculine self-identity, and affixing a hierarchical structure to the world around him. The Crusoe-esque figures Frank parodies engage in autobiographical actions that use nonhuman animals and/or the environments to develop a sense of selfhood. Nonhumans are abstracted from their complete parts and are reformed to signify anthropocentric control. In both *The Wasp Factory* and *Lord of the Flies*, human and nonhuman animal body parts and bodily fluids commingle—sweat, urine, and particularly blood are cultural symbols whose potency is evoked through contact with abject sensations.

[72] Barbara Creed, 'The Horror and The Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection', in *The Monster Theory Reader* ed. by Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p. 212.

Blood in sacrificial practices overlaps distinctions between the religious and irreligious. Anthropologically, sacrificial rites necessitate that the sacrificer themselves become transformed in some way by the act itself and, as previously indicated, also require nonhuman animals to be abstracted from their whole forms and disarticulated from their bodies to produce a physical representation of the sacrificer's control. Nonhuman animals become vessels of the sacrificer's will by undergoing a violent subjugating transformation, but the sacrificial process straddles the line between holy and profane as both human and nonhuman blood can be used in a sacrificial context. As Menely and Ronda indicate, in 'Leviticus, God identifies blood as the primary substance of sacrificial ritual', which informs us that blood—and its symbolic ambiguity as both the source of life and an indicator of death—are crucial sacrificial tools.[73] However, killing is traumatising, bloody, abject, and risks becoming profane. Anthropologists Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss indicate how the distinctions between religious and irreligious killing have previously been reconciled, stating that:

> sacrifice is a religious act that can only be carried out in a religious atmosphere and by […] essentially religious agents. But, in general, before the ceremony neither sacrificer […] nor place, instruments, or victim, possess this characteristic to a suitable degree. They are profane; their conditions must be changed […] rites are necessary to introduce them into the sacred world.[74]

The curation of a religious atmosphere is used to separate profane killing from religious sacrifice. Shaping an environment suitable for sacrifice through rites is present in both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Wasp Factory*. Golding's schoolboy hunters create the iconic sacrificial totem pole and utilise ritualistic chanting to reimagine their bloodlust as a pseudo-religious experience. To enable them to hunt, the boys assume hunting personas that create an

[73] Menely & Ronda, p. 26.
[74] Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*, trans. by W.D. Halls (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1964), p. 20.

acceptable distance between themselves and the act of killing, to transform the profane into the sacrificial. In *The Wasp Factory*, Frank uses segregated sacrificial spaces to project a sense of self, imbue the environment with a religious atmosphere, and abstract their killing from the profane world—though like Crusoe, there are no ethical considerations when Frank kills nonhuman animals. The Loft and the Bunker are saturated with Frank's personal symbolic significance to function outside of societal norms. These separate worlds, as Hubert and Mauss indicate, are under the sacrificial agent's control and are extensions of their desire to dominate.

In the conventions of the Robinsonade, the island itself becomes a separate space in its dislocation from the mainland that provides a geographical and psychological distance. While the island provides the essential isolation to curtate sacrificial spaces separate from everyday life it also presents the third-party reader with the objective distance to critique current norms reminiscent of textual events that appear abhorrent in the recontextualisation of the island. The physical and psychological imposition of the castaway-turned-colonist onto the island is an aspect of the conventional Robinsonade. Crusoe's sovereignty is maintained through violence in the structure of plantations and the facsimile of European structures that enforce control by transforming the environment. Through violence, Crusoedian castaways establish a hierarchical order to resist the lapse in distinctions between 'civilised' and 'uncivilised', human/animal, consumed/consumer, as they are jettisoned onto a deserted island outside of their known societal rules.[75] By introducing sacrifice as an explicit narrative device, contemporary Robinsonade re-visions reveal connections between nonhuman animal subjugation enforced through violence and the Crusoedian figures' sense of possession over the island and its inhabitants.

[75] As I will explore in the following two chapters, the Robinsonade island is an environment that can encourage radical change or conversely be used assert the Crusoedian coloniser's oppressive ideology.

(2.4) Sacrifice

Transformative acts, bodily fluids and body parts

Ritual sacrifice induces transformations in both the sacrificial victim, often a nonhuman animal, and in the sacrificer themselves. In an immediate sense, the sacrificer forces the disarticulated parts of the sacrificial victim into a new state of signification—they are no longer only parts of a body but become a metaphorical extension of the sacrificer. In Both *Lord of the Flies* and *The Wasp Factory,* emphasis is placed on images of blood with an acute focus on viscera theatrically intensified in a sacrificial context. Blood has a profound effect on Frank. He utilises his own blood and bodily fluids as well as other animals in sacrifice to transform the sacrificial animal into an extension of self. As Samuel Finegan recognises, the sacrificial artefacts Frank creates are 'simple objects that derive their power either from their preciousness [...] or their taboo nature (the animal skulls and 'precious stuff' harvested from Frank's body)'.[76] Frank uses personal items, such as family photographs, to connect the sacrifice to his own personal history. Frank is also connected to the sacrificial animal parts physically by either hunting or collecting them. The components 'harvested' from Frank's body link him physically and psychologically to the sacrificed animal. These connections recall the stipulation made by Sigmund Freud regarding acts of sacrifice in *Totem and Taboo*, stating that 'sacrifice […] cannot be valid by immolating just any victim […] the person, animal, or substance that is immolated must be that part of the sacrificer that defines him as such, namely the goods of life he has acquired by risking his own life'.[77] Frank offers up animals he has found or hunted, his blood and urine, and personal artefacts to project parts of himself into the sacrifice literally and conceptually in order to define a sense of self. This

[76] Samuel Finegan, 'Adolescent Occultism and the Philosophy of Things in Three Novels', *Transnational Literature*, 8 (2015), 1 – 12 (p.7).
[77] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans. by James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1950), p. 145.

section will consider the ramifications of this process and the effect this has on re-visionary Robinsonades understood in an environmental critical context.

In *The Wasp Factory*, there is a fusion between the sacrificer and the sacrificial victim. Hubert and Mauss suggest that 'the victim [...] comes to represent the [sacrificer]. Indeed, it is not enough to say that it represents him: it is merged in him. The two personalities are fused together'.[78] By applying Hubert and Mauss' assertion, the victim represents the sacrificer figuratively and literally. For instance, the animal that is sacrificed may have a cultural connection with a desirable trait that comes to represent the sacrificer through their immolation (e.g., dogs were sacrificed in Ancient Greece due to their connotations with loyalty). There is a more direct and immediate connection between Frank and his victims that does not necessarily rely on specific culturally reinforced associations. This connection is achieved through the labours he has undergone to attain the sacrificial parts (hunting or scavenging), through the personal sense of history he has with the item (such as Old Saul's skull), or the direct application of his own bodily substances to the sacrificial rite. These aspects merge Frank and the victim together, enabling his access to a stored mystic power he believes exists inside the body and is released through blood and nonhuman animal parts. This correlates with an anthropocentric relationship between humans and nonhumans, the vitality of the human body being confirmed through the subjugation of nonhuman animals. The effectiveness of sacrifice directly influences Frank's body and becomes a representative extension of self. As Samuel Finegan notes, 'Frank explicitly relates his occult assemblages to his body'.[79] Initially, this might not seem reminiscent of Crusoe's own constructions, but (as I will explore in the following chapter) building is an essential part of the colonist's control over a given environment that is indebted to the

[78] Hubert and Mauss, p. 31-32.
[79] Finegan, p. 7.

projection of human-self-identity into those constructs. Crusoe's engagement with his constructions is not only physical but imaginative. For example, on finding the infamous mystery footprint on the beach, Crusoe is frightened into fleeing from his 'country-house' to retreat to his self-proclaimed 'castle'.[80] In this way, we can see how constructs come to represent psychological concepts beyond their physical dimensions. In *The Wasp Factory*, the Sacrifice Poles are Frank's necromantic security system, adorned with animal heads and daubed with his own urine to link the eviscerated nonhuman animals with Frank's body and merge the two personalities together. Creating ordered and maintained spaces is a crucial part of the canonical Robinsonade reimagined by Banks through sacrifice. Frank's sacrificial rituals confirm his sense of sovereignty over the island thereby manifesting his desire to control the physical space around him, but in doing so he conversely comes closer to a sense of animality.

Frank's sacrificial power is sustained by the components he hunts and scavenges that mingle with his own body but are also crucially maintained through repetitive ritualistic actions and thought.[81] As Burkert informs us, there are 'two basic characteristics of ritual behaviour, namely, repetition and theatrical exaggeration'.[82] These elements can be straightforwardly applied to, for example, Frank's habitual upkeep of the Sacrifice Poles. This process develops our understanding of the Robinsonade through contemporary re-vision. There is an instant connection with the death of nonhuman animals that correlates with the maintenance of human authority that attempts to suppress ecophobic reactions to a seemingly chaotic nonhuman world. This re-visionary aspect of the Robinsonade also invites a more intimate connection with the world around the Crusoedian castaway that, though still

[80] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 135 & 140.
[81] Although closely linked, ritual and sacrifice are distinct actions in their own right. Ritual can function autonomously without the need for a specific sacrificial victim.
[82] Burkert, p. 23.

exploitative, envisions and recognises a different relationship with the nonhuman that complicates *Robinson Crusoe*'s narrative. Frank's connection with the island is reinforced through ritualistic actions, the details of the Sacrifice Poles are ingrained in Frank's mind by imaginatively projecting his consciousness into the disembodied animals as shown in the following extract:

> I thought again of the Sacrifice Poles […] picturing each one in turn, remembering their positions and their components, seeing in my mind what those sightless eyes looked out to […] my dead sentries, those extensions of me which came under my power through the simple but ultimate surrender of death.[83]

The disembodied animals—in both the sense that they are not embodied, animate, and are also without a body—become vessels for Frank's mind. The Sacrifice Poles' ability to function is due to the decapitated animals' supposed subordination in comparison to Frank's anthropocentric dominance. The sensations of power and control identified directly correlate with nonhuman subjugation that reinforce established anthropocentric attitudes. Sacrificed nonhuman animals have their agency and animacy removed and become vessels for the sacrificer's projected sense of self. In sacrifice, two competing results are created, the explicit semblance of control achieved by actively casting out the thing that has been scapegoated—in this case, the fear of uncontrollable forces—but implicitly the act of sacrifice brings Frank imaginatively closer to nonhuman animals.

The sacrificial process transforms the sacrificer's body and the body of their victims through contact with the abject and profane (blood, dead body parts, etc.). As Menely and Ronda explore, how we encounter blood affects the human psyche—our sense of urgent alarm at the sight of blood, its ambiguous imagery as something vital and yet unclean—all of which have profound consequences regarding our perception of nonhumans and our own

[83] Banks, p. 8.

animality. Our mutual morbidity shared with other animals is implicit in sacrificial rituals. As Frank is a parodic re-vision of hyperbolic Crusoedian characteristics there is no scope for real empathy between humans and the nonhuman. However, sacrifice is only efficacious because of the similarities between nonhumans and humans as the boundaries between species break down at the appearance of blood. As Menely and Ronda indicate, there is an 'innate human distress in witnessing blood pour from the ruptured body'.[84] This element of rupture, crossing over a physical and social boundary, causes abjection. As Kristeva describes:

> these body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being […] the corpse […] is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Abject.[85]

Recognising the origins for cultural taboos changes our relationship with nonhumanity. Though Frank's sacrifices are an assertion of anthropocentrism, they paradoxically gain their potency through the implicit recognition of human animality and mortality.

Rather than refuting these defiling impurities, Frank uses blood and urine as part of his sacrificial rituals. It may seem contrary to purpose that abject substances are used in a sacrificial context as sacrifice functions to stave off the threat from the nonhuman world, to implement human order, and secure the sacrificer from being consumed—why then use abject material that affirms the sacrificer's own mortality? As Kristeva clarifies in her discussion of the contradictory symbolic nature of blood:

> blood, indicating the impure, takes on the "animal" […] of which man must cleanse himself. But blood, as a vital element, also refers to women, fertility […] It thus becomes a fascinating semantic crossroads, the propitious place for abjection where

[84] Menely and Ronda, p. 26.
[85] Kristeva, p. 3 – 4.

> *death* and *femininity*, *murder* and *procreation*, *cessation of life* and *vitality* all come together.[86]

The ambiguous imagery of blood becomes a source of symbolic value. Its presence becomes a liminal crossroads of competing binaries. It is through the association with death and abjection that sacrifice gains some form of meaning. Sacrifice is a transformative process for both the victim and the sacrificer. As Burkert recognises, 'sacrifice transforms us […] by going through the irreversible "act" we reach a new plane […] killing justifies and affirms life; it makes us conscious of the new order and brings it to power'.[87] In killing nonhuman animals and turning their bodies into cultural artefacts, the sacrificer steps over a threshold that alters their understanding of the world. Frank associates killing and death with the affirmation of his own life and vitality, stating that 'a death is always exciting, always makes you realise how alive you are, how vulnerable but-so-far lucky'.[88] Frank feels more alive by contrast, a feeling that underpins the sensation of anthropocentric domination. Banks' re-visionary Robinsonade uses sacrifice as a device to explore our exploitative relationship with nonhuman animals that turns living bodies into cultural products.

(2.5) Sacrifice
Desiring control

Sacrifice is used to create the impression of control over the sacrificer's environment. Ritual practices and sacrifice attempt to protect the sacrificer from the perceived threat of a supposedly chaotic nonhuman world. Frank's Crusoedian sovereignty on the island is maintained through ritualised sacrificial killing and sacrificial spaces are used to dispel any dissension from unruly nonhuman animals or 'natural forces', such as the sea, that threaten to upset humancentric hierarchies. Frank's distrust and aversion to what is seen as

[86] Kristeva, p. 96.
[87] Burkert, p. 40.
[88] Banks. p. 41.

uncontrollable is echoed in the characterisation of his brother Eric, whose imminent return to the island becomes a source of anxiety for Frank. Eric is described as mad, wild, and feral, an unstoppable force bringing potential disaster towards the island, which is a world based on rigorous order and routine.

The symbolic use of blood and dead bodies is essential to sacrifice through the association with the taboo and abject. It is mobilised as a tool to control internal fears and external threats—for instance, the internal and external danger of nonhuman animals—as well as to control the actions of other people. In *Violence and the Sacred*, René Girard foregrounds the use of violence in religious rites and sacrifice in asserting that if 'we persist in disregarding the power of violence in human societies […] we are reluctant to admit that violence and the sacred are one and the same thing'.[89] The theatrical violence of sacrifice imparts the impression of control that is maintained through a religious atmosphere. Girard asserts that violence and the sacred function in conjunction with one another. This informs our understanding of violence in a religious or pseudo-religious atmosphere in the context of *The Wasp Factory*. The spectacle of violence provides the sacrificer with a method of control over other people, their environment, and their own fears or phobias. Derrida, in the previously unpublished work 'Le Sacrifice', states that:

> the sacrificed, the scapegoat, what must be put to death, expelled, or separated [is] like the absolute stranger who must be thrown outside so that the inside of the city, of consciousness, of the self can self-identify in peace. One must chase out the stranger in order for belonging, identification, and appropriation to be possible.[90]

Derrida's explanation isolates one of sacrifice's key functions that serve to banish unwanted anxieties that threaten to disturb an individual sense of identity. The conflation of a city with

[89] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. by Patrick Gregory (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 227.
[90] Jacques Derrida, 'Le Sacrifice', in *L'éternel éphémère* by Daniel Mesguich, trans. by Rick Elmore and Perry Zurn (Chicago: DePaul University, 2006), p. 5.

the human psyche is illustrative of where the threat to self-identity emanates from as it is prompted by a fear of otherness. Extending the figure of the stranger to nonhumans reveals the insecurities of the Crusoedian character confronted by the nonhuman other. To instil the impression of control, the sacrificer removes the concept, person, thing, or animal they perceive as threatening precisely because it is seen as otherly. Frank's anxieties about nonhuman animals, natural bodies, and the impending threat of his brother Eric are resolved by performing ritual sacrifice. Jack and his hunters attempt to remove their fear of the beast by leaving oblations to keep the idea of the beast securely on the peripheries of their makeshift society.

As discussed, the curation of a sacrificial space seemingly transmutes the profanity of killing into a sacred act and also essentially imparts the impression of control onto a given place. In *The Wasp Factory*, the symbolic geography of the island is mapped through places Frank has inscribed with meaning relevant to his own personal history. However, the places that hold the most significance are the Loft that houses the eponymous Wasp Factory and The Bunker, the latter being the resting place for the Skull of Old Saul, the deceased family dog. The specifically religious atmosphere is apparent as Frank enters The Bunker, stating that he has to let his 'eyes adjust to the gloom and my mind to the feel of the place'.[91] The physical and sensory changes mark a shift from one world into another. The connection between place, self, and sacrifice is present when Frank is preparing to use the 'Wasp Factory', stating that:

> I looked at the Time, Tide and Distance Tables […] noting the time of high tide. I set the two small wasp candles into the positions the tips of the hands of a clock would have occupied on the face of the Factory if showing the time of local high tide […] I

[91] Banks, p. 45.

> set the jar on the altar, which was decorated with various powerful things […] I held my crotch, closed my eyes and repeated my secret catechisms.[92]

The process is connected to religion through the reference to the 'catechism'. The catechism involves a series of set questions and answers. Frank's search for a definitive direction and a world that conforms to human order is implicit in this allusion. The Wasp Factory itself, the seat of Frank's sacrificial power, is connected to the wider environment of the island through the meticulous reference to tide charts. An awareness of the relation between space, and how the nonhuman world is mediated through sacrifice, channels what Frank refers to as the 'Power' and maintains his anthropocentric control of the island. Frank's Crusoe-esque sovereign rule is upheld by imaginatively controlling the source of his anxieties through the act of sacrifice by manipulating the surrounding environment and the bodies of animals. Frank's exploitation of the nonhuman is a contemporary gothic re-vision of the exploitative paradigm of eighteenth and nineteenth century Robinsonades. In both Banks' occult re-vision and more traditional adaptations of the Crusoe-like figures, nonhuman animals and environments are exploited to alleviate the castaway's anxieties. Banks re-frames human/nonhuman dichotomous relationships through a disturbing narrative that causes us to reconsider current interactions with the nonhuman that are continued out of tradition or social norms.

In *Lord of the Flies*, sacrifice takes on a more improvised quality than Frank's meticulously constructed personal mythos. However, like Frank, Jack and his hunters use sacrifice to instil a sense of control over the environment and their self-identity, which is threatened by their ecophobic fear of the nonhuman as discussed in the following section. To rid themselves of this phobic anxiety, the boys' fears are displaced onto nonhuman animals or humans that become surrogates for their fear of otherness. The lasting image of sacrifice in

[92] Banks, p. 72.

Golding's text is the totem of the severed pig's head left as an offering to the 'beast'. As James Baker recognises, one of the reasons the boys perform sacrifice is to dispel their fears regarding the beast, stating, 'the little Christian boys on Golding's island bow down before a ubiquitous fear and soon spontaneously invent a blood ritual to purge this fear'.[93] Baker's assertion aligns with an anthropological explanation for sacrificial rituals. As Burkert states, 'through ritual, the psyche tries to avoid anxieties, fleeing to a world of its own making from a reality it cannot accept and thus negates'.[94] The boys in *Lord of the Flies* and Frank in *The Wasp Factory* use ritual sacrifice to affirm a sense of self and regulate the environment around them in an attempt to remove their fear of the nonhuman.

Section three: Ecophobia

Fear of nonhuman animals and environments is a recurrent concern for eighteenth and nineteenth century Robinsonades. Culturally inherited fears of nonhuman otherness are projected onto sites such as forests/jungles, oceans, deserts, and many other such areas. They cease to exist exclusively as representations of a particular material environment and are permeated by cultural anxieties and fears. Estok's work on ecophobia can help contextualise these adverse reactions to the nonhuman and pinpoint their origins. Estok states that 'reading ecophobia means looking at the unacknowledged and often unwitting biases […] that are, in fact, the bedrock on which is based so much of our thinking'.[95] Our perception of the nonhuman is filtered through an ecophobic lens reinforced by cultural bias that assumes human pre-eminence. The isolation of the island narrative in the Robinsonade provides a

[93] James R. Baker, 'Golding and Huxley: The Fables of Demonic Possession', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 46 (2000), 311 – 327 (p. 320).
[94] Burkert, p. 25.
[95] Simon Estok, 'Reading Ecophobia: a Manifesto', *Ecozon,* 1 (2010), 75 – 79 (p. 75).

space to expand on Estok's theories and explore other anxious responses to the nonhuman that can culminate in phobia.

The castaway's ecophobic responses are exacerbated by their unique situation in the specific conditions of the desert island narrative. However, these anxieties emanate from a much broader origin in regard to the nonhuman world that is actuated by the state of isolation on the island. It also should be emphasised that phobias are characterised as *irrational* fears and although phobia is certainly part of the human/nonhuman relationship in the Robinsonade, there is an understandable amount of *rational* anxiety that comes with being trapped on a desert island. Martin Heidegger's definition of angst sheds light on this relationship. He states that angst does not:

> "see" a definite "there" and "over here" from which what is threatening approaches. The fact that what is threatening is nowhere characterizes what Angst is about […] But "nowhere" does not mean nothing […] what is threatening cannot approach from a definite direction within nearness, it is already "there"—and yet nowhere. It is so near that it is oppressive and stifles one's breath—and yet it is nowhere.[96]

In desert island narratives, rational fears are not dismissed after discovering there are no predator animals on the island. The underlying ecophobic roots escalate into often violent pre-emptive overreactions levelled against nonhuman animals and environments. Contemporary re-visions critique the prevailing sense of anxiety that saturates conventional Robinsonades.

In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding emphasises anxiety felt in the presence of the forest/jungle. The fear of forests and their presence in the cultural imagination is the subject of Robert Pogue Harrison's *Forests: Shadows of Civilization*.[97] Harrison states that 'forests

[96] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 174.
[97] Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: Shadows of Civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 108.

present an opaque mirror of the civilization that exists in relation to them' and impacts the 'various ways forests are conceived, represented, or symbolized'.[98] The reflective quality of forests is echoed by Siegel's assertion that in *Lord of the Flies* 'the jungle is basically a neutral element in the novel, and only gives the reader information about the characters as they act towards it […] [and] depends entirely on the boys' perception of it'.[99] The question of the jungle's neutrality depends on how we define 'neutral', as it may imply a degree of characterless inactivity and passivity that belies Golding's animate descriptions of the jungle. If this were the case, without human definition or observation, the jungle exists as a passive force with no innate identity or agency of its own. In this regard, Harrison's mirror analogy is more apt in the context of environmental criticism. The boys project their impressions onto the environment to reveal a colonial vision of the nonhuman; an anthropocentric sense of entitlement contrasted with the potential threat to human order.[100] The boys certainly begin by conceiving of the island as implicitly theirs by right, but in the periphery of the mirror's reflection they perceive something hostile: a perception that emerges from preconceived ecophobic notions. The nonhuman (particularly the non-European) environment is assumed to contain within it an innate danger or threat that needs to be expunged or contained through the implication of colonial order that utilises repressive violence. Siegel's description of the forest as neutral, a blank canvas inflected by the boys' collective emotions, is an impression that stems from the novel form's human-centric focal point and reveals how our perception of place is re-interpreted in the human imagination.

The analogues between Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Christian modes of thought provides some context to the boys' relationship with the nonhuman. Although formal

[98] Harrison, p. 108.
[99] Siegel, p. 47.
[100] As I will explore in the following chapters, the plantation mentality conceives of the nonhuman world as an exploitable resource that indisputably belongs to the Crusoe-esque colonist, but it also appears as a threatening otherly force that if left unchecked will destabilise human control.

Christian doctrines are left behind, the boys' distrust of nonhumanness stems from a postlapsarian fear of the animal and environmental 'other'. Lynn White Jr. explores Western attitudes to the nonhuman and critiques Christianity's role in the current environmental crisis.[101] The emphasis on the Christian anthropocentric differences between people and nonhumans manifests in *Lord of the Flies* through the beast, a figure that is fluid, almost omnipresent, and indicative of a fear of the wild. Its existence is reminiscent of Heidegger's definition of angst. The beast's blurred distinctions cause it to appear and reappear, become visible through its absence, and allow it to possess the hidden parts of the island as well as the fringes of the boys' imaginations.

Frank in *The Wasp Factory* embodies ecophobic attitudes that exaggerate the Crusoedian fear of the nonhuman. Frank emphasises the differences between himself and other animals, maintaining strict binaries that posit humans (himself especially) at the top of a hierarchical chain over other animals. The disruption of this order is a source of ecophobic distress for Frank, as discussed in relation to the episode in the Rabbit Grounds. Reflecting on ecophobia and nonhuman anxiety, the hunting scene explores the fear of being consumed, a recurrent motif in *Robinson Crusoe* that is articulated and parodied by *The Wasp Factory.* The anxiety and fear stem from the reversal of the food chain and carnophallogocentric behaviours. As Derrida reflects, Defoe's Crusoe 'is afraid of dying a living death (*mourir vivant*) by being swallowed or devoured into the deep belly of the earth or the sea or some living creature, some living animal'.[102] As well as being consumed by wild animals and environments, Crusoe and Crusoe-like figures are concerned with a more conceptual consumption where their sense of humanity is lost to the nonhuman wilderness.[103]

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[101] Lynn White Jr., 'Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis', in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* ed. by Cheryll Glotfelty & Harold Fromm (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996).
[102] Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign: Volume II*, p. 77.
[103] Crusoe is also specifically concerned with becoming a victim of cannibalism. I will discuss this issue further in the final chapter through a postcolonial and ecocritical lens.

(2.6) Ecophobia
Anxieties, forests, hidden threat

In *Lord of the Flies*, representations of ecophobia centre around the beast, the looming hostility of the jungle, and the totalising isolation of the surrounding sea. The conditions of the island amplify ecophobic responses. An essential component of the conventional castaway narrative is a sense of desertedness. With no means of escape, castaways are caught between the unknown dangers of the jungle and the unfathomable depths of the sea, trapped on the liminal beach suspended between two extremes in the only relatively safe zone without making attempts to tame the wilderness environment.

Conventional Robinsonades explore the anxiety-provoking vulnerability of a solitary person isolated in the immensity of the nonhuman world. Defoe's Crusoe, after being shipwrecked and washed ashore—caught between a desert of sea and a wasteland of jungle—reflects 'I had neither Food, House, Clothes, Weapon, or Place to fly to, and in Despair of any Relief, saw nothing but Death before me […] At the Approach of Night, I slept in a Tree for fear of wild Creatures'.[104] Crusoedian characters enforce human structures and are defined by their distinction to the nonhuman. The colonising and exploitative steps Crusoe takes exemplify anthropocentric and Eurocentric desires to stand apart from the nonhuman, to be expectational, rather part of a wider collective. To maintain this state of separation, Crusoedian characters require physical representations of human conceptual structures. Finding himself shipwrecked, Crusoe recognises the need for a weapon, a home, clothing, all of which exist beyond simple practical purposes and have greater symbolic value. Whereas Crusoe goes on to transform the desert island into a plantation colony, Golding in *Lord of the Flies* subverts this imperialist narrative as the boys are never able to develop past Crusoe's initial despair at being abandoned on the island.

[104] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 90.

Separation from the physical mainland and wider societal structures catalyses anxiety and, in the conventional Robinsonade, intensifies the impression of danger posed by the nonhuman. In *Lord of the Flies*, the castaways' preoccupation with the presence of unseen predators intersects with ecophobic responses to the jungle. This anxiety in relation to the nonhuman is underscored as Jack tries to articulate his feelings, stating:

> "If you're hunting sometimes you catch yourself feeling as if – there's nothing in it of course. Just a feeling. But you can feel as if you're not hunting, but—being hunted, as if something's behind you all the time in the jungle [...] "That's how you can feel in the forest. Of course, there's nothing in it. Only—only—" He took a few rapid steps toward the beach, then came back. "Only I know how they feel. See? That's all."[105]

At this point in the novel, the boys have explored the jungle and rationally know there are no predators on the island. Nevertheless, there is a persistent angst, only a lingering sense of dread intensified rather than pacified by the absence of any danger. The Crusoe-esque castaway is left constantly predicting or expecting a potential threat to emerge despite its continual absence.

Jack's anxiety in the jungle recalls the Crusoedian fear of being consumed and the reversal of the prey/predator binary. In the above extract, Jack's apprehension of the forest is underscored in the unconscious movement towards the beach, the only safe zone between the jungle and the unknown dangers waiting in the sea. Harrison's analysis of Dante's 'Inferno' isolates a similar sensation emanating from the forest, stating that 'Dante's fear in the "Prologue Scene" […] has no specific object. It is a vague and indefinite fear verging on existential anxiety. In effect, it is the forest's alienation itself that terrifies him'.[106] Harrison demonstrates how the forest can provoke feelings of internal and existential anxiety with no fixed origin. The anxiety the boys feel when they are alone in the forest is indicative of an

[105] Golding, p. 73.
[106] Harrison, p. 82.

ecophobic response to a world that is perceived as separate and otherly. The indefinable or unutterable quality of the boys' anxiety manifests in Jack's hesitancy as he struggles to summarise the effect of the jungle and insists that there is no cause for alarm by reiterating that these are only feelings.

Jack's difficulty in articulating the unsettling experience of the jungle explores the anthropocentric fear that something less substantial than a material body might be consumed by the nonhuman: that is, the human castaway's sense of self will be lost to the forest. In the Crusoedian imagination, the forest is a homogenous mass, one large and overwhelming presence that—if it is not broken down into reducible units—threatens to eat away at individual selfhood. As Siegel postulates, 'whether the jungle appears mysterious and threatening or magnificent and fascinating, depends entirely on the boys' perception of it. Jack […] projects his own sinister nature onto nature, rendering it intimidating'.[107] Although the jungle is not simply a passive neutral entity, in a symbolic or imaginative context it is becomes a conduit for human emotions that manifest characters' internalised prejudices. Like Crusoe, Jack enters the jungle with the mindset of the hunter and expects to find equally hostile elements directed back at him. The origin of Jack's anxiety represents internalised preconceived ideas about the jungle that emerge from a fear of the 'other', whether a nonhuman other or a xenophobic notion of non-European environments. These impressions build an ecophobic collage out of the texture of the forest. Some of the boys, particularly Piggy, are averse to entering the forest alone or in the dark. Harrison introduces a series of salient questions regarding our hostile relationships with forests:

> What is that antagonism, however imaginary, all about? Why does the law of civilization define itself from the outset over against the forests? For what obscure religious reasons is our humanity, in its traditional alienation from the animal

[107] Siegel, p. 47.

> kingdom, incompatible with that aboriginal environment? How is it that forests represent an abomination? [108]

The religious antagonism to the environment Harrison alludes to provides us with an insight into the culturally born distrust the boys have for the nonhuman. This religious motif recurs in the figure of the beast and a wider distrust of nonhumans who are demonised as the soulless otherly shadows of human civilisation.

The fear the forest inspires is, as Harrison points out, imaginary. The island initially appears open and ownable as the boys begin their adventure with the archetypal Robinsonade convention of surveying and mapping the island to conceptually assert ownership. On reaching the mountain on their first outing, Ralph theatrically spreads his arms towards the vista and remarks, "All ours".[109] This entitlement is reinforced by capitalist and imperial ideologies that envision the nonhuman as existing solely for human benefit. As Harrison identifies:

> Enlightenment remains out dominant cultural heritage. Still, today, in other words, we argue for the preservation of forests on the basis of their numerous uses and benefits […] this concept of utility is more insidious and historically determined than appears at first glance.[110]

The inheritance of this human entitlement becomes an obstacle to non-exploitative engagements with nonhumanity in the Anthropocene. In this mindset, if the world around us cannot be put to some productive 'use' then it becomes ungovernable and hostile. In *Lord of the Flies*, the affirmative colonial tone is absent from Jack and Ralph's discussion of the nightmares that are plaguing the island community later in the novel. Ralph says, "they talk and scream. The littluns. Even some of the others. As if — […] "as if it wasn't a good

[108] Harrison, p. 2.
[109] Golding, p. 40.
[110] Harrison, p. 108.

island"'.[111] Simon's uncharacteristic interruption highlights the undercurrent of ecophobia in the boys' collective imagination. Simplistically stating it is "not a good island" is indicative of the Crusoedian assumption that nonproductive spaces are somehow inherently malignant. This impression of the forest is reserved for the dialogue, the boys' diet of colonial adventure stories prejudicing their impressions of place, whereas Golding's third narrative describes the jungle vibrantly.

The figure of the beast also attracts ecophobic descriptions. It appears as an omnipresent inhuman entity, an animal, a monster, and a ghostly presence that continually changes shape in the boys' imagination. The animals used to describe it are associated with common phobias, variously described as a giant bat, a snake, a sea monster, and an uncanny half-human part-ape creature. Though phobias of specific animals might stem from negative experiences (i.e., being bitten by a dog as a child may lead to a distrust of all dogs as an adult), some animals are the focus for specific phobias regardless of any previous interactions that are founded on cultural perception. They cannot agree on what exactly the beast looks like or where the source of the anxiety emanates from; they speculate whether it emerges from the forest, the sea, or the sky. During the discussion, one boy states, "Daddy said they haven't found all the animals in the sea yet [...] "I don't believe in the beast of course. As Piggy says, life's scientific, but we don't know, do we? Not certainly, I mean—".[112] This quote demonstrates the conflict between a desire to believe in empirical positivism and logical ordering systems whilst recognising the gaps in human knowledge through which a fear of the unknown arises. The fear that the beast may be a sea monster augments concerns regarding the unexplored and unknown parts of the ocean that highlight gaps in human knowledge that keeps other animals at a scientific and quantifiable distance. The fear of not

[111] Golding, p. 72.
[112] Ibid, p. 124 – 125.

knowing for *certain* is a major factor in the debate the boys have surrounding the beast and their attempts to quantify it.

The boys' anxiety echoes a postlapsarian fear of nonhumanity. As Martin Green highlights, Golding's religious 'ideology is recognisable in his stress on original sin and his attack on natural grace […] in *Lord of the Flies* […] the boys revert to savagery and murder'.[113] Green goes on to state that the religious theme is carried over into the depictions of 'both civilisation and nature [as] corrupt, but the first is merely feeble, while the second is evil'.[114] The notion that 'nature'—both nonhuman animals and the environment—is innately evil emerges from ideological assertions of human sovereignty and an essentialist human morality. However, Green's assertion does not account for Golding's empathetic depiction of nonhuman animals. The sense of evilness existing in the nonhuman world is a projection of the boys' imagination, an anthropocentric point of view that has no material or actual foundation. Golding revises the colonial Robinsonades' fear that humans outside of society will become increasingly animalistic through contact with the nonhuman. The inhuman beast is fictitious, created through cultural anxieties that imagine potential dangers. The actual materially visible nonhuman animals (namely pigs) in *Lord of the Flies* are sympathetically described by the narration whereas the boys become increasingly brutal in their violent assertion of masculinity. The idea that nonhumanity is essentially evil emerges from an ecophobic preconception. Green's assertion that the boys revert to 'savagery' is not due to the absence of society but is rather a pre-existing condition of western civilisation's imperialistic violence.

[113] Martin Green, 'The Robinson Crusoe Story', in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, ed. by Jeffery Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 50.
[114] Ibid, p. 50.

Lynn White Jr. contextualises Western theology's antagonistic relationship between humans and nonhumans. White identifies the changes in Christian doctrine alongside advancements in technology and agriculturalism as factors in our exploitative relation to the nonhuman, asserting that the difference in 'man's relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature'.[115] These physical and conceptual changes separate humanity from the wider interrelated connection to the nonhuman. This attitude is echoed in the plantation mentality of the colonial Robinsonade that significantly alters human/nonhuman interaction and continues to affect our relationship with nonhumans in the Anthropocene with the advent of agrobusiness. Crusoe's response to the island is initially to view it as a *desert*, a morally corrupt wasteland that needs cultivating and transforming to make it habitable—a process made possible by reducing the nonhuman down to exploitable parts. White goes on to explain that 'especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen'.[116] While distinguishing this as a broad assertion, it provides a useful insight into how people perceive the environment and other animals, particularly in the context of *Lord of the Flies*.

The boys' anthropocentric mentality in *Lord of the Flies* highlights ecophobic notions of the nonhuman 'other'. Returning to the empirical reductionist notions discussed earlier, nonhumans are othered in the semiotic and taxological differences between people and species, marking them as essentially different or subordinate. An undefinable animal like the beast in *Lord of the Flies*, who does not obey conventional rules, creates a vacuum of knowledge that the boys on Golding's island find startling. Not knowing precisely what the beast is and how it came to be on the island opens the door to ecophobic concern. The beast is

[115] White Jr., p. 8.
[116] Ibid, p. 9.

entirely imaginary, emblematic of an overarching anxiety that *something* must exist on the island to threaten them.

(2.7) Ecophobia
The all-consuming sea

The Wasp Factory parodies ecophobic attitudes illustrated by earlier Robinsonades through Frank's exaggerated hatred of the sea and anxiety surrounding the reversal of human-biased hierarchies, namely the fear that we will be eaten physically and metaphorically. The established binary in eating meat provides a source of sustenance but also becomes a paradigm of domination over the nonhuman—the anxiety of this process being reversed, of being eaten yourself conceptually and bodily, is explored through the Robinsonade.

As stated, fearing being consumed is a fundamental part of the Robinsonade established in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. As Huggan and Tiffin recognise, 'Crusoe's account includes numerous references to being swallowed: by elements, by wild beasts, by cannibals. In actuality, however, it is Crusoe himself who increasingly dominates […] consumption, in particular capitalist consumption, is the real serpent in the garden'.[117] Huggan and Tiffin make the salient point that Crusoe-esque colonists are more often than not the consumers rather than the consumed. By consuming, castaways stamp the impression of control and selfhood onto the island by violently asserting human self-identity. As colonists, Crusoedian characters exploit the nonhuman physically and symbolically as well as enslave and murder non-European people whilst continually fearing this relationship may be reversed. Crusoe-like characters establish a combative and oppositional position between themselves and the rest of the island despite rarely encountering truly dangerous or even carnivorous nonhuman

[117] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 174.

animals. Despite the evidence to the contrary, castaways continue to fear that they *could* be eaten.

Returning to Kristeva's concept of abjection can help us understand representations of human and nonhuman relationships in conventional Robinsonades from an environmental critical perspective.[118] Kristeva draws a relation between 'imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us. It is […] not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite'.[119] The fear of being eaten, either the actualised threat of reversing the human/nonhuman binary or the anxiety that it may be up turned, becomes in itself consuming. Crusoedian figures are consumed with the thought that they may be eaten and that human order has become obsolete on the desert island without an overarching human structure. Anthropocentric human order is disturbed by the castaway's separation from the mainland, their identity compromised through the association with what they view as otherly and diametrically opposed to their sense of self. The disturbance causes a violent reaction to correct what they see as an ideological wrong, namely the blurring of boundaries between humans and nonhumans. Contemporary re-visions explore what happens when this order is disturbed and depict the fragility of an identity predicated on oppositional binaries.

There is a distinction between the well-founded fears a desert island might pose and the more irrational phobias. With no evidence to the contrary, the islanders *should* feel safe, yet the fear of being eaten persists. Ghesquiere notes that in *Robinson Crusoe*, 'nature is for […] a continuous threat. He is afraid of the sea, the earth, the woods, the wild animals, the

[118] I will discuss the connections between abjection and the island itself further in the following chapter in relation to its potential to overturn established dogma and the opportunity for liberation from unnecessary human constraints.
[119] Kristeva, p. 4.

rain and the sun, due mainly to his need for protection'.[120] Crusoe and Crusoe-like figures struggle with dwelling in an environment outside of their immediate control. Being in an exclusively nonhuman setting escalates their need for protection and highlights their essential vulnerability. These unfounded fears are encapsulated in the following scene as Crusoe enters a cave:

> I found it was pretty large […] sufficient for me to stand upright in it, and perhaps another with me: but I must confess to you that I made more haste out than I did in […] I saw two broad shining eyes of some creature, whether devil or man I knew not, which twinkled like two stars […] after some pause I recovered myself, and began to call myself a thousand fools, and to think that he that was afraid to see the devil was not fit to live twenty years in an island all alone […] I might well think there was nothing in this cave that was more frightful than myself.[121]

This episode exemplifies Crusoedian characters' fundamental fear of otherness that affects their immediate relation to the world around them. This is epitomised in the anxiety that another presence *could* inhabit the same space as Crusoe, as he remarks the cave was 'sufficient' for both himself and also 'perhaps another' to stand up in. The spaciousness invites the possibility of another entity. It is a vacuum that asks to be filled that promises the possibility of a challenger to Crusoe's sovereign rule over the island. Crusoe finds that there is indeed another presence in the cave that is, at this point, an unknown and as such holds the potential to be something capable of consuming even more proficiently than Crusoe himself.

Crusoe reminds himself that he is currently the most 'frightful' creature in the cave and the island. Emboldened by this fact, Crusoe:

> took up a firebrand, and in I rushed again […] I had not gone three steps in before I was almost as frightened as before; for I heard a very loud sigh, like that of a man in some pain […] followed by a broken noise, as of words half expressed, and then a

[120] Ghesquiere, p. 127.
[121] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 149 – 150.

> deep sigh again. I stepped back […] struck with such a surprise that it put me into a cold sweat […] I stepped forward again […] I saw lying on the ground a monstrous, frightful old he-goat, just making his will, as we say, and gasping for life […] dying […] of mere old age.[122]

Crusoe is indecisive and hesitant, he wavers at the cave entrance, uncertain whether to encounter the unknown entity or flee. The unheimlich part human and partly nonhuman sounds issuing from the cave cause a surge of fear in the 'broken noise, as of words half expressed, and then a deep sigh again'. The human-like quality of the sound coming from the cave elicits an abject reaction as the boundary point between Crusoe's crucial binary distinction between humans and nonhumans is challenged. Even after the unknown creature is discovered to be a dying goat, it is still described as both frightful and monstrous. Characters who inherit Crusoe's ecophobic reactions are kept in a state of constant vigilance in the fear they may be consumed, compromising their engagement with the nonhuman.

Reading Crusoe's encounter with the he-goat through Kristeva's understanding of abjection conceptualises *the* central Crusoedian concern, that the distinction between what is human and what is not is ambiguous, precarious, and cannot be dispelled by the assertion of a binary distinction. Kristeva writes:

> The abject is not an ob-ject facing me, which I name or imagine […] The abject has only one quality of the object—that of being opposed to I. If the object, however, through its opposition, settles me within the fragile texture of a desire for meaning, which […] makes me ceaselessly and infinitely homologous to it, what is ***abject***, on the contrary, the jettisoned object, is radically excluded and draws me toward the place _ where meaning collapses.[123]

The noises issuing from the cave alarm Crusoe. There is a fundamental fear for safety but also the anxiety that something otherly and as yet undefined is inside. When nonhuman

[122] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 150.
[123] Kristeva, p. 2.

animals cease to be a definite object, something that is opposed and defined against the human subject that provides the basis for human identity, the impulse is to flee or to force it aside. As Kristeva goes on to relate, the 'abject confronts us [...] with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of animal'.[124] A shared capacity to bleed, the presence of waste products, and eventual consumption in death ties humans and nonhumans together at a fundamental level that persists despite our attempts to deny the veracity of the connection. To combat being confronted with our own animality we institute rites, practices, and other social norms to confirm the boundary point between humans and nonhumans. The purpose of challenging and blurring the aggressively asserted oppositional binary between what is purported to be civilised and wild is not to only say, "Humans could learn a lot from animals", or that animal behaviour should be used as a model to base human life on.[125] Rather it emphasises the connective web of interactions that features humanity as a participating member rather than a passive third-party observer. Disturbing the pyramidal structure that places people at its pinnacle may induce a feeling of abjection, but it is a necessary discomfort to move away from exploitative relationships that ultimately negatively affect both humans and nonhumans.

The Wasp Factory's rabbit hunting scene discussed previously also emphasises the Crusoedian fear of consumption and disturbs anthropocentric order. Frank foregrounds the concern for his body and safety stating, 'the rabbit was on me in a half-second, heading straight for my throat […] Its head twisted this way and that as it tried to reach my fingers with its chopping teeth […] I couldn't move my hands for fear of it tearing the flesh off a finger or biting my nose off'.[126] The previously docile prey has become a hostile agent that

[124] Kristeva, p. 13.
[125] The behaviour of nonhuman animals is so diverse that grouping them in such a way for convenience might mistakenly confirm, rather than challenge, the binary.
[126] Banks, p. 31 – 32.

subverts the straightforward traditional hunting scene, disturbing the established dominant position of humans over prey animals reinforced by previous Robinsonades. Banks demonstrates that any animal, regardless of their position in human-ordered hierarchies, can create an ecophobic reaction that illustrates the current of generalised fear in encountering undomesticated animals and their potential to subvert the boundaries between humans and nonhumans.

Domestication of nonhuman animals and environments is a significant part of the colonial Robinsonade as a means of controlling the island and establishing human order. Seemingly harmless nonhuman animals and environments yet to be domesticated induce exaggerated reactions. They are seen as unpredictable when outside of human control. The above extract highlights Frank's Crusoedian fear of being consumed, in this instance losing his nose or a finger. Frank is predisposed to fearing losing a body part as he believes the family dog, Old Saul, was the cause of his castration. Despite the revelation at the end of *The Wasp Factory* that informs us this is not the case; it remains a fact for Frank at this point in the narrative. The threat of further dismemberment relates to the anxiety that a carnophallogocentric relationship could be reversed. Instead of eating other animals as symbols of dominance, prey or domestic animals invert anthropocentric dichotomies that are foundational for eighteenth and nineteenth century Robinsonades. The thought that it was a domesticated animal that supposedly caused Frank to lose a body part is crucial as domestication in conventional Robinsonade narratives removes the anxiety surrounding animal otherness and brings nonhuman animals under human control. The thought that Old Saul has acted converse to expectation furthers the ecophobic distrust of all nonhuman animals in *The Wasp Factory*. This particular reversal of human/nonhuman relationships will be explored in the final chapter concerned with Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy in relation to transgenics.

Crusoe-esque figures, such as Frank, internalise overarching human anxieties about being consumed by other animals. This fear also extends to natural bodies, most prominently the sea but also includes other environments as we have seen in relation to forests. As Ghesquiere indicates, 'Robinson describes the sea as wild, impetuous, furious, raging and dangerous. The various storms are characterized as violent, terrible, furious dreadful hurricanes'.[127] Crusoe feels helpless and isolated in comparison to the ocean, which becomes a site of ecophobic imagery framed as uncontrollable or destructive. Robinson experiences various shipwrecks throughout the narrative, but the following extracts recount the storm that casts Crusoe onto the island that specifically highlights the fear of consumption by natural bodies:

> The wave that came upon me again buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body […] I was ready to burst with holding my breath […] I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water […] I was covered again with water a good while […] the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again; and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forward as before […] had well-nigh been fatal to me, for the sea […] landed me, or rather dashed me, against a piece of rock […] that it left me senseless, and indeed helpless […] the blow taking my side and breast, beat the breath as it were quite out of my body […] I must have been strangled in the water […] and seeing I should be covered again with the water, I resolved to hold fast by a piece of the rock […] the next wave, though it went over me, yet did not so swallow me up as to carry me away […] I got to the mainland […] free from danger and quite out of the reach of the water.[128]

The corporeality of the sea, the 'body' of the ocean, consumes Crusoe in a literal sense as he is swallowed by the waves and dragged by the current. The spatial relation between Crusoe's own body loses its defined boundaries, indicated by 'burst', as it is invaded by seawater. Crusoe's body is smothered, he becomes seemingly insignificant and helpless as he is

[127] Ghesquiere, p. 127.
[128] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 40.

covered, strangled, and dashed in the fight to meet the shore. Specific features of Crusoe's body are disarticulated, his 'head and hands shoot' from the water while the rest of his person is submerged, the sea takes his 'side and breast' as well as the breath out of his body. As Crusoe loses definition and a complete form, the animacy of the sea changes to include bodily features, capable of reaching after Crusoe as he struggles to the mainland. This event and others like it persuade Crusoe to avoid the sea wherever possible causing him to take more circuitous routes and avoid seafaring.

As Huggan and Tiffin observe, Crusoe fears being swallowed by the elements as well as other animals, which is a fear Frank inherits.[129] Crusoe's phobia of the sea is born from his near-death experience and although Frank's exaggerated hatred does not stem from a parallel event it shares the fear of being consumed. Confronting the insurmountable opposition of the ocean creates phobic reactions in Frank, who states that the sea 'has always frustrated me, destroying what I have built, washing away what I have left, wiping clean the marks I have made […] The Sea is a sort of mythological enemy, and I make what you might call sacrifices to it in my soul, fearing it a little, respecting it as you're supposed to'.[130] The encroachment of the sea surrounding Frank's island threatens to take away his control of the environment. Paradoxically, the sea enables the Crusoedian castaways' assertion of sovereignty as it separates the island from the mainland but also threatens to consume them entirely. In *The Wasp Factory* it must be sated, pacified, and sacrificial offerings are devoted to warding off the sea's advance. Rather than the animal parts and bodily fluid Frank utilises in his other rituals, parts of his soul are metaphorically offered by accepting and recognising the sea as something insurmountable. Frank reflects that 'you can never really win against the water; it will always triumph in the end, seeping and soaking and building up and

[129] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 174.
[130] Banks, p. 54.

undermining and overflowing'.[131] Frank projects his own militaristic outlook onto what he views as a destructive equal. The sea is entirely unaware of the secret war between itself and Frank, whose phobic hatred is socially inherited as the sea exists as a long-standing mythological enemy in cultural memory as a site of fear and phobic concern.

The historical and cultural fear of the sea, or Thalassophobia, recurs throughout the Robinsonade tradition. Estok compares the media depictions of natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods to reports on international terrorism. These ecophobic descriptions of the sea and other unruly environments reinforce oppositional divisions between humans and nonhumans, affecting the way we view environments. As Estok states, 'the increasing violence of our climate has ratcheted up the tone of urgency and crisis defining representations of nature: one of the results of this is that terror and ecophobia often define twenty-first-century representations of nature'.[132] The prominence of ecophobic language in conventional Robinsonades establishes the sea as a site of anxiety, a fear that is exaggerated in the Anthropocene due to the rate of climate change. In *The Wasp Factory*, the descriptions of the sea are comparable to the language of terrorism/war highlighted by Estok.[133] Frank thinks of the sea as a saboteur or spy, 'undermining' and 'seeping' into human society. He sees the sea as subversive, something that disturbs his attempts to control the island and frustrates the edges of human-enforced order. Water is conceptualised as an infiltrator, a hostile agent invading human habitation, eroding, and breaking down physical and conceptual constructs. Frank's paranoia views natural bodies such as the sea as working against human agency or, more specifically, Frank's control over the island. In the

[131] Banks, p. 34.
[132] Simon Estok, 'Terror and Ecophobia', *Frame: Journal of Literary Studies*, 26 (2015), 87 – 100 (p. 88).
[133] Although the current twenty-first century representations of terror and ecophobia naturally appear after the publication of *The Wasp Factory*, Estok's work can be useful in understanding how the natural world can be pictured in an ecophobic light as an agent of terror by various medias.

Crusoedian mindset, it is impossible to engage with the immediate nonhuman environment or see nonhuman animals as anything other than either potential threats or possible resources.

Banks and Golding's depiction of hunting, meat-eating, and sacrifice in their re-visionary Robinsonades explores the anthropocentric desire to control nonhuman animals and environments in Crusoedian Robinsonades that emerges from a fear of the nonhuman other. Meat-eating in *Lord of the Flies* moves from a necessity towards fetishisation. It explores a desire to consume nonhuman animals physically and as metaphors for dominance. The inclusion of sacrificial ritual escalates the Crusoedian need to develop systems of control to order the nonhuman. Sacrifice transforms hunted and scavenged animals into cultural products that become extensions of the sanctifier's identity and will to dominate. The use of body parts, blood, and other bodily fluids (human and nonhuman alike) is a projection of self into the sacrificial victim. Sacrifice is also utilised to remove anxieties about the self-in-environment and the self in relation to other animals. Habitual actions project a sense of control over the sacrificer's immediate environment, which is used to combat ecophobic anxiety. To cope with the changes in their environment, Crusoe-esque characters implement strict regimens that force environments and others to conform to a Eurocentric dogmatic worldview. As we will discover in the following chapter, Crusoedian characters are emblematic of a desire to dwell but also demonstrate the self-imposed cultural barriers that hinder our engagement with the nonhuman world.

Chapter three
Aspects of dwelling, Anatopia in the Robinsonade

Dwelling in the archetypal Robinsonade entails a series of survival skills and the imposition of patriarchal order through violent colonial processes of domestication, work, and building to reconstruct a facsimile of the castaway-turned-coloniser's society onto the island. As discussed in the previous chapter, canonical Robinsonades typify a fear of the wilderness environment, nonhuman animals, and anxiety in response to an absence of human structure. Defoe's Crusoe sees the desert island as an unproductive and by extension morally corrupt wasteland; an antagonistic unliveable environment that needs to be initially survived and subsequently domesticated to fit Western sensibilities to make it hospitable. Paradoxically, alongside the representation of the island as a wasteland runs the *potential* for productivity and growth as a virginal pre-colony. This dichotomy exemplifies the exploitative Crusoedian mindset, the island is both a hostile force as well as a future outpost of imperial expansion. The how and why of dwelling is central to our understanding of the Robinsonade and our own capacity to dwell in the Anthropocene as conditions become increasingly inhospitable due to anthropogenic climate change. The 'eco' of ecocriticism, etymologically derived from the Greek 'oikos' meaning house, indicates the interconnected issues of dwelling and is concerned with how homes are formed conceptually and physically.[1] I will explore the question of dwelling in the Robinsonade in this chapter through two separate contemporary Crusoe-figures, J.G. Ballard's Maitland and Michel Tournier's Robinson, and analyse the

[1] William Howarth, 'Some Principles of Ecocriticism', in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. by Cheryll Glotfelty & Harold Fromm (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996) p. 69.

methods they deploy in order to dwell in the new environment of the island in its various incarnations.[2]

In Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe's processes of domestication and homemaking create anatopic European structures—from castles to cottages—that appear out of place in the tropical island environment.[3] The creation of an anatopia and the feeling of being out-of-place occurs when we are unable to merge our physical and psychological experience of place and self. As such we ourselves appear incongruous or something discordant in the immediate environment. To remedy this feeling, we might attempt to adapt the environment to reflect how we view ourselves or change our perception of self to suit the conditions of the environment instead. Some contemporary revisions initially assume familiar Crusoe-like responses to desert islands to critique the exploitative colonial tradition. Their characters continue Crusoe's efforts to control the environment through building and domestication only to find them insufficient ways of engaging with the fabric of the island itself.

This chapter explores approaches to dwelling other than pitting yourself against the nonhuman and cultivating a facsimile of civilising domestic features. Michel Tournier's *Friday, or the Other Island* and J.G. Ballard's *Concrete Island* critique the Crusoe myth by revising their protagonists' interactions with islands and revising the composition of the island itself while reconsidering acts of dwelling.[4] The Robinsonade and its subsequent re-visions question our own capacity for dwelling, physically and psychically, as the island

[2] As indicated in the introduction to my thesis, for convenience I will be referring to Tournier's protagonist as 'Robinson' and Defoe's protagonist as 'Crusoe' to avoid confusion.

[3] This chapter will establish some uses for the word 'anatopic' and 'anatopia' that I have derived from the pre-existing concept "Anatopism". The terms can be used to describe someone who is out-of-place or experiencing a sensation of out-of-placeness. It can also refer to features introduced to an environment or landscape that appear incongruous to the surrounding aspects of a particular place. It can also describe a non-space, somewhere in-between, that cannot be described as a utopia, dystopia, or Foucault's heterotopia but rather a world characterised by out-of-placeness.

[4] Michel Touriner, *Friday, or the Other Island*, trans. by Norman Denny (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1974). J G Ballard, *Concrete Island* (London: Vintage, 1994).

environment makes an issue of dwelling itself. The castaway narrative separates the Crusoe-figure from the physical and conceptual structures that supported their capacity to dwell in everyday society. This state of separation problematises the reliance on an intersubjective structure of human actors who facilitate dwelling and maintain a sense of identity and personhood.[5] Marooned and isolated, castaways can either recreate an echo of these structures to simulate their previous society or alternatively invent new methods of living on and interacting with the nonhuman. Analysing this process informs our own relationship to nonhumanity in the Anthropocene as it becomes imperative that we find new methods of physically and imaginatively dwelling.

Tournier's interpretation of the tropical island and Ballard's urban traffic island draw on familiar depictions of wastelands reminiscent of canonical Robinsonades. As Vittoria Di Palma describes in *Wasteland: A History*, the existence of the wasteland offers news way of considering the environment outside of an exploitative hierarchical relationship. Di Palma writes:

> as an underused, marginal space, the wasteland provided an exemplary site for the establishment of an alternative society. In fact, the wasteland offers an ideal space for all kinds of civil disobedience for reasons that are intrinsic to the concept of wasteland itself […] as wild land, it resists civilization. As useless land, it resists commodification. When desolate and barren, it resists cultivation. When wild and overgrown, it resists domestication.[6]

I will return to the idea of resistance and nonconformity throughout this chapter in relation to the Robinsonade and its colonial origins that influence our approach to the nonhuman in the Anthropocene. In both Tournier's *Friday* and Ballard's *Concrete Island*, the castaways' attempts at colonisation and domestication are obstructed. This forces them to consider how

[5] The capitalised "O" in "Others" refers to the Deleuzian Other, which I will explore in relation to the Robinsonade throughout this chapter.
[6] Vittoria Di Palma, *Wasteland: A History* (London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 42.

they can adapt to the environment rather than imposing an idealised vision of human-centred landscapes that are orientated around human desires.

Tournier and Ballard's re-visionary Robinsonades represent islands as living places and include varying degrees of animism projected onto the environment. Animism as a term has seen widespread use and its definitions can broadly encompass the belief that all things—whether an object, animal, mineral, or place—have agency. This is set against, as Tim Ingold indicates, Aristotle's hylomorphic model of creation that brings together 'form (*morphe*) and matter (*hyle*) […] form came to be seen as imposed, by an agent with a particular end or goal in mind, while matter—thus rendered passive and inert—was that which was imposed upon'.[7] This correlates with the conventional Robinsonade, which is ideologically driven by colonial and capitalist concerns that impose human concepts onto the nonhuman. Ingold defines animism as 'processes of formation as against their final products […] characterized by a heightened sensitivity and responsiveness [...] to an environment that is in perpetual flux'.[8] As I will demonstrate, Tournier and Ballard's Crusoe-figures move from considering the environment as just inert matter to be imposed upon by humans to experiencing the nonhuman receptively. However, the extent of their transformation as a truly radical change from the conventional Robinsonade is, as I will explore in the final section of this chapter, uncertain.

Both Maitland and Robinson feel a sense of dislocation and disembodiment in the new environment as they attempt to make their desert islands knowable through psychological and physical projections of self. I will explore this disembodiment in both texts through the uncanny. I will be drawing on Ernst Jentsch's explanation of uncanny sensations,

[7] Tim Ingold, 'Being alive to a world without objects', in *The Handbook of Contemporary Animism* ed. by Graham Harvey (Oxford: Routledge, 2014), p. 213.
[8] Ibid, p. 214.

were not knowing and unfamiliarity with space is creates an unheimlich effects, and Freud's definition that recognises how things we once considered heimlich—comfortable, homely, familiar—can come to resemble the unheimlich. Both interpretations are relevant to my discussion of dwelling, particularly in relation to Ballard as the concrete island Maitland finds himself stranded on appears as both a familiar and unfamiliar double of the city.

Both Maitland and Robinson adapt their approaches to living on and with the island, but the question remains whether these revised modes of interaction encourage equitable relationships between humans and nonhumans. Although there is a marked change in how they engage with the environment, they retain their sense of possession and ownership as the supposed sovereign rulers of the island. Maitland forfeits the chance to escape from the island to attempt to dominate it on his own terms. Although Robinson elects not to leave the island as he has found peace outside of Westernised society, he still considers himself its undisputed owner. The parallels between Tournier's Robinson and Ballard's Maitland are highlighted by Michel Delville, who recognises that:

> *Concrete Island* immediately evokes the myth of Robinson Crusoe. Maitland, however, is closer to the hero of Michel Tournier's adaption of the Crusoe story […] an inverted Robinson, Maitland does not try to recreate a civilised society […] but, instead goes through a process of initiation that draws him away from civilisation into the deepest and most primitive reaches of his unconscious self.[9]

The points of comparison between Tournier's and Ballard's Crusoe-figures appear in their responses to dwelling on the desert islands and, as Delville's asserts, in their exploration of subjective human identities. I contend that the transformative process in Maitland and Robinson's search for selfhood necessitates an initial emulation of the Crusoedian recreation of European capitalist society rather than solely a dive into a 'primitive' self. As discussed in

[9] Michel Delville, *J.G. Ballard* (Plymouth: Northcote Publishers Ltd., 1998), p. 42.

relation to *Lord of the Flies*, this supposed primitivity is really a derivation or recontextualisation of exploitative capitalist societal structures. This complicates Delville's assertion that Maitland and Robinson do not attempt to 'recreate civilised society', particularly when we consider Maitland's journey as he is rather pulled deeper into the processes and structures at the centre of capitalist civilisation. Tournier and Ballard's Crusoe-figures initially emulate Defoe's Crusoe to go on to provide contrasting re-visionary alternatives. However, even after both protagonists' apparent metamorphosis their relationship with nonhumanity is inflected with Crusoe-esque patterns. Their exploration of self is *self*-interested, the environment is used to enable this introspection without attempting a reciprocal relationship.[10] Though Tournier and Ballard critique the values of *Robinson Crusoe*, it is unclear whether their protagonists break from the paradigms of the Crusoe-myth and offer an alternative engagement with the island, or if their synthesis of new means of dwelling remains anthropocentric.

Section one: Imposing order

Systematic reconstruction of literary desert islands through physical and conceptual order-making systems is a fundamental part of the Robinsonade genre. Defoe's Crusoe cultivates and domesticates the island into a facsimile of European structures. *Robinson Crusoe* features anatopic buildings such as castles, pantries, and summerhouses rendered onto the tropical environment to curate an idealised European landscape aesthetic. Defoe's Crusoe introduces foreign crops, structures, and domesticated animals that changes the island's ecological makeup but also its conceptualisation. Physical and conceptual order is imposed to reproduce a copy of the European rural idyll. The transformation of supposedly unproductive

[10] Although this is certainly not an overwhelmingly negative relationship that continues the same exploitation as the colonial period, or the same rate of consumption we see in the Anthropocene, there is a one-sidedness that involves the cultivation of the self by utilising the environment.

environments into acceptable European visions was a preoccupation for Defoe that manifests in Crusoe's reordering of the desert world. As Di Palma notes, during Defoe's tour of Britain, he aimed 'to survey local resources and manufactures: more than other commentators he tends to see the countryside through the lens of use'.[11] Defoe's fiction and nonfiction writing is concerned with the human benefits of transforming the supposed unproductive wasteland into a profitable economic venture. His gaze narrows in the pursuit of productivity, to create a controllable world focused on utility. In *A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain*, Defoe regards a particular marsh area he is visiting as 'both unhealthy and unpleasant […] however, it is very good farming in the marshes [...] the Land is rich; for, it being a place where everybody cannot live, those that venture it will have encouragement'.[12] Defoe promoted enterprising expansion—in Britain, the wider British colonies, and potential new areas of imperial 'development'—and praised those who combatted the adverse conditions of the unproductive nonhuman world to reveal the promise of profit the environment conceals.

Crusoe's transformation of the island into a profitable outpost of English expansionism is a literary manifestation of Defoe's attitude. The following two sections will focus on Tournier's *Friday* and the initial emulation of Defoe's Crusoe and the laborious attempts to recreate a European way of life on the island and impose the conditions of Western civilisation onto what is initially viewed as a wasteland. In the first section of *Friday* before his apparent transformation, Robinson constructs anatopic physical buildings, enshrines and enforces dogmatic self-governing laws, and reinstates conceptual constructs like time measurement to solidify his place on the island.

[11] Di Palma, p.142.
[12] Daniel Defoe, *A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain. Divided into circuits or journeys. Giving a particular and entertaining account of whatever is Curious, and worth Observation* (London: printed for J. Osborn, S. Birt, D. Browne, J. Hodges, A. Millar, J. Whiston, and J. Robinson, 1742), p. 5.

Robinson tries a variety of colonising efforts to bring the island under his jurisdiction and sovereign rule. My analysis explores human and nonhuman relationships in Tournier's depiction of exploitative systems of control and reflects on the notion of dwelling in reference to Tim Ingold's 'taskscape' (a series of tasks that interrelate between their respective participants) and Deleuze's essay 'Michel Tournier and the World Without Others'.[13] Tournier's Crusoe-figure satirises the conventional Robinsonade version of dwelling by initially emulating the recreation and reclamation of their previous society and then summarily dismantling it. In the first section of the novel, Robinson exhibits a prevailing anxiety that any slippage in his pantomime act of civilisation will result in his fall from humanity and transform him into a nonhuman animal. As well as exploring the processes and the reasons behind Robinson's prolific building mentality, this section begins to question what happens when these slippages occur and the radical alternatives they present.

(3.1) Order

Building, physical and conceptual constructions

The conceptual and physical links between building and dwelling in the Robinsonade are manifestations of a castaways' out-of-placeness on the desert island and physical reminders of the home they are estranged from. Castaways struggle to consider the alien environment as habitable without enacting extreme changes: the island as an anatopia, a world out-of-place. To remedy this feeling, they build anatopic structures that resemble a familiar place. This only highlights their alienation as the structures are removed from their original contexts. Recoiling from their isolation from society, and without the various buildings and institutions

[13] Gilles Deleuze, 'Michel Tournier and World Without Others', in *The Logic of Sense*, trans. by Mark Lester (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), pp. 340 – 61.

that bind that society together, castaways/colonisers are unable to relate to the new context of the immediate environment.

To construct a sense of self and identity, *Friday*'s Robinson initially builds out-of-place structures to establish himself (both physically and conceptually) as a rightful owner, controller, and dweller on the island. Robinson's efforts to populate the island with buildings are attempts to rebuild his diminishing connection to his estranged society. He reflects in his journal that, 'merely to survive is to die. It is a matter of building, organizing, ordering, patiently and without cease. Every pause is a backwards step, a step towards the mire'.[14] To Robinson, the mire is both a literal place as well as a representation of 'the abyss of animalism', it is a place of inactivity and the site of his early experiments with being an animal.[15] These experiments with becoming like a nonhuman animal represent anthropocentric preconceptions of animality. Unlike the pigs that he shares the mire with he is inert, eating occasionally, and defecating indiscriminately. He emulates the prejudicial human-centric view that other animals are unclean and unproductive when left to their own devices. Robinson's polarising swing from ceaseless labour to complete inertia typifies his binary mindset. He is either human and relentlessly productive or a wasteful nonhuman animal categorised by a fruitless sedentary life. To expel the shameful feelings inspired by these episodes of inactivity in subsequent relapses into the mire Robinson redoubles his efforts to bring order to the island. He finds in building, and in buildings, a sense of belonging to the island, or rather that the island belongs to him. Creating these structures establishes a system that governs by drastically reforming the environment and extending a colonial reach over the island. To cement his dominion, Robinson relies on the surrounding buildings and their symbolic representation to establish his possession of the island. A

[14] Tournier, p. 46.
[15] Ibid, p. 42.

Heideggerian notion of dwelling, although problematised through the associations with fascism and nationalism, provides a point of entry for these Crusoedian modes of thought and notions of place.

Greg Garrard has highlighted the valid constraints in applying a Heideggerian approach to environmental criticism. Firstly, Heidegger's support of the Nazi party and their manipulation of ecological thought to further instil racial prejudice and incite hate by citing a land ethic does more than just problematise Heidegger's assertions regarding dwelling. The Nazi party promoted a supposedly authentic mode of dwelling that could only be achieved by the racially 'pure' people tied to a native environment. As Garrard states, 'the phrase that epitomised this purity was 'Blut und Boden' ("Blood and Soil")'.[16] Garrard clearly lays out the ideological motivations inherent in this phrase that associates blood purity with an 'authentic' dwelling in a given environment. Clearly, there are negative ramifications in deploying a purely Heideggerian line of enquiry in its links to nationalist and racist relation to place. There are further issues that occur for an environmental critical use of Heidegger in the anthropocentric relationships between humans, nonhuman animals, and inanimate objects. His hierarchical positioning of stones etc. as *Weltlos* (worldless), nonhuman animals as *Weltram* (world-poor), and people as *Weltbilden* (world-building) divides humans and nonhumans by further separating animals from apparently non-sentient objects. Heidegger separates the notions of the world and worldliness from the material reality of an environment. However, human dependence on world-building provides a useful context in which to consider the Robinsonade and wider anthropocentric attitudes.

Heidegger's assertion that only humans can dwell, not only physically but poetically, addresses a key concern that is at the core of the Robinsonade. Tournier's re-vision of the

[16] Greg Garrard, 'Heidegger Nazism Ecocriticism', *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 17 (2010), 251 – 271 (p. 256).

Robinsonade demonstrates the constraints in the idea of world-building itself. One of the barriers to Robinson's relation to space is his need to build literal and figurative supporting structures. His physical buildings, as well as the conceptual constructions of taxological world-building language and an investment in human institutions, distances Robinson from the immediate environment. The following summary by Heidegger introduces one of the key functions Crusoedian characters find in building, stating that:

> building [has] dwelling as its goal. Still, not every building is a dwelling […] even so these buildings are the domain of our dwelling. The domain extends over these buildings and yet is not limited to the dwelling place […] these buildings house man. He inhabits them and yet does not dwell in them, when to dwell means merely that we take shelter in them.[17]

Dwelling in the sense Heidegger indicates is not simply about being able to shelter in a given structure. To extend a 'domain' and inhabit a given environment more completely, people rely on the surrounding buildings and institutions to establish their sense of identity and their possession of the environment. Building only to survive practically and physically is not Robinson's primary goal. After building a house with a bed, he elects to sleep outside on weekdays to only use it on Saturday night and Sunday day where he enters the building with deliberate ceremony. At this stage of his developing relationship with the environment, the presence of the buildings embodies greater significance in Robinson's mind than simply serving as a shelter. They appear as bastions standing against the hostile environment and ward off the animalising effects of isolation issuing from his separation from his native society.

[17] Martin Heidegger, 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking', in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971), p. 102.

Through building and relentless labour, Robinson instils an artificial version of intersubjective dwelling. We can understand Robinson's motivations through Tim Ingold's 'taskscape', a system of interlocking tasks that become 'the constitutive acts of dwelling' where 'every task takes its meaning from its position within an ensemble of tasks, performed in series or in parallel, and usually by many people working together'.[18] Ingold introduces the idea of interactivity and interactive work as an essential component of how we currently conceive of dwelling. The aspect of artificiality occurs when applying this mode of thought to the isolation of the desert island. Ingold states that:

> the taskscape must be populated with beings who are themselves agents, and who reciprocally "act back" in the process of their own dwelling. In other words, the taskscape exists not just as activity but as *inter*activity.[19]

This complicates how Crusoedian castaways dwell, their dislocation from their native society severs their connection to the interactive social network of the taskscape. Without a structure of intersubjectivity supported by a system of other actors, their ability to dwell as described above is compromised. Existing outside of the taskscape, Robinson's reconstructions and self-enforced tasks are only a semblance of society, parodic and arbitrary reminders of his past life that have limited value in the context of his current surroundings.

Ingold highlights how anthropocentric thought limits the possibilities of human interactivity with nonhumans as interactive relationships are precluded in the conceptualisation of the world firstly as a landscape and then as the taskscape. He states that 'perhaps there is a […] fundamental difference between our perception of animate beings and inanimate objects [...] [animate beings] afford the possibility not only of action but also of interaction'.[20] Without recognising the potential for interaction with other animate or

[18] Tim Ingold, 'The Temporality of the Landscape', *World Archaeology*, 25 (1993), 152 – 174, (p. 158).
[19] Ibid, p. 163.
[20] Ingold, p. 163.

inanimate beings we limit ourselves and our capacity to dwell. Severed from human interaction, Robinson's sense of self becomes distorted, he reflects that 'he scarcely recognised himself […] as though a winter of pitiless severity had passed over that familiar countenance […] petrifying its human tremors […] the face is the part of our flesh that is moulded and remoulded, warmed by the presence of our fellows'.[21] Outside of the taskscape's opportunities for interaction Robinson's human qualities seem diminished. His face is impassive, and the 'human tremors' of emotion that are prompted through social interactivity are absent. Robinson alleviates these symptoms of isolation by using Tenn, the ship's dog, as a source of interaction. The narration relates, 'Tenn was smiling, and Robinson peered intently at him, seeking to recover that sweetest of human features […] his dog's smile would be reflected ever more clearly on the face of man, his master'.[22] Robinson substitutes interaction with other people with a pet. The hierarchical implications of this relationship are clearly underscored in the word 'master' and further highlighted in the weighting of the binary division between 'the dog's smile' that appears 'even more clearly' on Robinson's own face.[23] Robinson uses Tenn as a surrogate for social interaction, he is only afforded the capacity to reflect the feelings of his owner. Robinson's relationship with the island develops alongside his need for companionship as he begins to see the apparently inanimate island as a new source of relief for his isolation from a human social world.

The presence of an absent human social world is highlighted in Deleuze's interpretations of *Friday*. On the desert island, shipwrecked and isolated, Deleuze reflects that:

[21] Tournier, p. 75.
[22] Ibid, p. 76.
[23] Companionable pets, particularly dogs, are recurrent characters in the Robinsonade. Used for hunting, protection, and company dogs have played a vital role in human civilisation in general and are a crucial component to the success of castaway's in Robinsonades.

> Robinson's first reaction was despair, and this reaction expresses the precise moment of neurosis at which the structure-Other is still functioning, though there is no one to fill it out or actualise it […] Robinson seeks a substitute for Others, something capable of maintaining […] the hold that Others granted to things – namely, order and work.[24]

The order and order-making systems enforced and maintained through the societal Others are removed in the context of the desert island. As Deleuze asserts, Robinson's introduction of redundant tasks is an attempt to temporarily fill the presumed vacuum that opens through his separation from Others. Acts of substitution insufficiently fill the supposed void of unpeopled space on the island. Robinson's ecophobic and xenophobic distrust of the tropical environment and its unknown spaces emphasises his alien presence that is unable to integrate or adapt to the new environment. His initial response to the island mirrors Defoe's Crusoe, highlighted by Deleuze who recognises the parallels between their shared feelings of despair.

With further parallels to Crusoe, Robinson sees the island as in dire need of order that can only be achieved through work. Returning to Ingold's notion of the taskscape, Ingold states that '*the landscape as a whole must* […] *be understood as the taskscape in its embodied form*'.[25] This demonstrates the limits in creating landscapes in general as a human frame overlayed on an environment. Considering the idea of landscapes as an imposition of a framing device indicates a reliance on defined human parameters that cuts the world off at the edges to make it viewable, manageable, and to ensure nothing grows outside of its confines. The world conceived of as a taskscape is rendered into inert matter, animate and inanimate things outside of the intersubjective human-self become reducible variables. Ingold's definition emphasises the differences between the material environment and our conceptualisation of the landscape to facilitate dwelling. Recognising the landscape as an

[24] Deleuze, p. 352 – 53.
[25] Ingold, p. 162 [original italics].

environment with a frame imposed upon it demonstrates the limits of representations concerning the nonhuman. This is not only in literary representations, or visually through landscaping in art and photography, but in the physical limits of what the human eye can perceive and conceptually interpret. In *Friday*, the surrounding environment only becomes purposeful when it can be used to further the dweller's goals. It is not until Robinson abandons previously fixed notions of a teleological landscape that the island can be understood outside of its utility to humanity and beyond human modes of representation.

As well as the physical recreation of European society, Robinson establishes ways of measuring time on the island. Instituting a time system temporarily dispels the deracinating anatopia and inspires Robinson to further his control over the nonhuman. He reflects that:

> my time is marked by this regular ticking, positive, unanswerable, measurable and precise. How eagerly I seek those adjectives which for me represent so many victories over the forces of evil! I demand, I insist, that everything around me shall henceforth be measured, tested, certified, mathematical and rational […] I should like every plant to be labelled, every bird ringed, every animal branded. I shall not be content until this opaque and impenetrable place, filled with secret ferments and malignant stirrings, has been transformed into a calculated design.[26]

Enforcing capitalist working hours and a working week on the island creates a space where Robinson's efforts can be catalogued and monitored. Maintaining a strict regime self-governs his unconscious urge to be outside of dogmatic structures and avoid succumbing to the temptation of nonproductivity and embracing animality. Robinson holds onto the language of 'logical' systems, looking for the 'mathematical' and 'rational' explanation for the world around him. Implicit in his search to make the island and its inhabitants 'certified' is the assumption that without a system that supposedly logically orders the island it does not officially exist in the rational world. By remaining uncertified and outside of what is known

[26] Tournier, p. 58.

and verifiable the island appears to the ecophobic mindset as an unknown and potentially dangerous entity, an amorphous malignancy that conspires against human efforts of maintaining 'order'.

The above extract underscores the ecophobic desire to fight against the 'forces of evil' embodied by the nonhuman through empirical measurement and constant work. Robinson inherits this anthropocentric system from capitalist and western society, where things are only confirmed and known once they have been measured and observed. If things are unobserved or unobservable, they become unconquerable, a notion that chafes against the Robinsonade tradition of knowledge enabling domination. The descriptions of the pre-colonised island in conventional Robinsonades perceives a latent danger and hostility in the unknown island that seems to resist the coloniser's 'civilising' efforts. Tournier foregrounds the colonial anxiety to make the nonhuman known and measurable, Robinson's effort to uncover the island's 'secret' and 'impenetrable' opacity is symptomatic of Crusoedian dwelling. The above passage emphasises entitled patriarchal, colonial, and anthropocentric language; declaring 'I seek […] I demand, I insist' places Robinson in the self-appointed role of governor and administrator of the unruly, disordered island. His intentions at this point in the novel mirror the colonial narrative of *Robinson Crusoe* that transforms the island into a calculable, exploitable, and controllable world.

In the above quotation, Tournier hyperbolically escalates the organising attempts made by Defoe's Crusoe so that every plant is labelled, every bird ringed, and every animal branded to bring them into an orderly colonial world. Rita Ghesquiere notes how even 'more than Defoe's Robinson, Tournier's hero sticks to a strenuous order. The whole island must be tamed and this requires relentless discipline'.[27] She recognises how:

[27] Ghesquiere, p. 136.

> to build, to organize […] are, for Robinson, sovereign remedies against the demoralizing effects of solitude […] it gives him a wonderful feeling that he is the master and regulator of time [...] he disturbs nature by introducing the 'human' idea of time. Time as a mechanical process is the opposite of the cyclical time of nature.[28]

Mediating Robinson's interactions with the island through a filter that interprets his day through a capitalist timeframe blocks any engagement with the environment beyond a colonial desire to exploit and tame the nonhuman. As Ghesquiere highlights, Robinson's need for order stems from his separation from the body of society and 'the demoralizing effects of solitude'. He relies on familiar systems to facilitate his interactions with the world around him and fill the spaces left behind by absent 'Others', which as Deleuze also indicates parallels Robinson's need to retain the social world through building, tasks, and labour. Deleuze's interpretation emphasises 'the ordering of time […] the establishment of an overabundant production, or of a code of laws, and the multiplicity of official titles and functions that Robinson takes on—all of this bears witness to an effort to repopulate the world with Others'.[29] Further to Deleuze and Ghesquiere's assertions—that Robinson is attempting to dispel the effects of solitude—Robinson's actions coincide with an antagonistic oppositional relationship with the nonhuman typical of Crusoe-esque characters. Robinson reflects that he wants 'to fight against time […] to imprison time'.[30] His control of time is more than simply a sovereign remedy for loneliness, it is an ecophobic reaction to an ostensibly disorderly and unruly environment. Robinson reflects that 'he had regulated and mastered time – in a word, tamed it, just as the whole island was gradually to be tamed by the strength and resolution of a single man'.[31] His attempts to catalogue and shackle physical and conceptual forces on the island stem from an aversion to the 'malignant stirrings' of the non-

[28] Ghesquiere, p. 135 – 136.
[29] Deleuze, p. 353.
[30] Tournier, p. 53.
[31] Ibid, p. 57.

built environment as well as his displacement from European society. His need for a calculable world controlled through the 'resolution of a single man' foregrounds *Robinson Crusoe*'s human-centric narrative. Crusoedian characters re-order the world around an individual human agent in an attempt to make the world appear knowable and thereby confirming their identity as human in reference to quantifiable things around them.

The conceptual and physical institutions Robinson has built to protect him from the potentially hostile island prevent him from fully engaging with the immediate environment.[32] The contradictory nature of homes and dwellings is summarised by Catherine Alexander, stating that 'from the eighteenth century onwards, images of house and body give rise to images of safety and constriction, of inside and outside'.[33] Buildings and homes create a presumed dividing line between the world outside and the home's interior. The conceptual and physical institutions Robinson has emulated keep him safe but remote from the surrounding island. The narration reflects that:

> [Robinson's] observation of the Charter and the Penal Code […] his rigid adherence to a time schedule […] this straitjacket of conventions and prescriptions which he resolutely wore in order to stay upright, did not prevent him from being agonizingly conscious of the wild and untamed presence of the tropical world surrounding him […] he was constantly assailed by superstitions and perplexities which threatened the stability of the edifice devised for his protection.[34]

The tantalising existence of animality is positioned as both an external physical threat and a danger to Robinson's straitjacketed anthropocentric morality. The various definitions of

[32] Hostile in the sense that there is a lingering threat to personal bodily safety but also the challenge to the castaway's understanding of their own humanity and their role as the central authority on the island as the environment resists the imposition of colonialism through alleged unproductivity.
[33] Catherine Alexander, 'The Garden as Occasional Domestic space', in *The Domestic Reader*, ed. by Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 268 – 71, (p. 270 – 71).
[34] Tournier, p. 69.

'edifice' are endemic to the Crusoedian mentality at this stage of the narrative.[35] Constructing buildings physically manifests Robinson's need for a conceptual framework to safely dwell within and house a human self-identity defined by interiority.

Robinson's efforts to instate buildings and boundaries isolate and distance him from the immediate environment and hamper interactive forms of dwelling outside of those spaces he deems safely habitable. Like the recurring image of the parasol in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Friday* that keeps the castaway hidden from the sun, Robinson hides under the shade of his apparently civilising constructs to protect himself from the 'untamed presence of the tropical' amassed around him.[36] The resolution to 'stay upright' and continue with his religious devotion to work, structure, and order weakens as the novel progresses. He reflects 'I find myself working without any belief in what I am doing'.[37] This is the beginning of a shift in his sense of self that desires an alternative method of engaging with the environment as he experiments with working outside human structures. Robinson intermittently recognises that meaningless work and unnecessary self-imposed laws are temporary stopgaps before he is ready to dwell on the island interactively. The nonhuman world outside of Robinson's constructions appears perplexing and plays host to human superstitions about nonhumanity, which in the Crusoedian mindset are hostile entities that need combating. The imposition of order and artificial stability prevents Robinson's assimilation into the island environment.

As *Friday* progresses, Robinson moves away from the capitalist narrative of linear unceasing time and relentless work. After the water clock is stopped accidentally, Robinson

[35] An edifice (*édifice* in French) is both a large building and a system of beliefs, derived from the Latin words for house/dwelling and to make—it is a particularly pertinent word in relation to the Robinsonade tradition and the larger aspect of Western dwelling in terms of both a physical construction and constructed meanings/beliefs.
[36] Robinson's anxiety in regard to the sun is later reversed after he abandons the imposition of human order and opts towards nudity. His refusal to naturalise to his environment at the early stage in the text is indicated by his impractical attire that leans towards excessive modesty despite the absence of other people to perceive him as naked.
[37] Tournier, p. 112.

subsequently realises he can figuratively and literally put a stopper in the flow of time. This embodies a desire to abandon fruitless and labour-intensive work and exist outside of self-imposed structures. The narration reflects that 'time had had a stop, and he was on holiday! […] it seemed Robinson's omnipotence over this island […] extended even to the mastery of time'.[38] Besides Robinson's excitement in being freed from time, there is still the assertion that he is the overarching sovereign ruler of the island. This is indicative of the many polarising emotions Robinson encounters on the island in the earlier sections of *Friday* as he attempts to come to terms with alternate methods of engaging with the world. While he is excited that he can temporarily abandon his unnecessary labour, this only confers his control over the temporal and spatial dimensions of the island. Assuming an omnipotent sovereign mentality absolves him from the guilt of wanting to liberate himself from the straitjacket of convention and order. Using 'mastery' and 'omnipotence' re-frames Robinson's desire to be outside of time to demonstrate the extent of his sovereignty, rather than the urge to abandon these systems altogether.

Suspending time creates a momentary window where Robinson can explore his desire to inhabit what he refers to as '*the Other Island'*, a place that remains out of reach whilst Western ideological systems are the ruling body on Speranza. Before the dramatic explosion that destroys most of the Crusoe-like constructions—caused when Friday accidentally ignites Robinson's stockpile of gunpowder—Robinson continually departs from and then reconciles with the 'civil' world he has constructed around himself. Before the explosion destroys the built world around Robinson, each slippage into the Other Island ends with Robinson's reconciliation with the colonial island as well as an arresting feeling of shame followed by self-punishment. For example, if he returned to wallowing in mire, he punishes himself with 'ditch-digging' to avoid the temptation of inertia and animality. He also chastises himself for

[38] Tournier, p. 78.

the time spent ‘gestating’ in the womb-like cave, a place that will be discussed further in the following section. After his metaphorical and literal delivery from the cave he ‘walked on, bent double, shivering with cold and pressing his thighs together, caked with curdled milk. His helpless exposure to the brambles and sharp pebbles filled him with alarm and shame […] in the healing half-light of the house his first act was to start the water-clock again’.[39] His harsh delivery back into the world is in direct conflict with the contented, ambient, timeless feeling he had inside the cave itself. On returning to the ‘civil’ colonial island he reconnects with the physical built environment and reinstates the metaphysical structures he relies on to fill in for the absent world of Others. The sensations of ‘alarm and shame’ parallel his helplessness in the rough terrain. Robinson immediately returns to the domestic home and the rigid order of time. Robinson has to struggle with the sensations of guilt and shame emanating from the conceptual remnants of Western society before he is able to accept any alternative mode of dwelling.

As I will discuss in the following section, there are evident issues with Robinson’s maternal and later sexual relationship with the island that enforces an anthropocentric, colonial, and patriarchal paradigm but nonetheless demonstrates a movement away from viewing the nonhuman as inanimate. Although this maiden/mother relationship still relies on exploitation in order to dwell and turns the island into an ‘other’ it develops the Crusoedian relationship in a new direction demonstrating a shift away from teleological relationships. However, both the environment and women are positioned as binary opposites in comparison to the male-centric positivism inherent in Crusoe-esque ontologies. Tournier demonstrates how animism can be an alternative relationship model for humans to understand

[39] Tournier, p. 91.

nonhumanity, but he also uses this new sense of animism to explore the patriarchal exploitation present in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

(3.2) Order
Domestication and Agriculture

Robinson's strict routine and labour-intensive life does not produce goods for practical reasons alone. His untouched stockpile of food and surplus of domesticated animals indicate that there is another goal in his restless efforts. Robinson's agricultural processes and domestication represent attempts to fill the island with cultural products as an apparently civilising force that combats the assumed immorality of 'nature' in its base condition. As Di Palma highlights, both Defoe's critical and fictional work demonstrated a desire to re-make—and supposedly improve—the nonhuman world through an anthropocentric landscape aesthetic that held productivity as its ideal moral goal. In this model, unproductive environments are seen as immoral wastelands and met with aversion until they become exploitable. As Di Palma indicates, the:

> Wasteland is a cultural construct, a creation of the imagination, a category applied to landscapes rather than an inherent characteristic of them […] Wasteland is thus instrumental—even fundamental—to form a landscape ideal. And by helping to construct a dichotomy between the paradisiacal, beautiful, or "good" landscape, and the fallen, ugly, or "bad" landscape, disgust […] aids in the creation of a hierarchical, or scale of values, whereby different kinds of landscapes may be judged according to their proximity to, or distance from, either extreme.[40]

Transforming wastelands attempts to eliminate the corruption thought to exist in the nonhuman world. Robinson's Crusoedian efforts to make the island productive are attempts

[40] Di Palma, p. 9.

to work towards his own moral salvation and maintain his humanity in the face of the animalising effects of the wild and the fear of his own innate animality.

In *Friday*, agricultural and domesticating practices maintain the shroud of civilisation around Robinson and temporarily allay his anxieties about his status as a human outside of Western society and cement his position as the sovereign ruler of the island. As Robinson's conceptualisation of the island changes, Speranza is anthropomorphised into both a maternal and maiden figure who is subjected to sexual advances that is connotative of a wider oedipal relationship concerning patriarchal societies and the feminisation of the 'natural' world. As Val Plumwood describes in *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, dualistic notions of nature/culture, and women/man, other/norm etc., reinforce the subjugation of both the non-human world and marginalised people. Plumwood explains that 'key aspects of environmental critiques are centred on the way that control over and exploitation of nature contributes to, or is even more strongly linked to, control over and exploitation of human beings'.[41] This is central to my environmental critical understanding of the Robinsonade and the intersecting issues we experience today that exist as a result of colonial and capitalist ideology. Tournier's portrayal of the commodification of the environment demonstrates a familiar pattern of exploitation we still labour under in the Anthropocene.

Central to the Crusoedian Robinsonade is the colonial desire to 'improve' the island and transform wasteful unproductive space into an idealised 'moral' world that serves human interests. Robinson's early attempts to control and exploit the island follow a typically Crusoedian and colonial pattern. As discussed, by constructing buildings the Crusoe-esque castaway artificially adapts to an alien environment by replicating their native country's landscape to momentarily alleviate the effects of the anatopia but in doing so only make their

[41] Plumwood, p. 15.

out-of-placeness more pronounced. In *Friday*, the completion of productive projects provides a moment of satisfaction immediately followed by despair and ennui. To achieve this temporary relief from out-of-placeness the environment itself is dramatically changed. Tournier replicates the landscape aesthetic expounded by Defoe and the colonial mindset as Robinson burns fields, fells trees, drains lakes, and digs trenches all to further his means of production and control over the island. This attitude tallies with the colonial approach highlighted by historian Richard Grove, who states:

> clearing the land in the British Isles had long been associated with 'improving' it, and by the mid seventeenth century there was a widely held opinion that clearing and tilling the land brought beauty as well as economic gain […] In early colonial North America, aesthetic delight was taken in creating new vistas […] in which Europeans could dwell and prosper […] in this way we can see that cultural preconceptions, especially the attempt to reconstruct European-type landscapes in the island colonies, themselves constituted a new kind of ecological pressure.[42]

Grove's account defines the broad goals of the colonial regime and its response to the nonhuman colonial and pre-colonial world.[43] After entering a new environment, in this instance the tropical island, they aimed to reconstruct the elements of the European landscape that centred around profit and attempt to suppress the presumed amorality of the wasteland.[44]

Robinson's attempt to harvest his first crops highlights the difficulty in living in the nostalgic Western past on the present tropical island. This scene has wider implications that will be discussed in this section in relation to the violence directed towards a feminised environment. However, it also demonstrates the difficulties in attempting to replicate

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[42] Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 65.

[43] This is not just a historical endeavour; in the Anthropocene this production-oriented logic manifests itself in capitalist ideologies and is magnified by technological advances (i.e., deforestation of forests to make way for pastureland or plantations).

[44] Grove goes on to relate the difficulties living in a tropical environment presents to colonisers attempting to force a European model and mode of living onto the non-European environment as well as the specific ecological problems this posed for the environment itself.

European ontologies in an entirely different place. Robinson is unable to replicate the same agricultural practices on the tropical island. During the harvest he attempts to attain 'the light-hearted joys I had known when haymaking in the West Riding. The rhythmic movement, the swing of the arms left to right'.[45] His description of the ordered and timely movement of the harvesters' arms is indicative of the nostalgic yearning for order on the tropical island that is repeatedly described as unruly and wild. Instead of the rhythmic metronomic harvest he remembers in the West Riding as Robinson 'took the warlike weapon in his hand a strange frenzy seized him and forgetting the rules he slashed about him in all directions, furiously shouting as he did so'.[46] Robinson's fear of the unknown and uncultivated wild world emerges violently when presented with something representing a weapon. The loss of control links to my definition of anatopia in relation to the Robinsonade. His sudden awareness that he is alone, immersed in what he views as an alien world and surrounded by equally alienating nonhumanity, contrasts with the reality that it is Robinson who is out-of-place.

In an ecophobic aversion to the tropical island, Robinson abandons his self-enforced rules and drops the veil of decorum. However, violence is also implicit in his remembrance of past harvests in the English countryside. He states that:

> the [European] meadow was a growing mass to be attacked and conquered, methodically laid low […] an intricately contrived […] vegetable world in which matter was wholly subjected to form […] the European meadow is the exact opposite of the amorphous, undifferentiated herbage I cut down here. Nature in the tropics is too powerful, but crude and simple.[47]

The two harvests are unified through their depiction of violence, their essential difference is found in the manner the two fields have been ordered. The meadow in the West Ridings is

[45] Tournier, p. 52.
[46] Ibid, p. 51.
[47] Ibid, p. 52.

'contrived' by human design, the environment 'wholly subjected to form' imposed upon for human convenience. It is forced into a certain way of growing by methodical agricultural practices to make it malleable. The antithesis to the carefully planned English pastoral countryside bound to its human-engineered form is the 'amorphous' world of the island that grows beyond human confines without an imposed structure or pattern. The ecophobic reaction is underscored by the colonial response to the untamed tropics 'too powerful' for Robinson to combat alone. Rather than the controlled show of force demonstrated by the hay-cutters in the West Ridings, Robinson becomes frenzied with the desire to attack its tropical counterpart that underscores the Crusoedian aversion to a lack of human order.

The violent attack during the island harvest scene represents the Crusoedian xenophobic fear of the exoticized tropical world but also highlights a patriarchal feminisation of the environment that manifests in Robinson's oedipal relationship with the island 'Speranza'. He views the island world around him as both a maternal figure from which he is reborn and as a maiden figure who is subjected to sexual assault. After Robinson's attempt to configure the island as a map—a significant moment featured in many conventional Robinsonades to convey their ownership of the island—he reflects that it:

> Struck him, poring over his rough map, that viewed from a certain angle the island resembled a female body, headless but nevertheless a woman, seated with her legs drawn up beneath her in an attitude wherein submission, fear and simple abandonment were inextricably mingled.[48]

When approached from an ecofeminist perspective, Robinson's conflation of his map with a feminised body reveals interrelated mentalities corresponding with representations of women and attitudes towards the nonhuman world. The headless woman is drawn physically but also mapped in the imagination in a passive and submissive position, indicative of an

[48] Tournier, p. 42.

anthropocentric and patriarchal attitude used to justify the exploitation and removal of agency from both women and nonhumans. The subservient 'attitude' of 'submission' paired with the implied threat directed towards the mapped representation of the island/woman in the word 'fear' foregrounds his colonial efforts and later experiments in his relationship with the island.

Kate Soper calls our attention to the feminisation of the environment and landscape by hegemonic patriarchal narratives. The feminised images projected onto the environment are the maiden figure—an object to be pursued, tamed and controlled—as well as the nurturing mother figure, a pastoral image used to justify human exploitation.[49] Soper states that:

> In both these conceptions, nature is allegorized as either […] the womb of all human production, or as the site of sexual enticement and ultimate seduction […] Nature is both the generative source, but also the potential spouse of science, to be wooed, won, and if necessary forced to submit to intercourse.[50]

The maidenly and maternal conceptualisation of both the environment and the female body becomes a bilateral allegory of a patriarchal society that seeks to justify their abuse and exploitation as somehow 'natural'. For example, Robinson's experiments with grain to test the fertility of soil are depicted as a wooing process that measures the landscape's receptivity to sexual advance, an image that is compounded in the interrelated metaphors of 'reaping' and 'sowing' as Robinson begins farming—conative of the forcible submission to intercourse Soper highlights. Tournier moves beyond this symbolic representation of the colonial pursuit of resources and pushes Robinson's relationship with the island from a metaphorical to a

[49] Kate Soper, 'Naturalized Woman and Feminized Nature', in *The Green studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism*, ed. by Laurence Coupe (Devon: Routledge, 2004), p. 139.
[50] Tournier, p. 141.

literalised sexual relationship. However, before Speranza is sexualised, Robinson conceives of the island as a mother-figure.

Robinson's explorations into animism begin with the maternal phase of his relationship with Speranza where he sleeps inside a womb-like cave. However, after accidentally ejaculating in his sleep, he stops visiting the cave. I will address the conflation of sex and farming in the semen/seed allusion after assessing how pastoral and maternal metaphors promote a false sense of environmental balance and attempt to naturalise exploitation. After the incident in the cave, Robinson notices that his crops are failing and natural bodies of water are drying up. He reflects that:

> with my man's weight I was crushing the earth that nurtured me. Being pregnant with myself, Speranza could no longer conceive, just as the menstrual flow dries up in a prospective mother. Even worse, I came near to sullying her with my semen […] I think of Speranza swelling like a loaf in which the yeast is working, her bloated body spreading over the surface of the waters, eventually to die in disgorging some monster of incest![51]

Robinson equates the changes to the environment with the pseudo-pregnancy that would drain the island of vital energy. The literalisation of the patriarchal metaphor that feminises the environment mirrors the effects of environmental exhaustion. To sustain him literally, not just in a metaphorical sense, the island has been drained of resources at a rate of production that is unsustainable. In this sense, it is not Robinson's physical bodily weight crushing the earth that sustains him, but the weight of his over-consuming and ceaseless productivity on the island that drains the island of its resources. Instead of recognising himself as an environmental burden, Robinson equates the drought and failed crops with his time spent in the womb/cave and the consequences of an oedipal relationship.

[51] Tournier, p. 94.

After seeing the island as an animate being, Robinson states that 'Speranza was no longer a territory to be exploited but a being, unquestionably feminine, towards whom were directed not only his philosophical speculations but also the new needs arising in his heart and flesh'.[52] The island no longer resembles a motherly figure but becomes a site of sexual desire. The realisation that he has been exploiting the island as a colonist does not inspire Robinson to shed a Crusoedian persona, rather the exploitation of the island's body intensifies. Tournier represents the challenges of adopting new relations with place while still trapped in an anthropocentric mentality. Robinson's relationship with the island is now more than the straightforward exploitation of resources, but the imagined pursuit and eventual 'marriage' to Speranza reinforces his sense of authority and reaffirms his claim to the island legitimised through matrimony. While recognising that he has been an exploiter he simultaneously goes on to find new forms of exploitation.

Images of agriculturalism and farming are often accompanied by pastoral invocations of a harmonious relationship with the environment.[53] However, the relationship with the environment in an agricultural society is already exploitative and permeated with patriarchal sexual metaphors, which intensify in regard to colonial and capitalist plantations. Agriculturalism in this sense is concerned with what can be rendered from the earth, how it can be utilised for commercial gain, and how the environment can be reformed and reshaped to become 'productive'. As discussed in relation to Adams and *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, women and animals are objectified and consumed metaphorically and physically. Violence and meat eating are linked to aggressive patriarchal cultures. As Adams states, 'through symbolism based on killing animals, we encounter politically laden images of absorption, control, domain, and the necessity of violence. This message of male dominance is conveyed

[52] Tournier, p. 84.
[53] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).
Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (London: Routledge, 1999).

through meat eating – both in its symbolism and reality'.[54] However, Adams does not apply this same logic to plant life and agriculture. She asserts that in farming 'political implications are derived from a sense of organic unity rather than disjunction; harvest rather than violence; living in harmony rather than having domain over'.[55] Although this complies with Adams' aim to unite vegetarian and feminist discourse, it does not account for the links between exploitative agricultural practices and a feminised landscape that have interrelated sets of imagery.

Linking the connections between exploitation and farming—specifically mass plantations and global agriculturalism—is not to condemn the idyllic living-off-the-land ethic Adams describes but rather to highlight the dangers of ignoring the potential for ecological disaster. This is illustrated by Timothy Morton, who indicates how:

> ontologically, and socially, what we encounter in agrilogistics is immiseration. Very soon after its inception, agrilogistics led to patriarchy, the impoverishment of all but a very few, a massive and rigid social hierarchy, and feedback loops such as plagues or, as they were known in Greece, miasmata. Appearance, phenomena, are of no consequence. What matters is knowing where your next meal is coming from.[56]

The potential for humans and nonhumans to live 'in harmony' after swapping animal violence for the harvest does not consider the anthropocentric and patriarchal mentality involved in agriculture. Adams justifiably seeks a reciprocal relationship with the nonhuman, but this does not just preclude a meat-based diet rather it necessitates a revision of both plantation crops and battery farming that reduces the nonhuman into exploitative variables.

The above issues are demonstrated in the harvest scene discussed earlier that applies sexualised metaphors comparable to the imagery related to meat eating. The narration reflects

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[54] Adams, p. 189.
[55] Ibid, p. 189.
[56] Timothy Morton, 'She Stood in Tears amid the Alien Corn: Thinking Through Agrilogistics', *Diacritics*, 41 (2013), 90 – 113 (p. 92).

that ‘the wheat and barley were both doing well, and Robinson experienced the first delight Speranza had given him – how sweet and deep it was! – when he caressed those tender, blue-tinted shoots’.[57] This scene foreshadows the literal sexual relationship and the subsequent birth of the mandrake root children later in the narrative. The harvest is simultaneously a sexual conquest, a conception, and birth—the processes intertwined and blurred in the overtly sexual ‘seed’ metaphor alluded to earlier. Tournier explicitly uses sexualised language in Robinson’s nostalgic reflection regarding ‘haymaking in the West Riding. […] the scythe-blade cutting into the yielding, flowery mass and laying its swathe at my left hand, the heady scent of juice and sap’.[58] The aspects of sexualised violence are explicit in both the West Riding and Speranza harvest scenes. However, the nostalgic ‘yielding’ expanse of crops in Europe is framed as submissive as opposed to the as-yet-unconquered wild crops on the eroticised exotic island. The language parallels the sexualisation of eating meat, dispelling the idea that agricultural pastoralism is a harmonious and passive activity but rather is laden with sexual images and patriarchal analogies.

The persistent masculine narratives that merge images of the environment and the female body are particularly pertinent to Robinson’s conflation of Speranza as a motherly and maidenly figure. As Soper states, ‘it is in the perception of the colonizer, for whom nature is both a nurturant force—a replenished bosom or womb of renewal—and a ‘virgin’ terrain ripe for penetration, that the metaphor of the land as female is most insistent’.[59] The machinery of colonialism conceives of the virginal promise of ‘new’ land that sought the as yet unexploited and intact resources outside of the ‘old’ world to further European expansion. This mentality is intrinsic to our understanding of conventional Robinsonades. Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* promoted expansion into the virginal and potentially profitable areas of the world that

[57] Tournier, p. 51.
[58] Ibid, p. 52.
[59] Soper, p. 142.

remained relatively untouched by colonialism. Tournier critiques Crusoedian colonial attitudes by literalising the metaphorical sexual colonisation of supposedly virginal territory and manifesting colonial desires by enacting an actual sexual relationship with the island. The patriarchal and colonial gaze views the nonhuman world as both a generative source of vitality and a violently pursued sexual object. This is one of the many contradictory interpretations of the environment in the colonial imagination. The tropical island, as one example, is seen as exotic and erotic, untamed and wild, threatening and dangerous but also as virginal, waiting to be conquered but also resisting colonial rule. Tournier's literalisation of the coloniser's desires exposes the roots of anthropocentric and patriarchal relationships that exist to control the nonhuman world as well as marginalised others.

Tournier radically critiques the conventional Robinsonade by explicitly connecting colonial patriarchal control with male desire in the absurdity of Robinson's sexual acts with the landscape. The subject of sex and desire is absent in Defoe's narrative but maintains a latent presence in the androcentric colonial drive to conquer the nonhuman and dominate what is viewed as otherly. Defoe's Crusoe views the landscape as his to possess and consume. On surveying the island he notes how:

> the country appeared so fresh, so green, so flourishing, everything being in a constant verdure or flourish of spring that it looked like a planted garden. I descended a little on the side of that delicious vale, surveying it with a secret kind of pleasure […] to think that this was all my own; that I was king and lord of all this country indefensibly and had a right of possession […] I might have it in inheritance as completely as any lord of a manor in England.[60]

Crusoe's perception of space and conceptualisation of the landscape is directly related to both a colonial 'right of possession' and an intimate specific focus on eating and consuming in describing the environment as 'delicious'. Crusoe intends to cultivate the wild fruit-bearing

[60] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 85.

trees and as such ensure his 'inheritance', in a literal sense to insure an on-going food-source, but inheritance also conjures associations with lineage and reproduction. The environment's verdancy and fecundity are emphasised as well as Crusoe's hidden pleasure in ostensibly owning and controlling the island.

The sexual/agricultural colonial metaphor culminates into literal sexual action in *Friday*. As Robinson is walking to the 'pink combe', one of the sites where he performs sexual acts, he rhapsodises that soon 'he would be able to stretch himself out on that feminine earth […] then, with renewed strength by contact with that primal source, he would turn to press his loins to the huge, warm female body, to furrow it with a plough of flesh'.[61] This is the literal manifestation of the sexual/agricultural metaphor. Robinson's sexual organs become the plough that furrows the explicitly feminised landscape in an exploitative and sexually violent analogy. As Ghesquiere states, 'in search of a new challenge Robinson starts an erotic relationship with the island which is seen in his interest in the sexual life of animals and plants [...] Speranza is no longer the mother but the beloved wife, the fruitful garden, where he can sow his seed'.[62] Through Robinson's sexual experimentation, Tournier highlights issues surrounding the feminisation and othering of the nonhuman world. Alongside the coercive and exploitative ramifications, the metaphorical fruitful garden implies an abundance of continually renewed resources and assumes the earth provides inexhaustible vital material. Presuming the earth is an endless cornucopia open to overconsumption and constant expansion significantly contributes to climate change conditions and resource depletion. Robinson fails to shed this state of mind even in his final metamorphic state as we will learn in the final section which gauges his development after his Crusoedian domestications explode.

[61] Tournier, p. 142.
[62] Ghesquiere, p. 137.

When Robinson discovers Friday has also been conducting a sexual relationship with the island, he reacts as a jealous lover by initially attacking Friday and then blaming Speranza for having 'seduced Friday'.[63] Robinson's attempts to legitimise his claim to the island through marriage and sex are abandoned as he recognises 'the gap between the image of the island projected into his mind by his garbled recollections of human society, or his reading of the Bible, and the unhuman primitive and uncompromising world whose truth he was timidly seeking'.[64] By projecting the conventions of human institutions, like marriage, and attempting to affix an incongruous, decontextualised, and unsuitable structure onto the island Robinson has constructed barriers and instituted in-built limitations to his receptiveness of the environment itself. However, this realisation only manifests due to the island's supposed unfaithfulness which signals the end of this phase of his relationship with Speranza. It is indicative of the entitled nature of Robinson's reign on the island that one of the events that trigger his departure from the patriarchal colonial system is Speranza's supposed infidelity. The island's 'betrayal' of the coerced courtship and marriage plants the seed of doubt that Robinson's methods of interacting with the world around him that stem from Western sensibilities are fundamentally flawed.

Section two: Mind, body, place

As we have seen in Tournier's *Friday*, dwelling through building and working creates barriers between humans and nonhumans. The anatopic conditions in Tournier's *Friday* maintain a sense of alienation from the environment. Robinson is initially unsuited to the tropical world and goes to extreme lengths to delay any physical or mental adaptation to the new conditions. Maitland in *Concrete Island* also suffers from feeling out-of-place—despite

[63] Tournier, p. 145.
[64] Ibid, p. 164.

only being stranded mere miles from home—and attempts to combat the new conditions by utilising conventional methods of survival. Maitland's continual failure to escape via traditional means and his inability to control the environment as a figure of colonial sovereignty becomes a parodic rendition of Crusoedian tropes. This re-rendering of the colonial/capitalist narrative is underscored by Ballard's urban island that moves the abject, exoticized, othered tropical fantasy island inside the metropolis. Ballard re-constructs the Crusoe-figure to revoke the colonial hero of early adventure fiction who valiantly survives the hostile wilds of the frontier by patriotically bringing the supposed light of civilisation with them to the new world. Ballard's island challenges *Robinson Crusoe*'s Anglocentric narrative and complicates the capitalist insistence on linear progression that encourages ever-expanding productivity. The wasteland/traffic-island bears the markings of neglect, overconsumption, and the uncanny by-products of contemporary capitalist society that are actively shunned.

Unlike Crusoe, who remains remarkably unscathed during his own shipwreck, Maitland suffers physical and psychological injuries from his wreck/car crash. These injuries are summarily projected onto the wasteland in an attempt to heal his various wounds by disassociating from his body. These projections are indicative of Maitland's struggle with selfhood. He is forced to embed a psychic footprint onto the island rather than founding physical constructs in the manner of other Crusoe-figures. Maitland's relation to the space is initially mediated through nostalgic reflections and a humancentric individualistic 'I'. In characterising Maitland as an architect, Ballard explores a heightened sensitivity to built environments and the surrounding city but also demonstrates that it is untenable to apply purely human systems to the nonhuman. Maitland's concept of the outer world narrows as he reverts inwardly—into the self and the island as a projection of the self. In contrast, the island begins to unfold outside of its initially limited topography through slippery spatial and

temporal dimensions. The narrative structure is characteristically Ballardian but also intersects with the Robinsonade genre. Removing middle-class characters from overly organised spaces and societies into ambiguous zones challenges their previously held preconceptions of place.[65]

Maitland's separation from everyday life utilises the Robinsonade convention of totalising solitude to allow for the exploration of human/nonhuman interactions. As David Punter states, 'the long tradition of enclosed and unitary subjectivity comes to mean less and less to [Ballard] as he explores the ways in which a person is increasingly controlled and shaped by landscape and machine'.[66] As Punter suggests, breaking from conventional ways of representing the human experience explores the intersection between human identity that is informed by nonhuman animals, objects, and places. Inter and intra actions with nonhumans is integral to the conventional Robinsonade. The significance of these relationships often remains implicit or represented from an inevitably hierarchical anthropocentric stance that prioritises exploitation. As much as Crusoe adapts the environment of the island to suit his desires, the nonhuman also informs and moulds his own body—willingly or unwillingly.

The lone sovereign castaway in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* remains individual, withdrawn, and reticent in respect to the nonhuman. *Concrete Island* disrupts this individualism through an environment that traverses the illusory boundaries between human and nonhuman bodies. As Anthony Vidler indicates, 'the realms of the organic space of the body and the social space in which that body lives and works […] no longer can be identified as separate'.[67] This relationship is taken to extremes on the Robinsonade desert island as the human body and isolated nonhuman space reciprocally informs one another to ultimately

[65] Middle-classness is a significant part of *Robinson Crusoe*. The island world/dominion presents the aspiring middle-class the opportunity to enact fantasies of control that emulate a ruling upper class.
[66] David Punter, *The Hidden Script: Writing and the Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 1985), p. 14.
[67] Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Massachusetts: M.I.T, 1992), p. 168.

challenge the idea of a unitary and subjective human identity. The subversion of solitary selfhood is emphasised by utilising the Robinsonade and the sole sovereign Crusoe-figure, the canonical symbol of self-sufficiency. *Concrete Island* and other re-visionary Robinsonades disrupt the castaway's sense of self that is maintained in conventional Robinsonades by reducing the nonhuman into known variables and positing an absolute binary between human and animal. The colonial island is initially devoid of familiar objects that when introduced become otherly versions of themselves. These nostalgic and familiar elements are rendered uncanny, creating an anatopic gap between the self and the environment as a dwelling space. Rather than adapting the environment to suit the castaway's idealised landscape, the castaway themselves must be willing to accept change.

Maitland's sense of self is split as he attempts to project his mind and body onto the island, eventually becoming his own uncanny double. Ballard's unique environment is not only Maitland's double but also the abject twin of the metropolis. As such, the ecophobic responses discussed in the previous chapter evolve beyond a colonial fear of the exoticized 'wild' to be found already living inside the foundations of the metropolis: a reality that materialises on the wasteland/island.

(3.3) Mind, body, place
Detachment and projection

Ballard immediately complicates human unitary individuality as Maitland arrives on the island. As with *Friday*'s Robinson, contemporary Robinsonades consciously reframe a character's sense of self the moment they become a castaway. After the shipwreck, castaways must face the new conditions of the surrounding island and the definitive severance from their past life. Maitland experiences dualistic notions regarding the self-in-environment and the self-*as*-environment. Following the crash through the barrier, Maitland begins 'a careful inventory of his body' and finds that 'the eyes staring back at him from the mirror were blank

and unresponsive, as if he were looking at a psychotic twin brother'.[68] The violent crash/shipwreck onto the island triggers a split in Maitland's identity. As Michel Delville indicates, Maitland experiences a 'sense of duality and self-estrangement'.[69] This concurs with Roger Luckhurst's assertion that 'Maitland is immediately dislodged from self-identity, becoming his own double'.[70] Estrangement from a self-affirmed identity creates the conditions needed to remould Maitland's mind to adhere to the contours of the island. However, as with Tournier's Robinson the process is laboured. We are left in doubt whether or not the transformation from an anthropocentric stance is ever fully realised.

Robinsonade figures experience anatopic sensations that contribute to the uncanniness perceived in the nonhuman environment and divide notions of solitary selfhood. The injuries to Maitland's body and the otherly yet familiar urban island cause this duality. In the early sections of *Concrete Island*, Maitland views his injured body as a 'derelict figure' and states 'the reflection of himself […] was warped like a grotesque scarecrow'.[71] The ways Maitland perceives his body influences and parallels his perception of the island as a wasteland. The appraisal of his body mirrors the view of the island from an outside perspective: an abandoned, unproductive waste-ground in a state of dereliction. The description of a distorted, warped, and grotesque self is indicative of the horror and bodily detachment Maitland experiences in relation to body and space.

The anatopia Maitland experiences is partially a product of unfamiliarity with the new environment. Luckhurst states that Maitland is experiencing an unheimlich sensation in reference to 'Jentsch's proposal that [the uncanny] is generated by 'intellectual uncertainty',

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[68] Ballard, p. 8 – 9.
[69] Delville, p. 43.
[70] Roger Luckhurst, *"The Angle Between Two Walls": The Fiction of J.G. Ballard* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), p. 134.
[71] Ballard, p. 29 & 13.

particularly with regard to *spaces*'.[72] Jentsch provides this explanation for a sense of anxiety in unfamiliar environments that breeds the uncanny:

> The human desire for the intellectual mastery of one's environment is a strong one […] it signifies a defensive position against the assault of hostile forces […] [in] that never-ending war of the human and organic world for the sake of which the strongest and most impregnable bastions of science were erected.[73]

Freud builds on Jentsch's definition, refocusing on the possible unfamiliarity of familiar things, a line of questioning that will be explored later in this section. Applying Jentsch's understanding of the uncanny is particularly pertinent to Robinsonade conventions that narrate desires to combat the unknown world of the island through empirical cataloguing and measuring to understand the nonhuman. Developing Jentsch's view in light of environmental criticism reveals a trend of hostility that manifests in alien and unfamiliar places that is predisposed to view the nonhuman world as being dangerous and aggressive in of itself. Humanity attempts to supposedly defend itself against the illusory 'hostile forces' of the 'organic world' in a 'never-ending war' that nonhumanity is presumably unaware of.

Confronting the nonhuman in unfamiliar terrain manifests a range of new sensations, some of which emanate from the anthropocentric defensive position Jentsch outlines. Andrzej Gasiorek recognises Maitland's initial view of the island 'as a threatening non-place, a twilight zone in which he has been mistakenly confined from which there is no escape'.[74] The concrete island contains all the necessary traits of a desert island outlined in my methodology. Despite its proximity to the city, it exists outside of society's formal structures and induces an uncanny ecophobic state in response to the juxtaposing elements of familiarity and unfamiliarity catalysed by the island that exists as both a human-built environment and a

[72] Luckhurst, p. 134 [original italics].
[73] Ernst Jentsch, 'On the psychology of the Uncanny (1906)', *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 2 (2008), 7 – 16 (p. 16).
[74] Andrzej Gasiorek, *J.G. Ballard* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 115.

nonhuman otherly world. In this way Ballard directly re-visions *Robinson Crusoe*'s colonial narrative. The alienation the castaway feels does not emerge from the exoticized tropical wilds but already existed in the heart of the capitalist metropolis. Relocating the island adjacent to a city underscores the fundamental contradiction in the capitalist narrative of linear progression spawned from colonial ideology. Rather than purporting to be the civilising force bringing order to the chaos of the nonhuman world, the by-products and waste of constant work and consumption produce feelings of abjection and alienation that culminate in the creation of the concrete island. The concrete island is a product of overconsumption that is actively looked away from as something uncanny and abject.

After the crash/shipwreck, Maitland's perception of his body becomes progressively distorted. Descriptions of the body referred to earlier represent him as the grotesque other, furthering his association with an ecophobic uncanniness as his appearance is depicted as only near human or nonhuman. Maitland is split into an otherly nonhuman reproduction of himself. This loss of human status is the realised fear of the conventional Robinsonade, that the nonhuman environment will detrimentally alter a person to ultimately create something that is supposedly less-than-human but also not nonhuman—something that breaks the essentialist anthropocentric stance that lauds human subjectivity. Maitland's detachment from his body becomes exaggerated during his confinement on the island. The trauma of the crash, his isolation, his injuries, and his lack of food and water exacerbate his altered mental state. These factors catalyse his changing perception of self and his relationship with the island. He reflects that 'he knew that he was not merely exhausted, but behaving in a vaguely eccentric way, as if he had forgotten who he was. Parts of his mind seemed to be detaching themselves from the centre of his consciousness'.[75] The loss of an individualised self is met with a fusion of his fragmented body and mind with a psychological re-construction of the island.

[75] Ballard, p. 63.

Following this sense of detachment, Maitland's self-identification is increasingly estranged from his own body.

As Maitland and the island begin to merge in the imagination, he attempts to regain self-control and a subjective identity. As the narrative conveys, 'confused for a moment, Maitland squeezed his wrists and elbows, trying to identify himself. "Maitland…!" he shouted aloud. "Robert Maitland…!"'.[76] This self-affirmation is an attempt to reconfirm the unitary experience of his existence that also highlights a reluctance to accept changes in his relationship with the nonhuman. The need to be reminded of his name and connecting his name with his body by physically gripping his arm underscores the disconnection Maitland is experiencing. The isolated individual refuses to interact with nonhuman animals and spaces outside of pursuing individual desires, wants, and needs. The desire to be separate, exceptional, and individual stems from our view of human uniqueness. The belief in human exceptionality creates a barrier between the self and the immediate environment.

Maitland's changing relationship with the island conceptualises place through self-identification. This process is mediated by psychologically projecting onto the environment to confer ownership and belonging. Just as conventional Crusoedian figures reconstruct the island to represent a nostalgic idealisation of their past life, Maitland psychologically reconstructs the island to represent his inner self and personal history. He reflects, 'more and more, the island was becoming an exact model of his head. His movement across this forgotten terrain was a journey not merely through the island's past but his own'.[77] As he is unable to physically dwell in a Crusoedian sense by constructing buildings, Maitland engages with psychogeography to remould the environment and dwell imaginatively. Maitland's association with his past life and the island reconciles his new life with previous experiences

[76] Ballard, p. 64.
[77] Ibid, p. 69 – 70.

to familiarise the unknown deserted urban island. As such, he only relates to the environment by projecting human consciousness outwards. As Aidan Tynan highlights in the special issue of *Green Letters* that focuses on Ballard and the 'Natural' World, interpretations that emphasise human interiority in our relation to space should be taken in context with the physical environment. Tynan relates that:

> the dominant trend in scholarship […] has been to follow Ballard's own lead and to regard these landscapes as symbolic manifestations of psychological states or external realisations of 'inner space', but an ecocritical analysis cannot be satisfied with this. Indeed, it is increasingly difficult *not* to read these works ecologically and materially and in relation to our own climate emergency.[78]

As I will discuss, the material reality being represented and interpreted must be read in context with the unique contours of the given environment itself. Environments influence our understanding of what it means to be human, they exist beyond a purely symbolic consideration or as simple externalisations of human interiority. Recognising the animacy of environments queries interpretations of place only considered in reference to a human self. If human identity is dependent on our conceptions of place, relating our environment solely through human interiorities limits both our understanding of self and the nonhuman. The most effective remedy to this is recognising human/nonhuman relationships are reciprocal and mutually indebted. Applying this to *Concrete Island,* the environmental conditions represented are not just an external representation of Maitland's struggle with self but correspond to a reality born from the material conditions we face in the Anthropocene. Maitland's exploration of the island does not only reconcile with a fractured inner self but is an effort to come to terms with the fragmentary and uncanny spaces left over by capitalist society.

[78] Aidan Tynan, 'Ballard, Smithson and the biophilosophy of the crystal', *Green Letters,* 22 (2018), 398 – 410 (p. 398).

Concrete Island highlights the limits of engaging with the environment and selfhood through a human-centred understanding of place. As Palmer states, 'the island is at first related to [Maitland's] past […] and to his body. His attitude to his injured leg is intensely alienated […] his body is imaged as something separate from himself'.[79] As Palmer identifies, Maitland projects his damaged mind and body onto the island, distancing him from his injuries but also further alienating him from his actual body. Maitland attempts to heal his injured body by cementing his position on the island and imbuing parts of the environment with his identity. The following extract demonstrates this process of detachment and projection:

> he began to shuck off sections […] identifying the island with himself […] these places of pain and ordeal were now confused with pieces of his body. He gestured towards them, trying to make a circuit of the island so that he could leave these sections of himself where they belonged […] a small ritual would signify the transfer of obligation from himself to the island. He spoke aloud, a priest officiating at the eucharist of his own body. "I am the island".[80]

Maitland distances himself from his trauma and injuries by transferring physical and psychological pain onto the island. The environment mutates and merges with Maitland's body in a reimagining of the Eucharist, fusing them as he declares that he has now become the island itself. The use of the Eucharist signals the transformation of Maitland's physical form, the process of transubstantiation where one element not only simulates but becomes another entirely indicates Maitland's attempts to bind the disparate parts of his body with the island. Initially, this appears as though Maitland has created a new integrative relation to space that removes the boundaries separating human and nonhuman bodies. However, Maitland's identification with the island remains predominantly and anthropocentrically self-

[79] Palmer, p. 80.
[80] Ballard, p. 70 – 71.

serving. The island becomes a part of him by imbuing sites of significance with human parts, as such Maitland is only able to relate to space if it becomes more human in form and content. The transference of Maitland's psychological and physical injuries becomes another method of exploiting and transforming the environment for human needs. The nonhuman is only valued for its function to serve humans or is only acknowledged when it is imbued with human inflexions. Although the conflation of the island with Maitland's mind and body is a more experimentative approach to dwelling, mediating the nonhuman through the human body/mind comes attached with its own issues. As I will go on to discuss in the following chapter, we inevitably enter into our engagement with the nonhuman world from a human perspective and as a consequence our mediation of nonhuman environments and animals are inherently inflected with human characteristics. In recognising this, we can isolate our biases and attempt to moderate anthropocentric beliefs.

Maitland cannot function in a typically Crusoedian way, e.g. farming or domesticating nonhuman animals and building, and as such is forced to adapt his approach to the island. After psychologically implanting parts of himself into the environment, Maitland reflects that 'his injured thigh and hip, his mouth and right temple, had all now healed, as if this magical therapy had somehow worked […] he was at last beginning to shed sections of his mind […] all these he would bequeath to the island'.[81] The environment is not exploited in a conventional manner by extracting useful resources and creating physical structures. Instead, the island inherits the psychic and physical wounds of Maitland's trauma. Maitland uses the urban island to discard the unwanted parts of his mind and body, echoing the island's life as a dumping site for the city's waste products. The conflation between Maitland's mind/body with the island/wasteland creates a doubling effect that births an abject other—mirroring the metropolis's own attempts to distance itself from its ever-flowing waste products that find

[81] Ballard, p. 156.

their way into neglected spaces. The presence of this waste serves as a reminder of overconsumption in the metropolis.

Maitland reconstructs the island in the human imagination to reflect his trauma and internal conflict. Where Crusoe-figures physically inflect the nonhuman environment with a manifestation of their desire for human order in the form of buildings and crops, Maitland imaginatively reconstructs the island into a human shape. Although this transforms Maitland's sense of self through the conflation with the nonhuman, it also psychically expands his control over the island to make it possible to dwell somewhere that appears inhospitable. This produces a similar effect to the conventional Robinsonade with a crucial difference. Although the island is still affixed with human form and order—albeit purely imaginatively—this is only made possible by attempting to overcome the initial boundary between what is considered human and what is thought to be nonhuman.

(3.4) Mind, body, place
Questioning Crusoedian Controls

Even before his arrival on the island, Maitland is established as someone who desires solitude. This indicates his propensity towards Crusoedian sovereignty that is unfettered on the isolated urban island. The narrative states that:

> most of the happier moments of his life had been spent alone […] the image in his mind of a small boy playing endlessly by himself in a long suburban garden surrounded by a high fence seemed strangely comforting […] perhaps even his marriage to Catherine […] had succeeded precisely because it recreated for him this imaginary garden.[82]

A particular image of the garden environment is entangled with Maitland's nostalgic reflections of his childhood that are layered onto the island as more areas are uncovered. As

[82] Ballard, p. 27.

discussed, Maitland relates his injured body to the island as he also feels discarded and broken and finds the island and himself in a mutual state of abjection. Maitland also relates the environment to images of his childhood to felicitate his capacity to dwell. Relating the uncanny world to a past memory alleviates some of the stranger aspects of the island and forces a human narrative onto the nonhuman space. In Maitland's nostalgia, he demonstrates an inclination towards seclusion in his reference to a literal as well as an imaginary garden.

Ideas of gardens indicate the desire for human control over the immediate environment as an idealised vision of the natural world inflected with human intervention and order-making. This perception of gardens draws on typical Renaissance landscaping, and they themselves reference earlier classical styles, which became the conventional garden variety outdoor space attached to homes through intervening years still in widespread use in the twenty-first century. Its key principles depend on symmetry, topiary, and formal hedging—all central to producing anthropocentric order. Their structure affects our perception of the nonhuman conceptually and in a material sense (i.e., decreased biodiversity, destruction of prairie land that aids pollination in favour of mowed lawns, and the move away from 'natural' forms entirely for synthetic aesthetics such as 'AstroTurf'). The suburban garden in Maitland's nostalgic reflection adheres to a conventional desire to implement human order in nonhuman spaces. Crucially, the urban concrete island itself cannot be confined to distinctly proportioned measurements and parameters, the idea of the garden in a 'classical' style conflicts with the actual world of the island that resists subjugation.

Paul Farley and Michael Symmons-Roberts draw distinctions between what they call edgelands and more maintained gardened sites. They state that 'well maintained public spaces, parks and playing fields and promenades, are not edgelands; but with a little neglect and abandonment they can become edgelands. A garden is vegetation under control, plant life

held in various states of ecological arrest'.[83] The edgeland/wasteland environment subverts the arrested state of development in the ordered world of conservative gardens that impose the anthropocentric mania for what is seen as orderly. As Farley and Symmons-Roberts indicate, maintained sites that fall out of human imposed order grow outside of their constraints if neglected or left to their own devices. The more neglect offered to edgelands and wasteground, the more they grow until they no longer resemble the human-directed schema of the garden or match urban city plans. This relates directly to the geographical and social space of Ballard's concrete island which is a world in a state of supposed disarray and neglect, an actively forgotten world that questions the validity of constant linear advancement in the metropolis through its very existence. Farley and Symmons-Roberts signal that 'recession is good for wasteland. Any cleared terrain is left unmanaged and ignored, a natural order of succession is allowed to run its course'.[84] Without the narrative of progression and human development written by a capitalist obsession with productivity, the wasteland flourishes.

The conventional vision of the garden pervasive in Western society for the last five hundred years, a creatable and re-creatable world, parallels an empirical desire to shape much larger environments into landscapes that become an anthropocentric mirror to reflect the image of human mastery over the nonhuman. As stated, the desire for androcentric colonial control over the nonhuman runs throughout the conventional Robinsonade tradition and recurs in *Concrete Island* as a subversive critique of empirical and colonial models. Ballard ironizes Maitland's efforts to create a malleable garden-like world under his control only to be continually thwarted despite Maitland's best efforts. The island resists Maitland's attempts at subjugation by retaining its status as an unproductive wasteland. Ballard satirises

[83] Paul Farley and Michael Symmons-Roberts, *Edgelands* (London: Johnathan Cape, 2011), p. 101.
[84] Ibid, p. 140.

Maitland's attempts to satisfy the colonial urge represented in earlier Robinsonades. As Palmer recognises '*Concrete Island* fits the line of inversion and parody […] critiques and rejects *Robinson Crusoe*'.[85] Maitland, as the ironized figure of assumed Crusoedian authority and sovereignty, has his efforts and labours consistently undermined resulting in failure.

Ballard subverts Crusoe's resourcefulness, his life as a tenacious survivalist who never encounters an issue that cannot be solved through constant work and the assertion of selfhood. Crusoe's efforts, as well as other early Robinsonade figures, are almost always met with unlikely success.[86] Ballard uses a familiar Crusoedian figure—anthropocentric, white, male, middle-class—to produce a vastly different narrative marked by consistent failures Maitland refuses to acknowledge. Luckhurst recognises that there is 'the tendency in the latter half of the novel for Maitland to exploit the space for a colonial assertion of subjecthood'.[87] Maitland attempts to assume the mantle of the colonist by controlling the urban island through force of will but, as Luckhurst highlights, 'Maitland fails to master the hidden pockets of the island. Ruins, recalcitrant to the networks of the motorway […] problematize the triumphal assertion of subjecthood'.[88] The island as an unproductive, ruinous, forgotten place resists Maitland's efforts to transform the environment into a colonial subject and subverts the conventional Robinsonade that forces the wasteland to service human wants and needs. The recalcitrant island also resists the developing world surrounding it and rejects the narrative of human progression asserted in capitalist ideology.

Maitland's repeated setbacks are accentuated by his steadfast denial that he is unable to dominate the island. After being unable to create a signal fire, the narration reflects that 'despite his failure […] Maitland felt a quiet satisfaction that he had found the discarded

[85] Palmer, p. 81.
[86] For example, Jules Verne's castaways in *The Mysterious Island* create many elaborate and impossible constructions and devices to aid their control of the island.
[87] Luckhurst, p. 137.
[88] Ibid, p. 137.

sandwich […] it stood in his mind as yet another success he had won since being marooned. Sooner or later he would meet the island on equal terms'.[89] The narrative voice satirises Maitland's lack of self-awareness and baseless insistence that he will control the island. The pattern of free indirect address in the phrase 'yet another success' contradicts our understanding of Maitland's time on the island, which has been met with continual disaster. There is a tragic comedy in Maitland reframing finding a discarded sandwich as a hard-won victory against the hostility of a seemingly uninhabitable island. Re-visionary Robinsonades undermine the patriarchal, euro-centric, and anthropocentric principles that present a barrier to our engagement with the nonhuman world by satirising the Crusoe-figure and dethroning its control of the castaway narrative. Maitland's unfounded belief in his superiority and eventual triumph is repeated throughout *Concrete Island*—typified as he reflects:

> his success in building even this shabby shelter had revived him, rekindling his still unbroken determination to survive […] it was this will to survive, to dominate the island and harness its limited resources, that now seemed a more important goal than escaping.[90]

Maitland repeatedly spurns or self-sabotages opportunities to escape the island in favour of remaining until he has successfully claimed the resistant space as his own, something he never convincingly achieves. Maitland's efforts echo Jentsch's 'never-ending war of the human and organic world'. Leaving via outside help would admit Maitland's defeat at the hands of the island, a world that never knowingly participated in the one-sided war Maitland waged inside and against its borders.

The island as a wasteland defies attempts at exploitation and resists the metropolis that surrounds its boundaries. As indicated, Luckhurst refers to the island as 'recalcitrant' to the overarching highway that both connects and separates it from the metropolis. The

[89] Ballard, p. 55 – 56.
[90] Ibid, p. 64.

highway stands as a monumental reminder of the city's gentrifying development, industry, and supposed perpetual forward motion that subsumes 'unproductive' space. As an architect, Maitland's role in transforming non-productive areas like the island ties him to both capitalist and Robinsonade conventions. His Crusoe-like desire to harness the island's 'limited resources' is a response to the unmanaged environment and its unproductiveness from an anthropocentric perspective. Creating a profitable and productive world controlled by a male, middle-class, and white European sovereign ruler becomes—in the Crusoedian narrative—the goal of the marooned who seek to change their status as a castaway to a coloniser and emulate the production-oriented aims of their previous civilisation. By remaining as an unproductive space, the island resists capitalist ideologies. As Will Viney states, the 'piece of derelict land has been created and disremembered, hidden and neglected. Its true origins are made deliberately ambiguous'.[91] Ignored and abandoned, the wasteland has grown outside of human intended purposes. As the hidden, abject twin of the city and a site of waste and nonproduction the island's actual 'purpose' becomes increasingly ambiguous and makes it difficult to control. This is reflected in the island's topography that fluctuates to resist being mapped or placed into defined and regulated dimensions.

The unproductive wasteland is the antithesis to the ideal Crusoe-esque island that resembles a pliable and conquerable world that eventually submits to human coercion to provide for humanity. As a non-space, the slippery borders of Ballard's island comment on the Robinsonade tradition of transforming a supposedly economic and cultural wasteland into a profitable site that imitates, rather than reinvents, societal structures. However, the production and profit-based mentality on conventional Robinsonade islands becomes inherently waste-producing. Although the Crusoe-figures' métier is to transform the island

[91] William Viney, '"A fierce and wayward beauty": Waste in the Fiction of J.G. Ballard, Parts I & II', *Ballardian*, 2007, para. 4.

into a profitable venture of colonial expansion, the stockpiles of pelts, food, valuables, and salvageable material inevitably become waste as their production exceeds the needs of one person. This should also be considered alongside the lack of any economic imperative—as the island is self-contained, insular, and separate from global commerce. This is illustrated by the money Defoe's Crusoe salvages from the wreck, left to gather dust and mould in a drawer, its value irrelevant outside of a system of currency. The appearance of waste is emphasised on Ballard's concrete island, which is littered with the city's by-products. Its existence is the consequence of continual expansion and ostensive advancement. Factoring this waste material into my interpretation of the uncanny, the wasteland-island is born from the accumulation of society's discarded parts to become its abject double. This state of abjection is highlighted by Gasiorek, who states that the island is:

> a non-place […] it exists solely as the space left over and in between a series of interlocking highways, which define and isolate it; it is a forgotten patch of waste ground shaped by the discarded remnants of urban life […] This non-place functions as an abject, alienated microcosm, the dark other to the mundane reality from which Maitland is so suddenly removed.[92]

The sense of abjection Gasiorek indicates is concurrent with the island's genesis. It has been born from the rejected parts of the overproducing city and stands as a site of continued resistance against development as a nowhere world, an otherly remnant that exists despite and in spite of modernity, growing as a result of neglect and waste.

The notions of the uncanny, doubling, and abjection encapsulate the concept of islands more generally. As Kelly Oliver mentions, islands can be considered as abject spaces due to their state of separation from the mainland as well as our equivocal relationship

[92] Gasiorek, p. 108.

towards them. Oliver highlights this last facet by drawing on Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign* Vol. 2, stating that in:

> Derrida's analysis the island becomes a figure for this ambivalence, for loving or leaving or, more accurately, both loving *and* leaving. The figure of the island represents seemingly contradictory desires […] to cling to and escape from, to stand your ground and to flee. In this regard, the figure of the island might be what Julia Kristeva would call *abject* in the sense that it cannot be categorised. Rather it is always in between, between land and sea, between safe harbour and threatening isolation. Like everything abject, islands both fascinate and terrify. They fuel our ambivalent desires to love and leave, to flee and stay.[93]

The concrete island defies categorisation, Maitland is unable to map its changing dimensions, it exists in the in-between, the leftover, the forgotten space that provides the isolation needed to make an island. Maitland reflects that his crash/shipwreck may have been self-imposed, born from his desire to escape a mundane life that parallels Crusoe's flight from his family and England. As Oliver and Derrida indicate, the idea of an island manifests a compulsion to become castaways ourselves, a desire for the island environment and its isolation while also harbouring the simultaneous urge to escape self-imposed solitude. The Crusoe-figure desires to start afresh but paradoxically reproduces the same physical and conceptual institutions of their previous society. By placing the island immediately adjacent to the city, Ballard draws the Crusoedian conflict and ensuing sense of abjection closer to home. The hidden and abject world that is the island becomes ever-present as the unconscious of the city, despite—or rather because of—the attempts made to ignore its presence. As Maitland reflects, 'the whole city was now asleep, part of an immense unconscious Europe, while he himself crawled about on a forgotten traffic island like the nightmare of this slumbering continent'.[94] The island

[93] Kelly Oliver, *Earth and World: Philosophy After the Apollo Missions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 18.
[94] Ballard, p. 25.

assumes the form of the unconscious other that the city has repressed and attempted to forget wilfully or unconsciously.

Maitland embodies the contradictory and abject experience of islands; his transformative awakening, while the outside world seems to sleep, frees him from societal constraints while he simultaneously performs the exploitative narrative of the metropolis. Maitland's desire for control, his Crusoedian urge to dominate others and order environments, parallels how he perceives the island: as the unconscious, terrifying, nightmare of European society. It imagines a place where the rest of the city's wild, primal, uncivilised thoughts (along with its waste) have been repressed only to emerge from the unconscious—even if this does not reflect any physical reality this is the perception of unproductive non-spaces that become the antithesis of civilisation in an anthropocentric binary. Vidler highlights the unheimlich aspects of the built environment that bears consideration in my interpretation of *Concrete Island* in an architectural sense. Vidler states that:

> space is assumed to hide, in its darkest recesses and forgotten margins, all the objects of fear and phobia that have returned with such insistency to haunt the imaginations of those who have tried to stake out spaces […] space as threat, as harbinger of the unseen, operates as medical psychical metaphor for all the possible erosions of bourgeois bodily and social well-being.[95]

Space that is not claimed or that exists outside of known parameters holds the potential, in the anthropocentric mindset, to damage the human subject both physically and psychically by eroding the bastions of human exceptionalism. Hidden and unpeopled space on the island environment become consistent areas of anxiety for Crusoe-like castaways. As explored in *Lord of the Flies*, the threat of the jungle is affirmed and made known by absences, the dark recesses that exist at the borders of the known world frame unfathomable interiors. The

[95] Vidler, p. 167.

nonhuman is characterised by as a hidden world that resist scrutiny and as such is perceived as a threat to human minds and bodies. As indicated, this anxiety stems from a culturally learnt fear of the nonhuman other.

The concrete island is distinct from the jungles of distant tropical worlds in more conventional Robinsonades. On the tropical island, Crusoe fears for his mortal life, his spiritual well-being, and his concept of humanity. Crusoedian figures worry that prolonged contact with the nonhuman world will sever their ties to humanity and reveal a primal inhuman self. Ballard's *Concrete Island* brings this fear closer to civilisation and critiques the notions of human/nonhuman ontologies through proximity to the city. The Crusoedian colonial-anthropocentric identity is predicated on othering—i.e., Crusoe is civilised because the nonhuman is wild and requires civilising. Ballard demonstrates that a repressed, hidden, 'wild' self is not a distant concern or a product of equally distant tropical islands but lives at the core of capitalist structures. The supposedly dark nonhuman spaces Vidler highlights become an unheimlich reflection of the human city. *Concrete Island* indicates that this 'primordial' violence originates in the societal institutions of the city itself rather than being an inherent nonhuman quality.

Building on my earlier use of the uncanny, we can broaden the scope of its application with Freud's extension of Jentsch's parameters. Freud notes how Daniel Sander's definition of heimlich, which may be read as meaning homely or familiar, also 'exhibits one [definition] which is identical with its opposite […] what is *heimlich* becomes *unheimlich'*.[96] This component of familiarity becoming strange, secretive, and concealing is integral to Maitland's experience of the island. Although the concrete island is a human-made built

[96] Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny (1919)', in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 420.

environment, its familiarity quickly develops into unfamiliarity. The state of separation and the rapid growth of the edgeland outside of human control renders the known world into an unheimlich nonhuman other. The blurred distinctions between heimlich/unheimlich relate directly to the conventional Robinsonade when viewed in an environmental critical light.

Sanders states that the heimlich space is also 'secure, domestic, hospitable […] belonging to the house; friendly; familiar; […] tame (as in animals)'.[97] The idealised dwelling space Crusoedian characters aspire to parallels Sander's definition of heimlich. Crusoedian characters that follow a colonial narrative arduously remake the nonhuman world into a familiar representation of home life and domesticate any element that might threaten to disrupt the tenuous balance that keeps nonhuman forces subjected to human order. While Defoe's Crusoe manages to create pockets of seemingly secure and homely space, as well as taming nonhuman animals for companionship or work, Maitland is unable to establish physical dominion over the island.[98] The act of creating a home is an attempt to define the boundaries between what is human and nonhuman, inside and outside, between what is thought of as heimlich and unheimlich, but all too often these boundaries become blurred or, moreover, through their creation the idea of a potential threat outside the home is born. In creating a specific homely space, by extension, anything that exists outside that space becomes unhomely and threatening. The tireless efforts of Crusoe-esque characters to extend their dominion is to secure a larger space that forces out hostile entities, imagined or otherwise. Regardless of a castaway's successes or failures to construct actual homes, islands

[97] Freud, p. 419.

[98] Domestication of animals as an act itself potentially breeds an uncanny other. As discussed in relation to Tournier, companion animals are used to alleviate the effects of isolation suffered by the castaway in a less apparent exploitative relationship. Crusoe's parrot Poll and his Ship-dog, for example, are made to reflect a human likeness. In doing so, Crusoe does not extend to them the same claims to sentience usually reserved for humans alone but rather only used as a mirror. Without recognising nonhuman animals own innate agency they become signifiers that emphasise the absence of other human people on the desert island rather than actors in their own right.

in the wider Robinsonade tradition resist becoming a heimlich reflection of home-like worlds and remain outside of being considered 'tame'. This transforms the home itself into an unheimlich space. The anatopic structures, the incongruent facsimiles colonisers construct, become an uncanny double of the society the castaway is attempting to replicate. The home itself is out-of-place and its presence creates boundaries and binaries that render the outside world uncanny.

As an uncanny space, islands resist colonial means of control and domination that attempt to transform them into versions of the coloniser's native home. This process is complicated by *Concrete Island* as Maitland's original home is geographically close by. However, it still manifests this same pattern of resistance through the island's changing dimensions that destabilise Maitland's spatial control of the environment. In fact, the proximity to the city only emphasises the concrete island's subversion of human control. As the narration reflects the 'island seemed larger and more contoured, a labyrinth of dips and hollows. The vegetation was wild and lush, as if the island was moving back in time to an earlier and more violent period'.[99] The explicit reference to violence is concurrent with the fear that nonhuman worlds and entities are sites of primaeval feeling that can infect a person's humanity.

Maitland's retention of the Crusoedian mindset is an anxiety response to an unfamiliar world he initially recoils from. As Gasiorek highlights, 'the need to control things (people, environments) outside of the self discloses a desire to make that self an inviolable entity'.[100] Gasiorek's assertion is specifically in relation to Maitland being marooned but also applies to the wider Robinsonade as castaways attempt to become inviolable by dominating their

[99] Ballard, p. 102.
[100] Gasiorek, p. 116.

surroundings as a defensive reaction to the unknown. Gasiorek highlights the similar patterns of violence I have previously discussed, relating that:

> the environment […] releases [Maitland's] most aggressive tendencies, as though the fantasised displacement of part of the self onto the island gives rise to a reverse process, the disjected, alienated terrain bequeathing *its* hostility to the unwary intruder. The more Maitland perceives the island as a beneficent place, the more aggressive he himself becomes.[101]

Although there are pertinent questions raised here, I would contend that the island does not bestow a hostile attitude onto Maitland in a regression to a 'primal' self. Although the island is certainly not static or passive, it does not force Maitland into becoming an aggressor. This attitude surfaces as he becomes more introspective, a turn inward that is then projected outwards onto the island. His violent and exploitative traits are what he has brought to the island from the city. They manifest due to the presumed association between the nonhuman and primordial violence, apparently only kept in check by the civilising structures of society. By placing the concrete island on the outskirts of the city, Ballard highlights the pre-existing violence capitalist society is predicated on. While the sense of abjection tied to an island's separation from the mainland offers the chance to reform human/nonhuman relations, it also presents the opportunity to enact buried unconscious urges of the castaway i.e., the desire to control and dominate others. The island only appears to be in a state of primaeval regression due to Maitland's own perception of space that is immediately, and anthropocentrically, related to the self. Maitland becomes progressively more hostile as he attempts to identify the island with his own regressive emotional state.

As discussed in my methodology, the Robinsonade island environment is characterised by its separation from the mainland. Despite the concrete island's proximity to

[101] Gasiorek, p. 116 [my emphasis].

the highway that connects the metropolis, a conceptual gap opens between the city and the island/wasteland. Maitland is presented with familiar objects and locations in varying states of dereliction such as abandoned cars, dilapidated structures, and common everyday plants that are all rendered uncanny. By considering the castaway island as an anatopia, a place characterised by out-of-placeness, we can apply Freud's definition of unheimlich (i.e., something homely becoming unhomely). The environment begins to take on an aspect of otherworldliness, emphasised as Maitland reflects that 'around him the high nettles rose in the sunlight, their tiered and serrated leaves like the towers of Gothic cathedrals, or the porous rocks of a mineral forest on an alien planet'.[102] This unfamiliarity can help us to define how we view islands, as the other space not yet bound by constraining societal laws. Our response to this alien sensation can be polarising, it offers the possibility of liberation, but we may also be constricted by fear of the unknown.

Maitland, like Tournier's Robinson, eventually adapts a different mode of interaction as current methods prove insufficient. However, rather than seizing the chance to separate themselves entirely from the world they have left behind, they begin by emulating its forms and formal conventions regarding the nonhuman world, i.e., establishing a hierarchical system to create the impression of an impregnable self-identity. Tournier and Ballard both critique colonial modes of engagement with the nonhuman while offering some recourse for an alternative relationship. However, the question remains if they entirely break from Crusoedian modes of interaction—or whether this is viable or possible whilst remaining recognisably a Robinsonade.

[102] Ballard, p. 70.

Section three: Re-mapping the island

(3.5) Re-mapping the island

The island of Speranza

The final sections of this chapter will gauge the changes in Robinson and Maitland's relationship with the nonhuman world in relation to the question of dwelling. I will begin with Tournier's *Friday* and explore the shifts in Robinson's relationship with the environment that occur sporadically over time and are then suddenly forced to fruition after an explosion that destroys Robinson's scrupulously constructed buildings and dwellings. This accident forces Robinson into attempting a new kind of dwelling.

Tournier dismantles some of the essential aspects of the Crusoe figure in terms of where and how Robinson dwells. For example, Robinson overcomes his aversion to climbing trees that he originally saw as an act beneath human dignity. The association with other primates is initially seen as abhorrent, but after the accident he overcomes his cultural preconditioning and eventually elects to sleep inside the jungle canopy. This is a direct re-vision of Defoe's Crusoe, who out of fear spends his first night on the island in a tree and then makes progressive steps to remedy this motion towards animality and reinstate his position as a human outside of human civilisation by populating the island with the anatopic structures discussed previously. This is not only a literal re-vision but changes Robinson's attitudes towards dwelling conceptually beyond the physical. The key difference between Tournier's Friday and Robinson is their distinct methods of dwelling, both spatially and temporally. Robinson initially considers the world around him in linear fashion. Time progresses towards a definitive goal and is related spatially to his earthly attachments. This mentality undergoes a dramatic shift after the explosion, to a more spontaneous immediate relation to time that emphasises the breadth of his experiences afforded by the sun and sky. There is a movement away from looking inwardly, into the nostalgic past, into the past self,

and into the earth and what can be rendered from it, towards a horizon of seemingly infinite time and an immediacy with the surroundings at the present moment. This section will not be gauging whether Friday's methods of engaging with the island and its inhabitants are ethically or environmentally better or worse than Robinson's. The question is not who has the most authentic, ideal, or correct mode of dwelling but rather what Robinson learns from Friday's interactions with the environment and how this informs approaches to the nonhuman.

Both Robinson's efforts to create a substitute for the interactive taskscape as well as the Oedipal sexual relationship with Speranza prove to be ineffective modes of dwelling that further the anatopic distance between the castaway and the island. These relationships enforced an oppositional binary. They maintained that Robinson was *essentially different* from the world around him. In defining himself against that difference in an effort to find meaning and identity he is further isolated as the world around him becomes an anatopia and he himself is out-of-place. Robinson summarises this changing relationship with the island, reflecting that 'the period of the island-wife—following the period of the island-mother, which itself had followed that of the cultivated island—was now at the end, and that some new development was approaching, utterly strange and unpredictable'.[103] There is a progression away from viewing the island as a collection of resources that it reluctantly relinquishes towards seeing the island as an interactive entity.

By accepting not-knowing and embracing encounters with the strange and unpredictable Robinson can abandon Crusoedian methods of control. The static cultivated island that exists as inert resources in need of conquering and taming before transforming them into extensions of the coloniser's control is usurped by the island-mother relationship.

[103] Tournier, p. 146.

Although this attempt to animate the island into a feminised other demonstrates a change in Robinson's perspective, it is still passive and exploitable in both the island-mother and island-wife dynamic that asserts patriarchal ownership. What connects all of Robinson's previous interactions with the environment, despite their variations, is the sense of earthly attachment and their position as the other half of a binary used to define human identity. Robinson breaks from Crusoedian relations to space by abandoning his desire to exploit the earth.

This new skyward-facing outlook appears at first to be diametrically opposed to the Crusoedian point of view. In another reversal of Defoe's Crusoe, Robinson no longer tries to indoctrinate Friday as a colonial subject but rather attempts to emulate his interactions with the nonhuman. Robinson describes Friday as a child of air and sun as opposed to Robinson's earthiness. This transition to Friday's way of life is not seamless or effortless. Tournier emphasises the difficulty Robinson faces in engaging with what Robinson defines as his elemental opposite. The struggle to remove all of Robinson's cultural norms is exemplified by his revulsion at seeing Friday chew grubs to feed a baby vulture, forcing him to reflect on 'his white man's sensibilities, the queasy fastidiousness, wondering if this were a last rare token of civilisation or no more than a dead weight which he must resolve to shed if he were to embark upon a new way of life'.[104] Robinson's aversion is recognised as a remnant of redundant values that suppress new experiences. By acknowledging that the remains of his European ideals are not an absolute truth, but rather a potential hindrance to his new life on the island, Tournier signals a significant break from the Crusoe myth—specifically the castaway's anxiety of losing touch with their sense of humanity. Rather than rigorously maintaining an irrelevant set of cultural values constantly jeopardised by the nonhuman, Robinson embraces a new form of dwelling that appears directly opposed to Western

[104] Tournier, p. 140.

systems. Tournier demonstrates the shortcomings of insisting on time and space being calculable and measurable, therefore making the world apparently quantifiably knowable. Categorising the world around us constructs defined separations that risk becoming hindrances to inter and intra-action with the nonhuman. The shifts Tournier demonstrates in the castaway's human/nonhuman dynamic through the Friday-Crusoe relationship require Robinson to abandon the obsessive need to quantify, observe, and exploit as an abstract third-party in favour of a relationship that prioritises reciprocity.

Robinson's physical and conceptual barriers sheltered him from potential danger but also sheltered him from experiencing the island in any immediate context. His previous experiences have been filtered through a mindset that considered animality and the nonhuman as hostile and oppositional to individual identity and to wider concepts of human morality. After the explosion, Robinson reflects that under:

> [Friday's] influence, and the successive blows he dealt me, I have travelled the road of a long and painful metamorphosis. The man of the earth dragged from his labours by a spirit of the air could not of himself become a creature of air. He was too dense in substance, too sluggish in his movements.[105]

The trajectory of Robinson's spatial awareness has moved away from earthly depth and a preoccupation with building and working on the land towards stratospheric breadth and intimate and immediate interaction with the world. The island is no longer a catalogue of resources to be reformed into a profitable emulation of the European countryside or a hostile world full of potential unknown threats. Robinson reflects that there was always:

> *another island* hidden beneath the buildings and the tilled fields I had created […] now I have been transported to that other Speranza […] Speranza is no longer a virgin land which I must make fruitful, nor Friday a savage whom I must teach to behave. Both call for all of my attention, a watchful and marvelling vigilance […] every

[105] Tournier, p. 178.

> moment I am seeing them for the first time […] nothing will ever dull their magical novelty.[106]

Tournier consciously re-writes the ideological aims of Defoe's Crusoe. As a colonist, Crusoe must mould the virginal island around him into a European ideal and coercively convert Indigenous people and the unruly landscape into an outpost of Christian morality. As discussed, the island is simultaneously and divergently virginal, fecund, and a morally corrupt wasteland only made liveable by 'improving' the land. This indicates a conflict in the colonist's perspective between the ecophobic fear of the nonhuman and the desire to expand Euro-centric control. In Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Friday is initially an areligious 'savage' in need of conversion to Christian values. Tournier's Robinson subverts these Crusoedian conventions. It is Robinson who is inducted into Friday's way of life as he attempts to embrace the island as a separate entity.

Though Robinson's new perspective values the island for qualities beyond its possible resources, the above extract emphasises its many marvels and magical novelty that place Robinson into an outside observer's role as a perpetual tourist. He is there to watch and revel in the novel experiences that Friday and Speranza reveal, no matter how apparently naturalised he becomes. The question remains whether we can truly change our methods of dwelling or whether the baggage left by tradition will remain present even after they are seemingly abandoned. Fundamentally, the difference between Robinson's life on the island pre and post the explosion is that out-of-placeness is not a cause for alarm. The separation from mainland society becomes a chance to live outside of repressive means of control and not be punished for deviating from a narrative of incessant productivity.

Although Robinson is no longer fixated on the colonial desire to reproduce facsimiles of English pastoral scenes and produce unnecessary goods, his new perspective raises other

[106] Tournier, p. 175.

perhaps unexpected issues. His spatial shift from earthly depth to heavenly breadth comes with a detached attitude from the earth and a distinct apathy towards terrestrial life and environmental health. This is exemplified when the crew from the ship the *Heron* exert their own anthropocentric authority over the island. The ship's arrival rigorously tests the changes in Robinson's new relationship with the nonhuman, not least the conflict between his temptation to finally escape or stay indefinitely on the island. The reintroduction of the Western world temporarily reinstates Robinson's lost civilisation and its cultural values, revealing the shortcomings of Robinson's metamorphosis. Despite the seemingly radical divergence from Crusoedian practices, Robinson still retains an anthropocentric mindset. As the sailors begin to plunder the island of its resources:

> Robinson reflected […] on the acute distress it would have caused him in the days of the cultivated island to see it pillaged in this fashion. It was not so much the senseless mutilation of trees or the heedless slaughter of animals that now troubled him, but the coarse and avaricious bearing of these men who were his fellows.[107]

The similarity between the sailors and Robinson's past self is a cause of discomfort. Robinson now sees humanity as materialistic; he reflects that he must have also seemed as coarse by comparison. He prides himself on his new detached demeanour and his apparent spiritual growth during his estrangement from Western society. He shows contempt for the sailor's desire for material gain but remains unaffected by the abuse of nonhuman animals and environments. Since Robinson has no economic vested interest in the island, he disassociates from the world around him and is indifferent when it is exploited by others.

Robinson dispassionately observes the mutilation, slaughter, and pillaging of the island. His only reflection on the ecological destruction occurring around him is how far he has progressed to be able to shed his ties with the terrestrial concerns of other animals and the

[107] Tournier, p. 186.

environment as he has moved beyond the needs of other humans. Robinson's self-congratulatory attitude revels in its disconnection from the earth. This indifference is seen again when:

> one of the sailors had discovered two pieces of gold […] they resolved to set fire to the grass in the hope of finding more. The fact that the gold in a sense belonged to him scarcely occurred to Robinson, nor did he give much thought to the animals who were to be deprived of the only pasture which the rainy season did not turn to swamp.[108]

Robinson's unconcern for the environmental devastation demonstrates the distance he still sees between himself and the nonhuman. He maintains a misplaced anthropocentric assumption that the environment will be replenished as he reflects that 'Speranza's wounds were but superficial and would vanish in a few months'.[109] The belief in an ever-abundant fruitful garden that can continually supply people with resources to exploit is indicative of Robinson's lack of truly radical change. Our capacity to dwell in any given environment requires an awareness of environmental health and an acknowledgement of the finitude of resources. Despite all the various transformations Robinson has undergone, there is still a lingering anthropocentrism that maintains a barrier between the human and the nonhuman.

The unconcern Robinson demonstrates forces us to question the extent of his metamorphosis. However, as Palmer states, 'far more than Defoe, [Tournier] is on the wavelength of the ecological problem' that emphasises 'the suffocating grip and tyrannical routine of Western civilization […] and the depletion of natural resources and overconsumption'. [110] Certainly, Tournier challenges Western methods of dwelling and, through Robinson, demonstrates the failures of capitalist and colonial narratives that

[108] Tournier, p. 186 – 187.
[109] Ibid, p. 195 – 196.
[110] Palmer, p. 142.

emphasise productivity. Still, it is also the case that Robinson embodies anthropocentric attitudes to the environment in the concluding chapters. Tournier's exploration of the Crusoe-figure becomes progressively more pertinent to our experience of the world in the Anthropocene as we consider environmental exhaustion and the strains anthropocentric overconsumption places on the environment. The strain human activity places on the nonhuman world eliminate any future efforts to dwell, as the depleted environment is made uninhabitable for humans and nonhumans alike. Tournier demonstrates the constraints inherent in a Westernised approach to the environment that values securing resources and asserting anthropocentric supremacy over nonhuman alterity. The entitled assumption that resources are present solely for human benefit presents obstacles in shaping new methods of dwelling. Tournier demonstrates that retiring these beliefs is necessary to reinvent our relationship with the nonhuman.

Despite Tournier's exposure to the ecological problem, Robinson does not separate from an anthropocentric mindset even after his final metamorphosis. He still maintains sovereign control of the island and persists in the belief that the environment is an abundant cornucopia that endlessly supplies human wants. Despite all the changes in Robinson's relationship with the island, *Friday* does not overhaul the human-centred narrative endemic to the Crusoe-figure, which questions whether this is either a feasible or desirable aim. I will explore in the following chapter if it is possible to not only undermine or challenge anthropocentric narratives but to shift that focus entirely whilst retaining the essence of the Robinsonade as a specific genre. It remains vital to understand and explore human motivation and interaction to adequately address our relationship with the nonhuman. As Palmer indicates, Tournier emphasises:

> alienation between man and nature. Tournier's deconstruction of the original classic is a reflection upon what it might mean to leave behind the Western values of

> organization, rationality, superiority and to become part of nature. It can be seen as a thought-experiment about a return to nature and the reintegration of humanity with nature.[111]

Tournier utilises the Robinsonade to explore a new type of Crusoe-figure, experimenting with what happens when colonial attitudes are abandoned. Palmer's assertion may go some way to explaining Robinson's attitude to the crew of the *Heron* and their destruction of the environment. As just one part of the environment, and not its governor or custodian, Robinson has to accept the changes enacted on the environment resignedly and trust that they will not cause lasting damage to the ecological make-up of the island. I contest though that Robinson has not been able to integrate into the nonhuman world. There is still an anthropocentric hierarchy on the island and Robinson is still in sovereign control over Speranza without revoking his Crusoe-like position as the island's monarch. Inevitably, and naturally, we remain human. Interrogating what that humanity looks like and how it relates to the world is necessary in finding new methods of reciprocally dwelling with the nonhuman.

Despite the difference between the Robinson that entered the island twenty-seven years ago and the one found in the closing chapter of *Friday* there is not a complete fundamental divergence from Crusoedian sovereignty. Tournier subverts and undermines the broader elements of Crusoe's character and raises pertinent necessary questions about Western responses to 'otherness', but there is a crucial linchpin that holds the pattern of human-centric behaviour together. Without departing from hierarchical human sovereignty, the radical aspects of *Friday* cannot entirely break from the shadow cast by the Crusoe myth. This sovereign reign re-emerges when the *Heron* lands on Speranza and 'accordingly Robinson emerged from his concealment and walked on to the beach with the composure proper to a monarch welcoming visitors to his realm'.[112] Robinson still maintains the

[111] Palmer, p. 142.
[112] Tournier, p. 184.

trappings of European anthropocentrism that asserts human, specifically European and male, sovereignty. The island remains Robinson's property and he retains sole ownership of its resources. This attitude is reinforced by the captain of the *Heron* who 'had the courtesy to treat the supplies he had brought on board as though they had been the property of Robinson, the master of the island'.[113] The interactive human world Robinson had left behind is temporarily restored upon the arrival of the *Heron* and reaffirms Robinson's claim to Speranza. Although the self-conscious title of governor and administrator has been dropped, the mindset these titles conferred remains present. Robinson's interactions with the crew of the *Heron* confirm his possession of the island, after they depart Robinson exhibits 'joy at repossessing the realm which he had thought lost to him for ever'.[114] Robinson's final act to retain control over the island is to request that 'the whereabouts of the island not to be revealed' after the *Heron* departs.[115] Although this prevents any additional sailors from coming to the island and draining its finite resources, it also ensures Robinson's position as the undisputed controller of Speranza.

Despite retaining aspects of the Crusoedian mindset in terms of controlling space, there are some radical means of departure in Robinson's relation to time. The destruction of the water-clock and calendar-post removes the progression of time from a linear straightforward movement from a chosen point in the past to an indefinite point in the future. This does not cause Robinson alarm or inspire him to reinstate formal Westernised time but rather liberates him from self-policed rules. He reflects that 'what has changed most in my life is the passing of time, its speed and even its direction […] time passed rapidly and usefully, the more quickly as it was usefully employed, leaving behind it an accumulation of

[113] Tournier, p. 193.
[114] Ibid, p. 194.
[115] Ibid, p. 194.

achievement and wastage which was my history'.[116] Previously, Robinson worked in order to stockpile resources that symbolised economic gain on the island as well as conferring a sense of cultural and personal history. This maintained his connection with the world he had left behind and effectively prevented his engagement with the immediate surroundings in the present. In being forced to surrender his ties to linear time and the accumulation of a nostalgic past, the opportunity to find new ways of engaging with place emerge. As Deleuze highlights, 'the absence of the Other, and the dissolution of its structure do not simply disorganize the world but, on the contrary, open up a possibility of salvation'.[117] There is a chance for radical change without the constraints of a tyrannical system of governance that, although Robinson enforced, he was also subjected to. Previously, Robinson had enacted the cultural values of Western society regardless of how useful or appropriate they were to the island world. As Deleuze indicates, Robinson 'initially experienced the loss of Others as a fundamental disorder of the world […] but he discovers (slowly) that it is the Other who disturbs the world. The Other was the trouble'.[118] The 'Other' here is the fabric of human society that reinforces its presence through tradition and repeated interaction. The presence of the societal 'Other', and the encumberment of their traditions and values, prevent developing new relationships with the nonhuman by branding them as divergent, extreme, or unnecessary.

The presence of 'the Other' influences our engagement with the nonhuman and, as Deleuze suggests, becomes disorderly despite claims to the contrary. Without their presence, the individual would be able to engage with the environment in new radical ways without the baggage of cultural and traditional norms hindering human/nonhuman engagement. As Deleuze indicates, the isolated world of the Robinsonade provides a space away from the

[116] Tournier, p. 174.
[117] Deleuze, p. 354.
[118] Ibid, p 350.

disruptive effects of the Other and the opportunity to reinvent the self within—rather than against—the nonhuman world. For example, Robinson's new understanding of time away from the Deleuzian Other becomes an immediate experience rather than a collection of historical past moments. Robinson reflects that:

> he was younger today than the pious and self-seeking young man who had set sail on the *Virginia*, not young with a biological youth, corruptible and harbouring the seeds of its decrepitude, but with a mineral youth, solar and divine […] He could not forsake that everlasting instant poised at the needle-point of a perfect ecstasy, to sink back into a world of usury, dust and decay. [119]

Robinson is freed from the influence of psychological ageing caused by the insistence of retrospection. There is a fundamental contradiction between the Western desire for forward linear progression and its need to refer to a nostalgic past. On Speranza, every day is unique in its own immediate moment and does not need to be informed by other past or future moments. Robinson is freed from historically cultural values that require an individual who wishes to function within society's social systems to live in the past before they can contend with the present. The arrival of the *Heron* reasserts Western time standards and briefly disrupts Robinson's new mode of temporality. When Robinson learns the current date and calculates how long he has been on the island he suddenly feels significantly older, exemplifying Deleuze's assertion that it is the presence of Others which creates disorder. Western temporality's reintroduction effectively ages Robinson twenty-seven years in a matter of moments.

Although Robinson fails to shed *all* his Crusoedian modes of thought, Tournier emphasises the opportunities afforded by abandoning the formal structures enforced by human order. As Deleuze highlights, a world enforced by Others-as-structure is actually

[119] Tournier, p. 193.

disorderly. The island is an opportunity to free yourself of repressive constraints. As Deleuze speculates, 'what is a Robinsonade? A world without Others. Tournier assumes that Robinson, through much suffering, discovers and conquers a great Health, to the extent that things end up being organized in a manner quite different than their organization in the presence of Others'.[120] The absence of Others afforded by the Robinsonade presents the vital chance to reconsider how we can change our interactions with nonhumans. The castaway can abandon those material and cultural products that block our own engagement with the nonhuman. Whether Robinson fully leaves behind a Crusoedian ontology is contestable, but Tournier offers alternative ways of being in the environment that dissolves the anatopic barriers we have built around the nonhuman.

(3.6) Re-mapping the island

The island of Maitland

As with Tournier's Robinson, Maitland's relationship with the island develops to include some radical change but ultimately retains aspects of the Crusoedian mindset. As discussed, Maitland engages with the environment by psychically implanting parts of his mind and body into the island. His imaginative projections are attempts to understand or know the island, but they are also inevitably humancentric and humanise the environment. The connection Maitland feels to the island is facilitated through self-reflection reinforced by recollections from his childhood. Gasiorek highlights that Maitland's acclimatisation to the environment is achieved through 'a regression to childhood and a sympathetic identification with the island'.[121] The picture of the ruinous wasteland parallels Maitland's own body as he has been cast into the island and forgotten, as the island itself has been rejected by the wider city. Gasiorek goes on to relate that the 'desolate non-place […] has offered the possibility of re-

[120] Deleuze, p. 358.
[121] Gasiorek, p. 115.

making human relationships but this offer has been spurned, the dystopian view of life predominating over the utopian'.[122] As in Tournier's *Friday*, the separation of the island from society presents an opportunity to reinvent our relationship with the nonhuman that can either be refuted or accepted. The castaway could move beyond the exploitative narrative maintained by the apparently civilised metropolis and break from traditional modes of interaction.[123] However in this instance, Maitland is not permanently reformed, he persists in pursuing an exploitative relationship that attempts to dominate both the island and its inhabitants.

However, there are changes in Maitland's relationship to space that reforms the Crusoe paradigm. As Palmer asserts, the island 'goes beyond […] being a metaphor for Maitland's mind or his past. There are suggestions that he is rediscovering not some inner self, which is probably best left unvisited, but possibilities of worldness that are denied by the […] city outside'.[124] Moving away from viewing the nonhuman as a static entity or something that needs to be re-ordered to suit humanity in function and form is necessary to disrupt anthropocentric biases. Maitland's experiences surpass the restrictions of his life in a society bound by a human outlook. Ballard's description of an environment in flux echoes the diverse conditions of the edgeland environment and gestures towards the possibility of a relationship that reacts and interacts with the nonhuman rather than viewing it as a source of anxiety in need of governance, as a reflection of human self-image, or merely as a pool of resources that should be put to human use. This is emphasised through the verdant and animate images of grass. As in Tournier's revised Friday–Robinson relationship, Maitland absorbs some of Proctor's traits and learns to respond to the environment. He reflects that

[122] Gasiorek, p. 120.
[123] The utopian/dystopian narrative is, of course, largely dependent on perspective. For Defoe's Crusoe, the exploitation of the environment and the "other" is the desired outcome that produces the pseudo-utopian colony whereas in contemporary re-visions this world is distinctly dystopian.
[124] Ballard, p. 81.

'the deep grass was [Proctor's] vital medium. His scarred hands felt the flexing stems, reading their currents as they seethed around him'.[125] Proctor's reliance on the environment explores a more reciprocal and symbiotic relationship that establishes how our interpretation of the world around us is inflected by the nonhuman.

Despite this new appreciation for nonhumanity, Maitland's interactions with the grass are sporadically hostile and then suddenly sympathetic—whereas Proctor inhabits it as a part of his daily life. Proctor dwells and connects to space in a manner that Maitland lacks, demonstrated by the following quotations. The narration states that 'Proctor's trumpeting voice carried across the whispering grass, his deep mole-like music answered by the soft plaints of this green harp'.[126] This call and response scene establishes a mutual dialogue with the nonhuman that contrasts to Maitland's reflection that 'the grass was quiet, barely moving around him. Standing there, like a shepherd with a silent flock, he thought of the strange phrase he had muttered to himself in his delirium: I am the island'.[127] The pastoral idyll invoked in the latter quote places Maitland as a shepherd guiding a mute flock. Although this moment is a significant shift in Maitland's relation to place (from hostile to benign) it still places him as the anthropocentric figure at the top of a human-nonhuman hierarchy. Maitland becomes the custodian and shepherd that controls and guides a flock, recalling the domesticating Crusoedian process that governs and regulates the nonhuman rather than viewing other animals and environments as an equal participant. Maitland's feverish identification with the island is also recalled. His access to the nonhuman is still facilitated by referring to the self *as* the environment and mediating the unfamiliar through the human in an effort to make it known and quantifiable.

[125] Ballard, p. 128.
[126] Ibid, p. 147.
[127] Ibid, p. 130.

Considering the environment as an embodiment or reflection of human selfhood is epitomised by the unintentional naming of the concrete island as 'Maitland'. Reminiscent of Defoe's Crusoe-Friday dichotomy, Maitland teaches Proctor to write. However, Maitland tricks him into sending an S.O.S message that incorporates Maitland's name, as Proctor 'scribbled away at the concrete, mixing up fragments of Maitland's name […] as if determined to cover every square inch of the island's surface with what he assumed to be his own name'.[128] The practice of naming the island is a significant part of the canonical Robinsonade. In naming the island, the castaway takes a step towards becoming a coloniser by stamping a human marker onto the environment, often a name that confers their possession of space. Pippa Marland highlights how:

> it is not only the discourse of conquest and supremacy that informs the Robinsonnade tradition. Beer notes the close relation of the island with the self in these works. She suggests that through this relationship the island comes to be regarded as a site of 'self-enquiry' (Beer 1989, 10), a *tabula rasa* on which the protagonist can inscribe his identity, much as she feels Crusoe does upon his island.[129]

The colonial desire for control, sovereignty, and conquest directly relates to the individualism of the Crusoedian character who views the nonhuman as either reflecting their identity or a threat to self. The island here is not formally but inadvertently signified 'Maitland' by exploiting Proctor's labour, who attempts a moment of self-identifying expression previously denied to him by wider society. He is used as another exploitable resource to furnish Maitland's own ends to establish his possession of the island in a colonial sense.

After Proctor's death, Maitland seemingly assumes a new perspective regarding inter and intra-active life on the island. Previously, Maitland asserted the city's economic and

[128] Ballard, p. 152.
[129] Pippa Marland, *Ecocriticism and the Island: Readings from the British-Irish Archipelago* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2023), p. 9.

exploitative policies by introducing money economies and forcing Proctor into becoming a 'beast of burden'. After Proctor's death there is a shift in Maitland's behaviour. As in Tournier's *Friday,* the specifics of the Friday–Crusoe dynamic shift away from enforcing exploitative capitalist notions and recognise the value of dwelling in a reciprocal relationship. However, as with Tournier's Robinson, this only becomes a viable option after the possibility of exploiting others is removed entirely. Robinson's various buildings, plantations, and stores explode and in *Concrete Island* Proctor is killed and Jane decides to leave the island. As such, both Crusoe-figures are unable to continue in the same exploitative vein. Without the recourse to continue exploiting others, Maitland alters his relation to space and begins a self-imposed hermitage in the closing chapters of *Concrete Island*. Maitland attempts to shed an anthropocentric mindset, in 'leaving the crutch, he crawled through the grass, feeling his way with his outstretched hands, sensing the stronger vibrations of the tall grass growing from the churchyard'.[130] This prone position contrasts with the image of Maitland riding and beating Proctor with his crutch to move across the island. The crutch has been used to aid Maitland's survival but is more often used as a tool of authoritarian violence. Discarding the crutch is a symbolic dismissal of his previous way of life. Maitland abandons his reliance on capitalist ontologies that enforce oppositional relationships with the nonhuman that exist to reassure human exceptionalism in the face of the unfamiliar. Forsaking formality, Maitland experiences the environment in a new context by sensing the vibrations of the grass and responds to the island's interconnectivity to guide his sense of space. The self-identification discussed earlier has taken on a new tone. Maitland and the island merge in more equal terms as he senses 'the warm air […] across the island, soothing both the grass and his own skin, as if these were elements of the same body'.[131] This is distinct from Maitland's previous

[130] Ballard, p. 175.
[131] Ibid, p. 156.

consideration of the immediate environment and marks a potential turning point for his transformation. In this transformative moment, the environment is not a hostile entity to be feared and attacked or a projection of self that is pinned down to an anthropocentric "I" in the declaration "I am the island". In this instance, the definite article is used to describe both Maitland and the island existing in tandem in the same body that is both human and nonhuman, not a projection of Maitland's hubristic selfhood.

As identified in the previous section, Maitland creates doubles of himself and the island to remove damaged, broken, and abject parts of his personality and create a new self. However—far from revealing an ideal inner identity—his hidden, unconscious, violent tendencies spill out in the isolation from the restrictive structures of civilisation on the island, which exists as both a physical site and the abject unconscious of the city. As Patrick Gill indicates, '*Concrete Island* […] argues that civilisation itself is the thing that robs us of our humanity'.[132] The violence Maitland exhibits is a product of the city and part of a city-wide exploitative narrative. As Maitland attempts to assert his control over the island's inhabitants he reflects that he 'had relished the violent confrontation, knowing that he would make both of them [Jane and Proctor] submit to him […] all that mattered was that he dominated the senile tramp and this wayward young woman'.[133] In discovering vulnerable others on the island, Maitland elects to recreate and continue their exploitation rather than consider other possible relationships. Maitland defers blame for this dynamic onto others, telling Proctor that '"you're all too eager to be exploited"'.[134] The opportunity to exploit is all the incentive Maitland requires to fall into the Crusoedian mode of dwelling. As Palmer recognises, 'the island replicates and intensifies the exploitation that prevails in the rest of the city, but also

[132] Patrick Gill, 'Dystopian and Utopian Omission of Discourse in Three Modern Robinsonades: *Lord of the Flies*, *Concrete Island*, *The Red Turtle*', *Porównania*, 2 (2019), 145 – 156 (p. 149 - 150).
[133] Ballard, p. 139.
[134] Ibid, p. 149.

offers an alternative to it […] this is only intermittently apparent. Whatever his relations with the island, Maitland's relations with its other inhabitants are often antagonistic'.[135] As we have explored on Speranza, the island presents the opportunity to either affirm or reject cultural norms. Ballard explicitly makes the connection between the Crusoedian mindset and capitalist control. The Crusoe-figure is a product of imperialist and colonial mentalities, their goal is to conquer and create a profitable world that resembles the face of European society. Ballard's re-visionary Robinsonade gestures towards the chance to change our interactions with nonhumans and others. However, Maitland ultimately reverts to exploiting the lives of vulnerable people and the environment to establish himself as their undisputed ruler. This demonstrates the extent to which the canonical and colonial Robinsonade narrative bleeds into an ostensibly postcolonial world. As I will discuss in the following chapter, we are still attempting to decolonise our relationships with the nonhuman and each other. Ballard's re-vision of the Robinsonade highlights the ties which bind capitalism to colonial practices.

Despite the shifts in his conceptualisations of place, Maitland persists in his desire to dominate the island by surviving and escaping it autonomously. Maitland tells Jane, '"I don't want anyone to know I'm on the island"' and demands that she promises to '"tell no one I'm here"'.[136] Maitland's desire to be left alone may be a personal challenge to conquer the self, as he claims, but his preoccupation with solitude suggests a Crusoedian desire for sovereign control of the island.[137] However, Maitland is unable to support himself without exploiting the labour of others. The end of *Concrete Island* appears successful and conclusive from Maitland's perspective, who remains resolutely convinced he will escape the island and

[135] Palmer, p. 81.
[136] Ballard, p. 167 & 174.
[137] Ibid, p. 144.

victoriously reunite with his family. Delville shares Maitland's optimistic view of his castaway experience, stating that:

> the novel leaves us with the impression that the process of psychic individuation triggered by the island has been successfully completed, Maitland's final decision to return to the civilized world may imply that his need to escape from the pressures of society and family was only a necessary stage […] in order to give his life a new sense of direction and purpose.[138]

My interpretation of Maitland's relative success as a castaway—i.e., his chance of escape, his prospect of survival, and his apparent transformation—diverges from Delville's assertion.

Although there are changes in Maitland's perspective, his super-objective of conquering the island remains the same. The island offers the chance to work outside of convention and societal constraints. The changes Maitland attempts are limited and often support, rather than deny, the exploitative practices of the capitalist city. His initial desire to escape *to* rather than *from* the island stems from 'his need to be freed from his past, from his childhood, his wife and friends, with all their affections and demands, and to rove forever within the empty city of his own mind'.[139] An escape from ordinary middle-class life was the impetus for Defoe's Crusoe's initial voyage. Like Crusoe, Maitland harbours a desire to *be* and *do* something extraordinary. In Delville's critique, the island becomes a stopgap for Maitland's self-exploration, a revelation in the urban wilderness that informs and confirms his sense of purpose. However, I contend that Ballard ironizes Maitland's search for 'purpose' and contrasts the desire to escape from the constraints of society in the natural wilderness by placing the island on the outskirts of the city. The odyssey-like journey experienced by other Crusoe figures is reduced to a matter of a few miles from home. Relocating the island to the outskirts of the city has a dual effect to make the city itself

[138] Deville, p. 46.
[139] Ballard, p. 142.

assume the role of the deserting, isolating wilderness of the sea. The island's proximity to the city highlights a recurrent ambiguity in conventional Robinsonades. Maitland attempts to escape the city only to reconstruct the city's social structure in the same way Crusoe flees mundanity only to recreate that society on the island.

Besides the conceptual differences in the castaway journey, the conclusion to *Concrete Island* suggests that, rather than conquering the island and emerging as a triumphant hero, it is more probable that Maitland will soon die by the end of the novel. Throughout *Concrete Island*, Maitland harbours a desire to dominate the 'other'. The narration satirises Maitland's reflection that 'in some ways the task he had set himself was meaningless. Already he felt no real need to leave the island, and this alone confirmed that he had established his dominion over it'.[140] Despite his repeated failures, Maitland believes he has conquered the island and has fulfilled the castaway-to-coloniser narrative. However, the belief that he will escape the island is unfounded. Maitland's sense of accomplishment juxtaposes the narrative voice that states, 'left alone on the island, Maitland would survive no more than a few days'.[141] Maitland's failure to live cooperatively and his need to assert authority leads to his probable death. The re-visionist aspect of *Concrete Island* appears when Maitland is understood as a satirical figure rather than the novel's conquering hero. Maitland's insistence on fulfilling the egoistic Crusoedian role and not reforming the human-centred attitude into a mutual model of dwelling parodies the exploitative practices of Western society and demonstrates the flaws inherent in Crusoe-esque human exceptionalism.

This leaves the question of whether we can create a Crusoe-figure that is truly radical, that departs from the need to assert anthropocentric, Eurocentric, gentrifying visions of selfhood that keeps the castaway out-of-place and inside an anatopia. Tournier offers the

[140] Ballard, p. 176.
[141] Ibid, p. 171.

chance to leave behind the world of Others-as-structure, but his protagonist Robinson is seemingly unable to let go of a desire for sovereignty and human hierarchy. As discussed, Maitland is summarily satirised but also oscillates between a new sense of relationality and consistent regression to capitalist ideology. This is combined with one of the other major sources of radical change in Ballard's re-vision in the island's proximity to the Western metropolis. We are left to question whether it is possible to create a Crusoe-figure that satisfactorily and meaningfully breaks from patterns of exploitation or whether a colonial and anthropocentric mindset is too ingrained in the Crusoe-character to resolve entirely. Lastly, does radically re-visioning the Robinsonade's castaway-figure risk obscuring the genre's colonial origins, the roots of which continue to impact life today as we struggle to reconcile capitalist ideologies with the reality of living—and surviving—in the Anthropocene?

Chapter four
The Robinsonade in the Anthropocene

As concluded in the previous chapter, re-visionary Robinsonades have altered specific elements of the Crusoe-colonist to present new modes of interaction as well as ironizing and critiquing aspects of the Crusoedian mentality. However, parts of the exploitative, patriarchal, and anthropocentric mindset remain ever-present. With the residual presence of the Crusoe-esque character continuing into contemporary narratives, we should consider how the Robinsonade can be reinvented and what is required to create a Crusoe-figure relevant to the challenges we face in the Anthropocene. Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy proposes a wider re-vision of the Robinsonade's narrative to deconstruct Crusoe's established patterns of exploitation and forge new ecologically centred relationships within the Robinsonade to highlight behaviours that lead to Crusoedian mindsets.

Atwood develops a new approach to the Robinsonade, suited to exploring the urgent issues of the Anthropocene and imagining the dangers in store for the near future as we navigate through an era significantly altered by human activity. The *MaddAddam* trilogy utilises the Robinsonade's features without strict adherence to the chronology of Defoe's canonical text. By purposefully departing from some of the Crusoe-myth's conventions Atwood presents alternatives to Crusoe's anthropocentric mindset that resulted in a fractured and exploitative relationship with the nonhuman world, paralleling our own experience of the Anthropocene. Atwood foregrounds questions regarding the host of challenges we face in the current era such as; transgenic science and its impact on human and nonhuman life, the effects of climate change, declines in biodiversity, the global exploitation of women, the disenfranchised, 'racial others', and planetary resources, as well as the inherent dangers of globalised consumerism and monolithic corporations. This catalogue of exploitation

contributes to the commencement of the Anthropocene. As Jonathan Pugh and David Chandler highlight:

> we need a different onto-epistemology, or way of knowing, in the Anthropocene; where the footprints of humanity suggest that what can seem to be temporally and spatially distant or 'withdrawn' – such as global warming, waste production, nuclear fallout, the legacies of pollution, or colonialism – are also intimately 'close' and 'present'.[1]

By addressing the Anthropocene in its many forms through the Robinsonade we can recognise the path that has led us to planetary crisis and indicate what we can change to overcome current exploitative practices.

As outlined in my methodology, the term 'The Anthropocene' has been employed extensively following the work of Eugene Stoermer and Paul Crutzen. However, the Anthropocene as a concept has become a catch-all term with its own set of issues and ramifications. Alternative terms have been proposed, such as Capitalocene and the Plantationocene, to focus our attention on the origins of the current ecological crisis as opposed to the more generalised 'Anthropos' in Anthropocene.[2] These alternative terms provide useful insights into interspecies relationships in the context of the Robinsonade and question the widespread use of the 'Anthropocene'.

As discussed, defining a specific beginning for the Anthropocene has further ramifications beyond simple practicalities that affect how the issues are framed socially and politically. By deciding on a timeline, we affect our interpretation of the Anthropocene that in turn changes its meaning for the Robinsonade. For example, *Robinson Crusoe*'s narrative

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[1] Pugh and Chandler,, p. 144.
[2] Jason W. Moore, 'The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 44 (2017), 594 – 630.
Donna Haraway, Noboru Ishikawa, Gilbert Scott, Kenneth Olwig, Anna L. Tsing & Nils Bubandt, 'Anthropologists Are Talking – About the Anthropocene', *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* (2015).

recalls the colonial origin for the Anthropocene in the Orbis Spike (1610). Lewis and Maslin provide this event as a potential date for the commencement of the Anthropocene. The ramifications of this particular date are highlighted by Sophie Sapp Moore, Monique Allewaert, Pablo F. Gómez, and Gregg Mitmannm in their discussion of the Plantationocene:

> The date marked a detectable global dip in carbon dioxide concentrations, precipitated […] by the death of nearly 50 million indigenous human inhabitants as a result of "war, enslavement, and famine" brought about by European contact […] Dating the origins of the Anthropocene to the onset of settler colonialism in the Americas during the early modern period helps make visible a violent history often erased in scaling up to species thinking and global environmental change.[3]

Considering the Orbis Spike as the beginning of anthropogenic global climate change contextualises colonial narratives like *Robinson Crusoe* and highlights the genocidal colonial violence that forces non-Europeans and the nonhuman world into reducible and exploitable parts. This also demonstrates the limits of using 'Anthropos' as a general catch-all term, as the largest changes originate and persist to emanate from patriarchal elitist Western capitalism.

Alongside the Orbis Spike, a more recent date has been proposed as a possible beginning for the Anthropocene. The Bomb Spike indicates an increase in the amount of nuclear testing post-World War Two as well as the surge in technological advancement, termed The Great Acceleration, as a possible beginning for the human epoch and the ensuing environmental issues we face today. Lewis and Maslin underscore that 'choosing the bomb spike tells a story of an elite-driven technological development that threatens planet-wide destruction. The long-term advancement of technology deployed to kill people [...] highlights the more general problem of 'progress traps'.[4] In the Robinsonade, colonial castaways rely on

[3] Sophie Sapp Moore, Monique Allewaertm Pablo F. Gómez, and Gregg Mitmannm 'Plantation Legacies', *Edge Effect*, (2021), para. 6 – 7 https://edgeeffects.net/plantation-legacies-plantationocene/ [Accessed 21/10/21].
[4] Lewis & Maslin, p. 178.

a technological advantage that allows for the exploitation of the island and its inhabitants. Exploring the ramification of this date for the Anthropocene informs interpretations of the *MaddAddam* series that depicts a near-future world beset by technological interventions ranging from new transgenic species to lab-grown super-viruses that affect humanity and wider Earth systems.

Defining a specific point in geological history for the age we are currently living through presents its own challenges as the Anthropocene projects into an indeterminate time in the future where human civilisation on Earth has ended but the effects of human activity will still be felt. My use of the term does not rely on one definitive starting point, rather I use it to conceptualise anthropogenic impact. As Yadvinder Malhi highlights, 'the focus on a start date for the Anthropocene' can become 'an unnecessary distraction [...] the timescales of the Anthropocene are so entangled with human history, any boundary to the Anthropocene is a diffuse region [...] with multiple slow antecedents and drawnout consequences'.[5] This is illustrated by the posthuman world of the *MaddAddam* series that explores the beginning of the end of actively created anthropogenic issues as the majority of the human race and civilisation has been destroyed by the 'Waterless Flood' (a genetically engineered pandemic virus). Forms of posthuman life are imagined, such as the transgenic Pigoons and Crakers, while the last remnants of humanity live in the debris of civilisation. Nevertheless, the effects of human activity are still felt and as such the Anthropocene continues even after the loss of human civilisation globally. As Adam Trexler highlights, the '*Anthropocene* is also anticipatory, indicating humanity's probable impacts on geophysical and biological systems for millennia to come'.[6] It is impossible to know for certain when the effects of human-

[5] Yadvinder Malhi, 'The Concept of the Anthropocene', *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 42 (2017), 77 – 107 (p. 89).
[6] Adam Trexler, *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change* (London: University of Virginia Press, 2015), p. 1.

generated changes to geological, atmospheric, and climate systems would cease to be a factor on Earth even after the death of human civilisations. As such, the Anthropocene currently stretches on indefinitely.

Although the Anthropocene as a term poses some limitations, Lewis and Maslin as well as Crutzen and Stoermer highlight that it allows us to centre our attention on human activity and asks us to reconsider the way we perceive, interpret, and represent our relationship to all things nonhuman. As Trexler emphasises:

> *Anthropocene* productively shifts the emphasis from individual thoughts, beliefs, and choices to a human process that has occurred across distinct social groups, countries, economies, and generations [...] both *climate change* and *global warming* are easily bracketed as prognostications that might yet be deferred, but the *Anthropocene* names a world-historical phenomenon that has arrived.[7]

This poses practical problems to how the Anthropocene can be depicted in art and media, as well as how we should approach a new age inflected by anthropogenic issues from an environmental studies perspective. This becomes apparent as we attempt to readjust our mindset to factor ourselves individually and collectively into local and global parts of Earth systems that stretch beyond our individual lives. Timothy Clark underscores the problem of creating a form of representation to adequately comprehend the present lived experience and the possible futures of the Anthropocene. Clark asks, 'are the limits of imaginative engagement emerging in these novels, poems [...] and so on, merely the limits of now anachronistic cultural conventions, capable of reinvention? Or, more profoundly, does the Anthropocene form a threshold at which art and literature touch limits to the human psyche

[7] Trexler, p. 4.

and imagination themselves?'[8] The scale of the Anthropocene and its possible ramifications might defy current modes of expression and articulation beyond human understanding.

The novel form can be anthropocentric and fails to capture the scope of the Anthropocene as the focus is usually on the relatively brief lives of individual human beings and depicts their points of view in a fictive world that captures human-centred narratives. As Clark speculates:

> the true complexity of environmental issues have been perhaps easier to represent in new or revised forms of poetic practice than in prose forms like the novel [...] One advantage of poetry is that its removal from the conventional constraints of prose narrative renders it more open to representing multiplicity, and even contradiction and indeterminacy, and to do so without its readers necessarily feeling the lack of some clear storyline.[9]

As Clark underscores, conventional novels may narrow the scope for environmental critical interventions. However, if we consider that one of the aims of terming the current age the Anthropocene is to recognise humanity's roles in local and global ecosystems, we may find that novel forms such as the Robinsonade allow us to interrogate human/nonhuman relationships and explore the myriad potential exchanges between different people, other animals, and the environment. This may necessitate a move away from focusing on a sole protagonist such as Crusoe. This is illustrated by Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy as she utilises multiple perspectives to represent a more holistic exploration of the Anthropocene.

The human-centric novel form focuses our attention on human behaviour, but this should include our interactions with the nonhuman historically and how we imagine future interactions taking place. Through the novel, we can imaginatively explore these engagements and question past, present, and future relationships to explore the consequences

[8] Timothy Clark, *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), p. 175 – 176.
[9] Timothy Clark, *The Value of Ecocriticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 59.

of human activity. This is integral to Atwood's *MaddAddam* series, as Hope Jennings highlights, 'although Atwood does not explicitly define or refer to the Anthropocene (as a name or concept), cultural anxieties about extreme climate change—including fears of economic, political, and environmental collapse—permeate her trilogy'.[10] By locating the *MaddAddam* trilogy as a Robinsonade in the Anthropocene, our attention centres on Atwood's re-vision of specific anthropogenic issues emerging from the Western androcentric Crusoe-myth.

The question of science and technology influences the trajectory of the *MaddAddam* trilogy and is an essential part of considering the Robinsonade in the Anthropocene. The technological advances present in the trilogy parallel contemporary scientific breakthroughs and their inclusion poses pertinent ethical problems generated by transgenics.[11] As Atwood explains, her brand of speculative fiction depicts possible potentialities rather than prophetic predictions. She states that:

> Every novel begins with a what if, and then sets forth its axioms. The what-if of *Oryx and Crake* is simply, what if we continue down the road we're already on? How slippery is the slope? What are our saving graces? Who's got the will to stop us?[12]

The near future of the *MaddAddam* trilogy provides a brief temporal separation from our own lives to reflect on the dangers of a looming dystopian world suffering from the effects of climate change emerging from globalised corporations and consumerism, global poverty and inequity, and unimpeded advances in bioengineering and transgenics. Atwood's speculative fiction places the Robinsonade into a potential 'what if?' scenario and imagines a possible conclusion to current social, environmental, and technological realities that potentially lead

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[10] Hope Jennings, 'Anthropocene Feminism, Companion Species, and the *MaddAddam* Trilogy', *Contemporary Women's Writing,* 13 (2019), 16 – 33 (p. 16).

[11] Shima Behnam Manesh, Reza Omani Samani, and Shayan Behnam Manesh, 'Ethical Issues of Transplanting Organs from Transgenic Animals into Human Beings', *Cell Journal*, 16 (2014), 353 – 360.

[12] Margaret Atwood, 'Writing *Oryx and Crake*', in *Writing with Intent: Essays, Reviews, Personal Prose 1983 – 2005* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2005), p. 285 – 86.

towards a precarious future. Atwood invents satirical but plausible possibilities based on current technology. Before the deadly pandemic eradicates the majority of humanity, the effects of irreversible climate change and social inequity portray visions and versions of possible near-future eventualities or events currently in motion.

Atwood utilises the thematic and conventional aspects of the Robinsonade, as well as incorporating deliberate departures and divergences from the canonical narrative, to revise the Crusoe-myth and create a radical re-vision of the Robinsonade for the Anthropocene. We can remind ourselves here of the Robinsonade conventions in terms of narrative structure, the actors involved, and what constitutes a desert island. Defoe's canonical Robinsonade narrative consists of an initial voyage, a shipwreck, exploration and mapping of the island, colonisation and exploitation of the island (including vegetal life, nonhuman animals, and the enslavement of Indigenous people), and ends with a choice to remain on or depart from the island and return to civilisation.

The shipwreck as a narrative device may not be immediately apparent in Atwood's re-vision, but it is essential in our understanding of the trilogy as a Robinsonade for the Anthropocene. The literal shipwreck that multiple—though not all—Robinsonades feature as a part of their narrative can be interpreted figuratively in the *MaddAddam* trilogy. A shipwreck is the abrupt and violent break from the castaway's previous life as they are jettisoned into the new world of the desert island. The shipwreck's definitive sense of severance from civilisation announces a period of isolation characteristic of Robinsonades. Atwood includes several possible breaks from everyday civilisation that can be read through our understanding of the shipwreck, most notably the pandemic. The virus represents a break from the world that existed before the 'waterless flood' that Snowman, Toby, and the other survivors suffer through. The virus imposes the necessary separation from human society to induce the isolation needed to create the Robinsonade island. The comparison between the

virus and the shipwreck is compounded by its association with flooding in the trilogy and the related images of storms, tempestuous seas, and diluvian catastrophes.

The *MaddAddam* trilogy explores the role of colonists and Indigenous peoples in the Robinsonade as well as the ramifications of colonialism that remain present in the Anthropocene. The Friday/Crusoe relationship is re-invented through Blackbeard, a Craker child, and Toby. The Crakers and their relationship with the human survivors of the pandemic imagine alternative ways of being in an environment that deviates from a Western and Crusoedian approach to dwelling. The *MaddAddam* trilogy acknowledges colonial and neo-colonial acts that systematically exploit colonised people as well as the nonhuman and perpetrates the issues we face in the Anthropocene. Atwood's speculative fiction uses the narrative conditions of the Robinsonade to critique and offer alternatives to colonial relations to place. As discussed, the severance from human society after the literal or metaphorical shipwreck allows for the possibility to re-imagine our ontological relationship with the nonhuman. Atwood's re-vision of the Robinsonade critiques the colonisers' exploitative and genocidal reign and also offers alternative ways of dwelling indebted to Indigenous North American practices. As Gina Wisker indicates:

> Atwood's eco-Gothic speculative works are influenced by the insights offered by indigenous knowledge and by the forms that indigenous tales take, both as cautions and as suggestions of ways forward […] based on a different way of understanding relationships between nature, animal, and human […] revising selfish, blinkered human behaviours might offer advice and hope for potential last-minute disaster avoidance.[13]

The conceptual and physical separation from systems that uphold human/nonhuman binaries can allow us to reconceptualise and reimagine the castaway's interactions with the

[13] Gina Wisker, 'Imagining Beyond Extinctathon: Indigenous Knowledge, Survival, Speculation – Margaret Atwood's and Ann Patchett's Eco-Gothic', *Contemporary Women's Writing*, 11 (2017), 412 – 431 (p. 415).

nonhuman. Atwood's near-future speculative fiction provides both a cautionary tale and a way to move past colonial and neo-colonial anthropocentrism. The focus of this chapter's first section is centred on the Crusoe-esque castaway, represented in the *MaddAddam* trilogy through several different characters. The traits of the Crusoe-figure examined in previous chapters are split into several parts and embodied by multiple characters including (but not limited to) Snowman, Crake, and Toby.

Section one: The Crusoe-figure

We can consider Snowman and Crake as two halves of the conventional Crusoe-figure that Atwood uses to critique androcentric and anthropocentric narratives, and Toby as a more radical re-vision of the castaway. Snowman is the archetypal deserted shipwrecked survivor, stranded alone on the shoreline and forced to think in terms of Crusoedian survival as the posthuman world requires the immediate need for food, shelter, water, and defence. However, like Maitland in Ballard's *Concrete Island*, Snowman continues to fall short of the Crusoe-esque survivalist's impossible accomplishments. Consequently, Snowman critiques the anthropocentric notions of conventional Robinsonades and their assertion that human ingenuity, logical thinking, and the application of technology can surmount all problems the castaway might face in the nonhuman wilderness. As in other re-visions, Snowman's characterisation and the world he navigates has been ironically inverted or exaggerated. Like other Crusoe-figures, Snowman attempts to retain some form of connection to the world of language and feels the deracinating effects of timelessness in a place without Others while still being haunted by his old life before the shipwreck/pandemic.[14]

[14] The narrative of *Oryx and Crake* is split between Snowman's present-day life and recollections of his time before the pandemic where the narrative refers to him as 'Jimmy'. I will be referring to Jimmy/Snowman simply as 'Snowman' to avoid confusion.

The other half of the conventional Crusoe-figure in the *MaddAddam* trilogy is embodied by Crake, the *homo faber* and hyperbolically and parodically amoral scientist. Crake views himself beyond human concerns and is relentlessly scientific in his effort to reduce life and living others into malleable variables. In *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*, his anthropocentric entitlement enables his manipulation and exploitation of other humans and nonhumans though his motivations for creating the virus to eliminate human civilisation and killing himself remain obscure. Crake experiences isolation from Others, but rather than the enforced separation through shipwreck Snowman or Crusoe endures, Crake's world is an isolated laboratory free from the constraints of societal norms and mores. Crake's status as a scientist evokes the Enlightenment and Victorian era Robinsonade. The utilisation of scientific principles is vital to the Crusoe-esque character, from Defoe's canonical text to Victorian versions such as H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr Moreau.* Acquiring knowledge and deploying technology are colonial methods of subjugating Indigenous people, controlling the nonhuman world, and violently asserting Eurocentric 'superiority'. However, Crake uses scientific principles to destroy human civilisation, reversing the canonical application of technology to subjugate the nonhuman. Crake parodically critiques notions of anthropocentric sovereignty as he ascends to godhood through the creation/destruction myth by designing the Crakers and enacting his quasi-divine judgement on humanity who are punished by the release of a deadly virus in the Waterless Flood, creating a post-postdiluvian world.

Besides the conventional aspects of Crusoe's characteristics embodied and inverted by Snowman and Crake, the Crusoe-figure is split further to extend beyond a stranded castaway and a controlling amoral scientist. By fragmenting the Crusoe character into several different incarnations, the *MaddAddam* trilogy provides further scope for critique and re-vision of the Robinsonade. Toby—one of the central characters in *The Year of the Flood* and

MaddAddam—moves past patterns of exploitation and anthropocentrism. Toby is a survivor, a leader, and a practical thinker, but her understanding (or willingness to understand) the nonhuman world sets her apart from the destructive eventualities of the archetypal Crusoedian character. Toby has a significant impact on the Robinsonade form and becomes an incarnation of change for the Crusoe-figure, better suited to dealing with the conditions we meet in the Anthropocene and repairing our relationship with the nonhuman.

(4.1) The Crusoe-figure
Snowman and the Posthuman Wilderness

Although the *MaddAddam* trilogy is non-linear, the series is established as a Robinsonade from the outset of *Oryx and Crake*. We find Snowman in the position of a stranded survivor of a devastating shipwreck, cast away alone, keeping to the shoreline and sheltering in a tree. Atwood draws direct parallels with Defoe's Crusoe and his first night on the island that he spends concealed in a tree to save himself from potential unknown dangers lurking on the ground. After Defoe's Crusoe endures his first night hidden up a tree, he takes steps to create more human-like structures—the tree itself has to be reconceptualised as an 'Appartment' to avoid any association with animality that threatens his status as a human outside of human society.[15] How Crusoe's various dwellings are reimagined is indicative of what the building itself represents as a conceptual structure beyond its physical dimensions. Defoe describes Crusoe living in country houses, summerhouses, forts, and castles—each representing a specific feeling associated with regular society from before the shipwreck.

As mentioned previously, Crusoe's first use of 'castle' occurs after discovering the infamous phantom footprint that increases his concerns about security. Crusoe's initial retreat into the tree is prompted by the trauma of the shipwreck and a fear of the unknown creatures

[15] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 42.

waiting in the wilderness. In contrast, Snowman is aware of the real dangers of sleeping on the ground as the *MaddAddam* trilogy features deadly and carnivorous transgenic animals. Unlike Crusoe, Snowman began his life as a castaway by constructing an improvised bed on the ground until:

> one morning he'd woken to find three pigoons gazing at him through the plastic [...] he thought he could see the gleaming point of a white tusk. Pigoons were supposed to be tusk-free, but maybe they were reverting to type now they'd gone feral [...] they'd run off, but who could tell what they might do next time they came around? Them or the wolvogs [...] So he'd moved to a tree.[16]

A crucial distinction between the *MaddAddam* trilogy and the majority of other Robinsonades is the introduction of deadly animals, besides other humans. As my previous chapters have established, the exploration of human and nonhuman relationships is crucial to understanding the Robinsonade. The majority of examples include companion animals or domesticated working animals that are exploited to further the castaway's control of the wilderness environment or used to create a facsimile of human interaction—such as Crusoe's dog and parrot. There is a definitive hierarchy in *Robinson Crusoe*'s relationship to other animals, as the following extract establishes. Crusoe relates:

> what a Table was here spread for me in a Wilderness […] me and my little Family sit down to Dinner […] Lord of the whole Island; I had the Lives of all my Subjects at my absolute Command […] how like a King I din'd too all alone, attended by my Servants, Poll […] was the only Person permitted to talk to me. My Dog who was now grown very old and crazy, and had found no Species to multiply his Kind upon, sat always at my Right Hand, and two Cats […] expecting now and then a Bit from my Hand, as a Mark of special Favour.[17]

[16] Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), p. 38 – 39.
[17] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 125 – 126.

The animals in Crusoe's kingdom are subject to his absolute rule and their relative worth is correlative with their resemblance to humanity e.g., Poll the parrot is 'permitted' to talk and is taught to reflect human language and the unnamed ship's dog is used to fill the social gaps opened through the loss of human society. Snowman's relationship with other animals is notably different to other Robinsonades. In the contemporary Robinsonades that I have already explored, such as *Lord of the Flies* or *The Wasp Factory*, prey animals are subjected to the Crusoedian characters' desire who exert human will through violence. Any danger they perceive in the nonhuman is illusionary and the perception of threat stems from an ecophobic imagination coupled with the sense of vulnerability the human subject suffers on the desert island.

The intervention of bioengineering renders the posthuman world hostile as transgenic animals with a dangerous mix of genetic traits have bred freely without the constraints of humanity. The presence of transgenics in the trilogy introduces several key changes to the Robinsonade and our response to other animals. Bioengineering raises several ambiguous interpretations; transgenic animals have been subjected to exploitation and experimentation, but without an authoritarian human presence they represent an inversion of domestication that disrupts hierarchical binaries. Atwood's wolvogs and pigoons are ironic inversions of animals typically found in Robinsonade narratives. In *Lord of the Flies*, for example, pigs symbolise the castaway's desire for meat and a proclivity towards sadism but in Atwood's trilogy the pigoon embodies the castaway's fear of being eaten. As discussed, Defoe's Crusoe harbours the recurrent fear of being consumed by other people, the ocean, and predators. This is reflected in Crusoe's recollection of the aftermath of the shipwreck:

> after I got to Shore and had escap'd drowning, instead of being thankful to God for my Deliverance, having first vomited with the great Quantity of salt Water which was gotten into my Stomach […] I ran about the Shore […] exclaiming at my Misery, and

> crying out, I was undone, undone, till tyr'd and faint I was forc'd to lye down on the Ground to repose, but durst not sleep for fear of being devour'd.[18]

Defoe's description draws on bodily effects, from Crusoe vomiting up poisonous seawater, being overcome with feeling faint, and the lingering threat of being eaten that prevents him from sleeping. It also describes metaphorical consumption, where something intangible is swallowed. Crusoe's fear that his sense of self will be cannibalised resonates in his cry of 'undone'. Snowman's fear of being eaten is more immediate and physical. He reflects that the pigoons would 'bowl him over, trample him, then rip him open, and munch up the organs first […] a brainy and omnivorous animal, the pigoon. Some of them may even have human neocortex tissue growing in their crafty, wicked heads'.[19] Combining the horror of being eaten alive with the innocent-sounding 'munch' emphasises a tangible abject feeling. The near humanness of the pigoons is stressed to invert human/nonhuman hierarchies. The traditional prey or livestock animal is genetically altered to become both human adjacent and a predator, literalising Crusoe's fear of being eaten and cannibalism.[20] The inclusion of transgenic animals, particularly with human brain tissue, disrupts essentialist definitions of what it means to be human and actualises the Crusoedian concern that divisions between humanity and animality will be breached.

Atwood's wolvogs subvert the role of domesticated dogs in the Robinsonade, consequently Snowman is denied the companionship that Crusoe finds in keeping pets and undermines human hierarchies. These factors are demonstrated in the following exchange between Snowman and a pack of wolvogs:

> "Hello, my furry pals," he calls down. "Who wants to be man's best friend?" In answer there is a supplicating whine. That's the worst thing about wolvogs: they still

[18] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 60.
[19] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 208.
[20] The presence of cannibalism in the *MaddAddam* trilogy will be explored further in the final section of this chapter in light of colonialism and imperialism.

> look like dogs, still behave like dogs [...] They'll sucker you in, and then go for you. It hasn't taken much to reverse fifty thousand years of man-canid interaction. As for the real dogs, they never stood a chance: the wolvogs have simply killed and eaten all those who'd shown signs of vestigial domesticated status.[21]

In desert island stories, and human evolution more generally, dogs have been bred for safety/protection, companionship, work etc., but in Atwood's transgenic menagerie the wolvogs' domestic appearance conceals something 'wild' and dangerous. The introduction of transgenics disturbs defined differences between animals that signals a departure from ways of past representations of nonhuman animals in earlier Robinsonades. The hybrid of a dog/wolf counteracts the millennia of domesticating and bonding in 'man-canid interaction'. This inversion of the human-master and servile-nonhuman animal relationship demonstrates the extent to which transgenics has complicated the supposed 'natural order' of human rule. The wolvogs have the likeness of the domestic dog, a friendly outward appearance that conceals a wolfish return to their ancestral genetic code. In the *MaddAddam* trilogy, actual dogs are all but wiped out along with human civilisation. Snowman is forced to chase away potential pet companions as they represent a strain on already limited resources. He is unable to satisfy a part of the canonical Crusoe-esque character by domesticating nonhuman animals for companionship, labour, and profit. The Robinsonade in the Anthropocene charts a very different narrative of human scientific intervention than its Enlightenment or Victorian counterparts. The apparently order-making devices of civilisation, such as technology, have instead created a world characterised by disorder through anthropogenic climate change and devastating effects on biodiversity. However, the existence of transgenics also destabilises human control as the distinctions between species becomes fluid.

[21] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 108.

Oryx and Crake emerges from a cultural preoccupation with transgenic science. The narrative imagines the results of continued cross-species genetic experimentation and its impact on notions of humanity. Pablo José Francisco Pena Rodrigues and Catarina Fonseca Lira theorise that in the Anthropocene:

> novel organisms, such as alien and hybrid species and GMOs will play key roles in biological interactions—leading to what we call the Bio-Evolutionary Anthropocene. Those organisms will have divergent evolutionary capacities or create different pressures on both natural and anthropized ecosystems and alter the distribution, richness, and ecological patterns of local and global biodiversity—and lead to novel and unexpected evolutionary pathways.[22]

Atwood verbalises a concern for the changes to 'natural' systems caused by transgenics through Snowman, who provides an outsider's perspective on Crake's laboratory experiments. As Snowman tours the prestigious Watson-Crick Institute's bioengineering laboratory, he realises the changes to everyday life prompted by unfettered experimentation. In the following exchange, Snowman questions Crake about the consequences these experiments might have:

> "What if they got out? Went on a rampage? Start breeding – and the population spirals out of control – like those big green rabbits?"
>
> "That would be a problem," said Crake. "But they won't get out. Nature is to zoos what God is to churches".
>
> "Meaning what?" said Jimmy. He wasn't paying close attention, he was worrying about the ChickieNobs and the wolvogs. Why is it he feels some line has been crossed, some boundary transgressed? How much is too much, how far is too far? [23]

[22] Pablo José Francisco Pena Rodrigues & Catarina Fonseca Lira, 'The Bio-Evolutionary Anthropocene Hypothesis: Rethinking the Role of Human-Induced Novel Organisms in Evolution', *Biological Theory*, 12 (2019), 141 – 150 (p. 142).
[23] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 206.

Oryx and Crake reconsiders our relationships with other animals and environments through transgenics and the evolutionary pathways that are explored, as well as closed off, in the Anthropocene. Crake's cryptic response that 'Nature is to zoos what God is to churches' only exacerbates Snowman's anxieties and alienation. Narrating the possible realities of transgenics explores the fear a boundary has been crossed, which has profound and divergent consequences for our relationship with the nonhuman. On the one hand, transgenics demonstrates that the division between species is not an impenetrable sacred border but something far more permeable and removes the illusion of human exceptionalism. Conversely, this realisation comes at a cost. Animals are tested on and killed in the name of progress and their DNA is subjected to experimentation that becomes an extension of human entitlement.[24] As Derrida indicates, 'however one interprets it, whatever practical, technical, scientific, juridical, ethical, political consequences one draws from it, no one can today deny this event—that is, the *unprecedented* proportions of this subjection of the animal'.[25] Acknowledging the scale of nonhuman exploitation necessitates we change the way sentient and agentic life is viewed purely as a resource. The destructive repercussions of reductive attitudes are summarised in the term 'Plantationocene'.

(4.2) The Crusoe-figure
Snowman and Cultural Wreckage

As with other Crusoe-figures, Snowman's isolation burdens him with the responsibility of maintaining humanity's social and cultural worlds. As one of the few survivors of the deadly

[24] In the above extract Snowman references 'green rabbits', an acknowledgement of Eduardo Kac 'GFP bunny' Alba, a genetically modified 'glowing' rabbit created as a living transgenic artwork by Kac and geneticist Louis-Marie Houdebine. Alba was imbued with the GFP gene found in the jellyfish, *Aequorea victoria*, which fluoresces green during blue light exposure. Atwood's world takes place in the near future, a time when experiments with gene splicing has advanced into new realms that are nonetheless reminiscent of our current bio-engineering capabilities. Further discussion of Alba and Kac will be explored in the second part of section one in reference to Crake.

[25] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I am*, ed. by Marie-Louise Mallet and trans. by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 25 [italics in original].

pandemic, Snowman is the inheritor of material and figurative cultural products. The castaways' severance from regular society intensifies the desire to maintain an ever-diminishing connection to increasingly abstract cultural references. However, in the *MaddAddam* trilogy, language and its relative value are already in jeopardy before the shipwreck. Snowman's responsibility as a cultural custodian is already in effect, evidenced by his:

> lists of old words [...] words of precision and suggestiveness that no longer had application in today's world [...] He'd developed a strangely tender feeling towards such words, as if they were children abandoned in the woods and it was his duty to rescue them.[26]

Even before Snowman's isolated existence in *Oryx and Crake*, the functions of language had become limited, the utility of obscure words obsolete. The society in the *MaddAddam* series prioritises scientific advances for its potential for capital over the less profitable arts and humanities—illustrated by Crake and Snowman's respective education and career trajectories. The Watson-Crick Institute Crake enrols in focuses on the 'hard' science(s) and the potential cash yield promised by scientific innovations. Conversely, the Arts centred Martha Graham Academy Snowman attends is underfunded, in disrepair, and home to unproductive pursuits maligned in a world focused on profit. The two colleges become analogous of the polarised society, as Snowman reflects:

> the system had filed him among the rejects, and what he was studying was considered—at the decision-making levels, the levels of real power—an archaic waste of time. Well then, he would pursue the superfluous as an end in itself. He would be its champion, its defender and preserver.[27]

[26] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 195.
[27] Ibid, p. 195.

Snowman's role in maintaining a dying cultural world was already active before the collapse of civilisation. Unlike other Robinsonades, Snowman already felt alone in his efforts to sustain cultural connections. Snowman's capacity to maintain his connection to language is affected by the effects of isolation in a posthuman world.

Like Crusoe, Snowman's connection to language is jeopardised by an imposed split from humanity. Living in a cultural and literal wasteland challenges Snowman's capacity to retain meaning in a world that was already culturally depleted. Atwood cements the connection between Snowman's own loss of language and the world of the castaway adventure novel as the deracinating effects of isolation begin to separate words from their meaning. This is seen as Snowman 'hikes doggedly onwards, muttering to himself. The forest blots up his voice, the words coming out of him in a string of colourless and soundless bubbles, like air from the mouths of the drowning'.[28] The image of a drowning sailor is conflated with the smothering effect of the forest that recalls the Crusoedian fear of being consumed by natural bodies (the jungle/forest, the sea). Snowman's voice is without colour or sound, his words are muffled to convey the loss of meaning without another human recipient. Defoe's Crusoe repairs the severed connection to language through the Bible salvaged from the shipwreck and by disseminating English language, taught to his pet parrot Poll and later to Friday. Crusoe goes through a spiritual reawakening on the island. The Bible provides him with comfort and support in his isolation, highlighted as Crusoe relates that:

> I took up my Bible […] the first Words that presented to me, were, *Wait on the Lord, and be of good Cheer* […] It is impossible to express the Comfort this gave me. In Answer, I thankfully laid down the Book, and was no more sad, at least, not on that Occasion.[29]

[28] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 169.
[29] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 133.

Crusoe's recommitment to the biblical Word and the colonial act of enforcing western language onto colonial subjects re-establishes his lost connection to a now remote cultural world.

For Snowman, the cultural world before the pandemic is not so easily reinstated. As seemingly the sole survivor of the virus, he becomes the only reference point for an extinct civilisation. Without the supporting system of human society, the relationship between the signifier and the signified begins to dissolve. The following extract reflects on Snowman's loss of meaning. He relates that:

> from nowhere a word appears: *Mesozoic*. He can see the word […] but he can't reach the word. He can't attach anything to it. This is happening too much lately, this dissolution of meaning, the entries on his cherished wordlists drifting off into space.[30]

There are further implications in Snowman's attempts to recall the meaning of Mesozoic—a geological era split into the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous that saw the evolution and eventual extinction of giant reptiles. The choice of 'Mesozoic' to illustrate Snowman's lost connection with language may only be coincidental, but the era saw large-scale changes in landmass, climate, and evolution that recalls the world Snowman inherits and foreshadows our own potential fate in the Anthropocene. Both eras share rapid shifts in climate, geological formations, evolutionary changes, and most pertinently extinction events. The Mesozoic is an era also referred to as 'The Great Dying', a name that recalls our own contemporary epoch that has been infamously branded 'the sixth mass extinction'. The difference between the Mesozoic and the Anthropocene is the latter's anthropogenic source. The death of human civilisation in *MaddAddam* is caused by Crake's man-made pandemic before the full extent of climate change, resource depletion, declining biodiversity etc., can be realised. The slip in

[30] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 39.

language as Snowman forgets the meaning of the Mesozoic becomes a reminder of Earth's past that also recalls the fears of mass extinction to bring our potential future into perspective.

As established, the pandemic/shipwreck constitutes a definitive severance from civilisation. After being washed ashore, castaways are faced with the prospect of existing in isolation with few cultural or material ties to their past, compounded with the daunting task of surviving outside of civilisation. In the canonical Robinsonade, the trauma of the shipwreck is promptly followed by pragmatically salvaging the remnants of the ship's wreckage. In the canonical narrative, the actual wrecked ship provides both cultural and material artefacts for castaways to survive the desert island physically and spiritually. The post-pandemic world of the *MaddAddam* series has comparable cultural and material articles. However, rather than coming from a beached ship, they are scavenged from the wrecks of civilisation in the nearby desolate city. Snowman and the other survivors of the pandemic are forced to pick through the detritus to subsist.

Unlike other Robinsonades, much of the scrap salvaged in *Oryx and Crake* is useless, as illustrated in the chapter 'Flotsam'. The random cultural artefacts scavenged by the Craker children are useless reminders of pre-pandemic life rather than the helpful life-saving materials Crusoe miraculously pulls from the well-stocked wreck. The salvage the Craker children show Snowman is worthless mass-produced leftovers born from wasteful global consumerism, underscored by the following extract:

> The children scan the terrain, stoop to pick up flotsam [...] keeping some items, discarding others; their treasures go into a torn sack [...] Opening up their sack, the children chorus, "Oh Snowman, what have we found?" They lift out their objects, hold them up as if offering them for sale: a hubcap, a piano key, a chunk of pale-green pop bottle smoothed by the ocean. A plastic BlyssPluss container, empty; a ChickieNobs Bucket O'Nubbins, ditto [...] Snowman feels like weeping. What can he

> tell them? There's no way of explaining to them what these curious items are, or were.[31]

The 'treasures' the Craker children salvage are a random assortment of items either abstracted from their whole (such as hubcaps and piano keys) or empty reminders of human excess (the sexual aid pill/distribution method for Crake's virus and the bioengineered fried "chicken" bucket). Snowman is left with disparate reminders of things that have now lost their meaning in the world after the shipwreck, rather than useful stores of grain, gunpowder, and tools Crusoe manages to salvage. As Crusoe remarks, 'I had the biggest Magazine of all Kinds now that ever were laid up, I believe, for one Man, but I was not satisfy'd still'.[32] Defoe's intended meaning is likely that there are still supplies to be salvaged from the wreck, but it implicitly gestures at the insatiable colonial appetite for *things*. This facet of the colonial Robinsonade is critiqued by Atwood as Snowman is deprived of anything remotely near Crusoe's assorted stockpile. Colonial and capitalist mentalities are inclined towards consuming, a burden we continue to labour under in the Anthropocene. This is reflected in the *MaddAddam* trilogy's pre-pandemic society as the disparities between the overconsuming and waste-producing elites force other marginalised groups into poverty. All that is left of Snowman's society after civilisation ends is largely waste, which exists interminably into the future.

The other 'treasures' the Craker children discover are hubcaps and piano keys. These useless items recall the loss of human civilisation and apparent human achievement. The car has been a ubiquitous symbol of freedom, industrial ingenuity, and mobility, but also a haunting reminder of our reliance on fossil fuel. The piano represents human cultural and creative accomplishments that have lost their relevance in the absence of a human audience.

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[31] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 7.
[32] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 48.

The hubcap and piano keys are materially present in the posthuman world, but their meaning is lost to the time before the pandemic as Snowman fails to explain 'what these curious items are, or were'. The material artefacts left over from human civilisation survive past the end of peopled society as a nonbiodegradable inheritance of plastic. In this way, the Anthropocene endures indeterminately into the future long after humanity. In *Oryx and Crake*, before we know of any other survivors, Snowman becomes the nexus point for a lost cultural past and the material present but is unable to adequately connect the two separate worlds. We are left with the impression that these material and cultural artefacts, as well as what they represent, belong to the past and should remain so as the survivors contend with the task of imagining other ways of being without the constraints or support of wider human society.

As discussed, castaways are forced to cope with the effects of timelessness and anatopia on the desert island. Unlike other castaways, Snowman does not, or cannot, recreate a facsimile of his previous life—rather he is consistently reminded of his life pre-pandemic through recollections. This connection to the nostalgic past is a hallmark of *Robinson Crusoe* shared between Snowman and conventional Crusoe-esque characters who fall victim to repeated 'repinings'. This is a motif repeated throughout *Oryx and Crake*, as the narrative relates Snowman's life before, during, and after the pandemic. Atwood blends Snowman's despair with extracts from a fictional colonial handbook:

> 'Get me out! he hears himself thinking. But he isn't locked up, he's not in prison. What could be more out than where he is? "[...] what could I have done? Just someone, anyone, listen to me please?" What a bad performance. Even he isn't convinced by it. But now he's weeping again. *It is important,* says the book in his head*, to ignore minor irritants, to avoid pointless repinings, and to turn one's mental energies to immediate realities and to the tasks at hand.*[33]

[33] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 45.

The assertion of the colonial monologue haunts Snowman, chastising his depression and despondency. Snowman's self-conscious performance of a lonely castaway ironically echoes Crusoe's own despair in the aftermath of the shipwreck. Crusoe's feelings are projected outwardly onto the nonhuman world throughout the novel, for example, the island is melodramatically named 'the island of despair'. Crusoe also projects his feelings onto nonhuman animals. His tame parrot has their limited vocabulary inflected by Crusoe's 'bemoaning Language […] [he'd] lay his Bill close to my Face, and cry, Poor Robin Crusoe, Where are you? Where have you been? How come you here? And such things as I had taught him'.[34] Before Crusoe begins to relish his totalitarian control over the island and its inhabitants, his feelings of abject misery are projected onto the nonhuman. Poll has been taught to sound consoling. The other parrots on the island also eventually absorb these sympathetic sounding words so that Crusoe's self-pitying rebounds throughout the forest in the call of birds. Snowman's nostalgia emulates the castaway's desire to cling to the vestiges of human civilisation but simultaneously creates a self-aware ironizing version of Crusoe's narrative.

Oryx and Crake replaces the hubristic sovereignty of the lone Crusoe-figure with self-reflection to directly address the violent crimes against humanity committed during colonial rule. The below extract blends the Crusoe-esque colonial voice with interjections from Snowman, stating:

> "It is strict adherence to daily routine that tends towards the maintenance of good morale and the preservation of sanity," [...] He has the feeling he's quoting from a book, some obsolete, ponderous directive written in aid of European colonials running plantations of one kind or another [...] they would have been told to wear solar topics, dress for dinner, refrain from raping the natives. It wouldn't have said raping. Refrain

[34] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 121.

> from fraternizing with the female inhabitants […] He bets they didn't refrain, though.[35]

The above extract directly establishes Atwood's trilogy as a re-vision of the Robinsonade that challenges colonial-era narratives. Snowman calls attention to the implicit violence in the colonial voice and highlights how atrocities committed during colonial rule are mitigated semantically to conceal the history of genocide and exploitation. Snowman has no memory of ever being taught to emulate the colonial voice and its presence accentuates the continual existence of colonial narratives in a supposedly post-colonial era. The above passage strikes upon a key issue that highlights colonists' exploitation of people and the environment: the establishment of plantations.

The development of the plantation has permanently altered our relationship to the world in the Anthropocene. Life has been re-ordered, reduced, and exploited through the efforts of colonialists. The changes to our existence through colonialism have prompted some critics to rename the current era the Plantationocene, rather than using the broader prefix *Anthropos*. This highlights the origins of current global conditions, as the below summary clarifies:

> Plantation worlds, both past and present, offer a powerful reminder that environmental problems cannot be decoupled from histories of colonialism, capitalism, and racism […] its accompanying rearrangements of life are produced through processes of land alienation, labor extraction, and racialized violence.[36]

Colonial mentalities take physical form in the arrangement of the plantation. They attempt to reduce non-European people and nonhuman life into exploitable variables and remorselessly remove their autonomy while denying culpability by asserting white supremacist ideology. The formation of the plantation only serves the interests of the plutocratic elite. The

[35] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 5.
[36] Sapp-Moore, Allewaertm, Gómez, and Mitmannm, para. 3 – 5.

overarching narrative of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is shaped by the production of plantations. The voyage from South America to the West coast of Africa that strands Crusoe on a desert island is launched with the singular intent of forcing people into slavery without any other consideration beyond meeting the demands of the plantation. The prevalence of slavery in South America during the 1700s alone continued to escalate and led to horrendous mass death for both African and Indigenous people forced into slavery.

The closing chapters of *Robinson Crusoe* are concerned with plantations with acts of genocide and slavery as peripheral concerns. Defoe was an advocate for further establishing British colonies in South America, specifically in the region along the coast of Chile.[37] Defoe's narrative rewards Crusoe's efforts to colonise the island to encourage actual colonial expansion into the Americas. As Crusoe reflects, the fledgling colony 'improvement […] the Island it self […] five of them [colonists] made an Attempt upon the main Land, and brought away eleven Men and five Women Prisoners […] I found about twenty young Children on the Island'.[38] The neighbouring Indigenous population has either been forced into slavery or, as Crusoe relates, killed during two separate raids:

> 300 *Caribbees* came and invaded them, and ruin'd their Plantations […] they fought with that whole Number twice, and were at first defeated […] but at last a Storm destroying their Enemies Cannoes, they famish'd or destroy'd almost all the rest, and renew'd and recover'd the Possession of their Plantation, and still liv'd upon the Island.[39]

Emphasis is placed on the significance of plantations rather than the lives of Indigenous people, who are depicted as either an obstacle or a tool for European colonial rule. *Robinson Crusoe*'s ending asserts that all wrongs have been righted as the plantations are renewed and

[37] Daniel Defoe, 'Letters from Daniel Defoe to Robert Harley; 1703 – 1714', [Accessed 25 – 11 – 2022] https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/letters-from-daniel-defoe-to-robert-harley-1703-1714
[38] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 257.
[39] Ibid, p. 257 – 258.

the island has been made not only habitable but profitable for the European settlers. It is essential that re-visions of the Robinsonade remember these colonial origins. The genesis of *Robinson Crusoe* is inseparable from colonialism. Atwood's re-vision focuses our attention on the colonial plantation systems that manipulates the lives of disenfranchised people and exploits the nonhuman world while reminding us that these systems of control and exploitation remain ever-present in the Anthropocene. As Huggan and Tiffin indicate:

> several of Atwood's early works […] had been explicitly concerned to break down masculine/colonialist attitudes to nature attached to what the Australian ecofeminist Val Plumwood calls a 'hyper-separation of humans from nature and other animals […] *Oryx and Crake* offers a grotesque—simultaneously ridiculous and terrifying—perspective on Haraway's promissory cyborg universe […] Atwood's main satirical targets are familiar enough […] and all are linked, directly or indirectly, to her overarching topic of exploitative aspects of twenty-first-century corporate biopower.[40]

The contemporary Robinsonade provides a radical alternative and a clear point of departure from its canonical counterpart. Atwood abandons the plantation system that exploits the labour of enslaved people and the environment. This eventuality is made possible through the separation of the pandemic/shipwreck. The structure of the world before the pandemic recalls our own society that continues to exploit enslaved labour in the Plantationocene. The plantation system is left in the past after the collapse of the supposedly civil society. The imposition of the shipwreck separates the castaway from the past and allows the Robinsonade to be a transformative genre rather than a vehicle for colonial oppression.

[40] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 209 – 210.

(4.3) The Crusoe-figure
Crake and Reductionism

While Snowman explores the fading ties to a cultural world lost on the desert island and the danger of transgenic animals, Crake personifies the relentlessly scientific mentality that typifies a key aspect of the Crusoedian figure. Scientific and technological innovation perform a significant function to fulfil the agenda of earlier Robinsonades, namely the assertion of human authority—or, more specifically, the sovereignty of European males—in the 'Man vs Nature' binary. This broad definition of 'human authority' also excludes non-Europeans, women, the working class, and a significant number of other marginalised groups outside of what hegemonic structures present as the social norm, which is in fact proportionally small.

Robinson Crusoe exemplifies Defoe's interest in science and the advantage it grants over the nonhuman. As Ilse Vickers relates, 'Defoe had a life-long interest in science. He was not a 'practising' scientist but a commentator on the methods and aims of experimental philosophy'.[41] As Vickers highlights, for Defoe and his contemporaries 'the most significant aspect of experimental science lies in its presenting man with the hope that he could eventually come to know and understand the world he lived in and that, consequently, he could regain dominion over things and so control the future'.[42] The efforts of scientific investigation, experimentation, and knowledge acquisition are crucial components of the Crusoedian relationship with the nonhuman. Atwood queries the role science plays in the Anthropocene by drawing on the model of the scientific castaway that begins with Defoe and Crusoe and develops during the Victorian period with H.G. Wells' Dr Moreau. As Jayne Glover argues, 'In *Oryx and Crake* control comes from science. Science itself is a neutral

[41] Ilse Vickers, 'The Influence of the New Sciences on Daniel Defoe's Habit of Mind', *Man and Nature*, 7 (1988), 166 – 178 (p. 169).
[42] Ibid, p. 167.

force, as Atwood herself has argued, but the uses to which scientific advances are put can be seen as either positive or negative'.[43] Crake is an ambiguous figure in the trilogy. He is a hyperbolic stereotype of a detached amoral scientist but his anthropocentric experiments develop a deadly virus to subvert human domination of the Earth. Atwood complicates the anthropocentric aims of Enlightenment and Victorian era Robinsonades as, seemingly, Crake eradicates anthropogenic climate change by bioengineering the devastating pandemic virus.

Anthropocentric Crusoe-esque scientific methods are used to understand and uncover nonhuman processes, all in order to control what is seen as otherly and secure human sovereignty. From taxonomical classification to technologically enhanced resource depletion, scientific methods have been used to assert anthropocentric hierarchies and herald the commencement of the Anthropocene. This reductionism separates humanity from the nonhuman by placing them into discreet exploitable categories. Like early Crusoe figures, Crake demonstrates the same inclination towards reductionism and empiricism. As the world is resolved into equations and variables then reduced into malleable parts further emphasis is placed on human ingenuity and exceptionalism. In *Oryx and Crake,* this attitude is summarised by a fridge magnet in the elitist Watson-Crick Institution that reads, 'The proper study of Mankind is Everything'.[44] In this binary mindset, humanity detaches itself from the nonhuman to become a third-party observer rather than an active part of an inseparable web of life. The above phrase is later reversed when Crake is showing Snowman around the Paradice facility, Crake quips that: 'The proper study of Mankind is Man'.[45] Introspectively scrutinising humanity as an individual species uncovers the path that has led to anthropogenic environmental change in the Anthropocene. Crake's introspective view of human behaviour

[43] Jayne Glover, 'Human/Nature: Ecological Philosophy in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*', *English Studies in Africa*, 52 (2009), 50 – 62 (p. 52).
[44] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 209.
[45] Ibid, p. 320.

complicates the straightforward interpretation of the Crusoe-esque scientist. His motivation to release a deadly pandemic to eradicate humanity and replace them with a small colony of transhuman vegan gatherers is purposefully obscured. Atwood's narrative pairs the horror of the near-total destruction of humanity with characteristic absurdism. Crake's motivations are mystified; he is simultaneously an anti-anthropocentric, an amoral experimenter, and a pseudo-god figure exercising absolute authority through bioengineering. By complicating Crake's motivations, Atwood's re-vision critiques the canonical Crusoe-figure.

In the canonical Robinsonade, science presents the semblance of control over the nonhuman. Applying scientific methods in this way suggests that if things are made knowable the castaway can master the world around them. This encourages the dilution of the nonhuman into discrete fragments disparate from a unified or holistic whole. This colonial and capitalist vision of the plantation explored in *Robinson Crusoe* leads to the globalised consumer culture that characterises the Anthropocene and creates the conditions for overproduction and waste as represented in the world of *MaddAddam*. As discussed, although defining the current age 'the Anthropocene' has certain benefits, the generalised etymology does not explicitly account for the source of exploitation that creates modern slavery, produces conditions that disproportionately affect the already impoverished, and depletes biodiversity. The limits of the *Anthropos* in Anthropocene mirrors Crake's deadly pandemic that plans to rid the planet of humanity's exploitative burden in a perverted act of eco-terrorism. As Huggan and Tiffin highlight:

> This blasted world is the paradoxical consequence of Crake's ecophilosophy, a violent form of techno-ecological utopianism through which he looks to steer 'the nature of nature in a direction beneficial to those hitherto taken', and to salvage the wrecked

> post-Enlightenment ideal of perfectibility by reducing all life to a controlled experiment.[46]

To administer his virus, Crake creates the BlyssPluss Pill, marketed to target human frailties and failings that exemplify human exceptionalism and augment anthropocentric vices, namely greed, gluttony, and lust. Whilst showing Snowman his lab, Crake remarks that his work is designed to fulfil the human desire to 'stop time' and overcome 'grief in the face of inevitable death'.[47] Crake promises to alleviate human anxiety as his miracle cure proports to transcend our collective animal existence to circumvent death and sickness. BlyssPluss is designed to target the pleasure principle to satiate desires for risk-free sex and includes the added stimulus of a narcotic effect to ensure rapid distribution to infect the largest portion of humanity.

Atwood's carnivalesque comedy lends itself to ironic reversals. BlyssPluss promises to satisfy human wants and wishes but instead ensures civilisation's extinction. Although this ultimately (and permanently) prevents anthropogenic change, much like the overly generalising *Anthropos* it lays the blame for climate catastrophe at the feet of all of humanity regardless of guilt or culpability. Jason Moore's Capitalocene indicates the limits of the Anthropocene as a term that views climate and 'humanity as an undifferentiated whole'.[48] In this mindset, humanity is viewed as a totalising problem that is separate from, and acts against, the 'natural' world. As such, the nonhuman is viewed as passive and humanity as exceptional, destructive, and innately oppositional to 'Nature'. Crake represents this binary way of thinking distinctly reminiscent of Crusoe.

Crake plans to replace the human race with the Crakers, designed to be an ecologically sustainable alternative to human wastefulness. As J. Brooks Bouson states,

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[46] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 210.
[47] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*, p. 310.
[48] Moore, p. 295.

'Crake, who, in a strange twist on the idea of scientific imperialism, uses science not to conquer the natural world but to control human nature by creating his bioengineered and environmentally friendly hominids'.[49] Crake's creation complicates any straightforward interpretation of his role as a Crusoe-figure as either a radical reversal or a faithful reproduction. Though human technological advantages are used to purposely undermine human control over the environment, Crake's binary distinctions still posit an essential difference between humans and nonhumans. As Hannes Bergthaller asserts:

> Crake has literalized the pastoral fantasy of humanism—he has employed the tools of engineering in order to breed the wildness out of man, creating a species of human beings that will be congenitally unable to soil the planetary *oikos*. The Crakers have been thoroughly and permanently housebroken.[50]

Bergthaller's assertions invert the Crusoedian attempts to resist animality, i.e., to remove the possibility that they themselves are 'wild' or might become animal-like. Further, this underscores the contradiction at the centre of western civilisations' attempts to withstand the 'forces of nature' that have inadvertently—according to Bergthaller—made us 'wild'. This notion challenges what we understand wild to mean and inverts the established notions of human morality and civility vs nonhumanity as corrupting, exterior, and in need of human order. As discussed in relation to dwelling, the societal Other in the Deleuzian sense is in fact disordering and hinders the development of new relationships with the nonhuman. Further, this concept can be extended to understand our relationship with the planetary oikos—the ecological home—where the human devices of control are disruptive and disordering, implying we are not-at-home and in effect 'wild' since we are unable to inhabit the planetary home civilly.

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[49] J. Brooks Bouson, '"It's Game Over Forever": Atwood's Satiric Vision of a Bioengineered Posthuman Future in *Oryx and Crake*', *SAGE Publications*, 3 (2004), 139 – 156 (p. 141).
[50] Hannes Bergthaller, 'Housebreaking the Human Animal: Humanism and the Problem of Sustainability in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*', *English Studies*, 91 (2010), 728 – 743 (p. 735).

Different human physical and conceptual institutions have contributed to climate change that makes the earth more inhospitable. Bergthaller highlights Crake's efforts to 'carefully eradicated those biological traits of older humanity that have led it down the path to ecocide'.[51] Though it is vital to challenge definitions of human/nonhuman or civil/wild this assertion risks unintentionally turning humanity into a homogenous group that are hereditarily predestined towards destruction. This notion labours under the same preconceptions Moore highlights in the term Anthropocene. It suggests that humanity is separate from other species and not 'at home' on Earth with the nonhuman. This mentality posits the familiar distinctions between humans/nonhumans at the centre of anthropocentric discourse, albeit with separate intentions. Crake attempts to remove the possibility of the Crakers repeating humanity's collective mistakes by adding other genetic predeterminants. Though Crake adheres to a binary way of thinking, the overarching ideological use of science in the Robinsonade is subverted. In conventional iterations, science illuminates the dark reaches of the uncivilised nonhuman world for the benefit of colonists. Crake uses advanced technology to return civilisation to a time before the Bronze Age, where any surviving humans will be without a conceptual and technological support system or the means to continue patterns of exploitation.

Bioengineering problematises essentialist ways of defining humans and nonhumans. Transgenics realises one of the fundamental anxieties of the conventional Robinsonade—the collapse of the castaway's humanity as identities predicated on binary relationships with the nonhuman dissolve. As discussed, Robinsonades explore the fear that association with the wilderness will turn the castaway into something inhuman—both less than human but also not nonhuman. The Crusoedian castaway's reliance on a technological advantage is crucial in maintaining their identity as a human and preserving the boundaries between human and

[51] Bergthaller, p. 735.

nonhuman worlds. Crake's use of transgenic science complicates rather than alleviates the anxieties in the question, what is a human? Atwood utilises the castaway's removal from human society as an opportunity to start afresh. As Anne Franciska Pusch recognises, 'Atwood's trilogy […] depicts a future where biotechnological innovations, especially in the field of human and animal "enhancement", significantly affect shared human–animal life by redistributing power and authority, as well as by blurring the human–animal boundary'.[52] As the following section on Toby as a Crusoe-figure explores, the absence of physical and social structures in the Robinsonade encourage new modes of engagement. Transgenics breaches the bastions of sacred difference between humans and other animals as mutable genetic codes cross over species binaries.[53]

Like the anthropocentric Crusoedian, Crake is positioned as a third-party observer outside of nonhuman life, but unlike Crusoe he also detaches himself from humanity. Crake becomes a divine Creature-figure for the Crakers and the mythos surrounding him survives after his death and is the foundation for the Craker's worldview. *The Year of the Flood* recalls the Judeo-Christian God from the Old Testament, whose various punishments for human sinfulness included plagues, floods, and other methods of mass destruction—sparing only a handful of chosen survivors. Crake's influence over the environment, humans, and other animals demonstrates a desire to control others as an exaggerated Crusoedian sole sovereign. Earth becomes a post-postdiluvian world as the 'waterless flood', Crake's genetically altered virus, heralds a 'divine' judgement of humanity. As well as the destruction narrative, Crake also follows the creation myth as his design and production of the Crakers are made with his

[52] Anne Franciska Pusch, 'Splices: When Science Catches Up with Science Fiction', *Nanoethics*, 9 (2015), 55 – 73 (p. 57).

[53] This raises more ethical questions and dilemmas than can be adequately addressed here. It is crucial to highlight the significance of transgenic animals in the text as they encourage us to consider the dismantling of rigid differences around species distinction. Nevertheless, this challenge to human essentialism is a by-product of animal experimentation that is anthropocentric in its most basic premise; the justification that other animals can be used for essentially human ends.

aesthetic in mind as all the Crakers shared Crake and Oryx's green eyes. The Crakers revere Crake as an omniscient being who created life out of the chaos in the time before the Waterless Flood, parodying the Genesis Creation event. Despite his death, Crake assumes the sole sovereign position of the Crusoe-figure, not just of a tropical island, but of the entire posthuman landscape as his transgenic creations inherit a world of his design.

This divine creator role recalls the frequent accusations levelled against transgenic scientists and bioengineers, the claim they are 'playing God'. Adam Waytz and Liane Young's quantitative study on the perception of transgenics illustrates some anxieties from the public in regard to gene splicing as a transgressive practice, a concern echoed by Snowman in *Oryx and Crake.*[54] Crake's laboratory, Paradice, recalls the Edenic world of the Old Testament where Adam names the animals of the Garden. Adam's taxonomy becomes a proto-scientific classification of animals, plants, and minerals. Transgenics takes this process a step further as other animals are no longer only named but re-made. These practices have generated some public concern that science interferes with 'natural' processes. This anxiety, warranted or not, is explored through the narrative of the *MaddAddam* trilogy. In the extract below, Crake shows Snowman the Grandmaster lobby of the MaddAddam website accessed through the Extinctathon game:

> Adam named the animals. MaddAddam customizes them [...] Jimmy had a cold feeling, a feeling that reminded him of the time his mother had left home: the same sense of the forbidden, of a door swinging open that ought to be kept locked.[55]

Atwood creates a sense of transgression, of engaging in something illicit that blurs the distinctions between the 'natural' and 'unnatural'. The publication of *Oryx and Crake* in 2003 coincides with rising anxiety at the turn of the millennium regarding genetic engineering. The

[54] Adam Waytz and Liane Young, 'Aversion to playing God and moral condemnation of technology and science', *Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London,* 374 (2019), 1 – 10.
[55] Atwood, *Oryx and Crake,* p. 216.

end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s saw a rise in the use of GMOs, bioengineering, cloning, and other developments. Three years before the publication of *Oryx and Crake*, Steven Best and Douglas Kellner outline the anxiety that advances in bioengineering caused and note how genetic scientists in various media were said to exhibit a 'dangerous one-dimensional, reductionist mindset that is blind to the social and historical context of science and to the ethical and ecological implications of radical interventions into natural processes'.[56] Anxieties relating to bioengineering are still present, but according to Waytz and Young's study strong opposition is held in a minority. A survey undertaken by William Hallman et al found that 'about 50% of those surveyed admitted that their opinion of genetically modified foods was based on their "gut feeling"'.[57] The distrust of the new, the unknown, and the possible unseen future ramifications of transgenics factor into public opinion. Atwood creates a self-consciously hyperbolic 'mad scientist' as Crake is characterised by the 'reductionist mind-set' Best and Kellner describe. Crake's worldview is ultimately Crusoedian as human and nonhuman others become malleable variables for him to manipulate. The last addition to the series, *MaddAddam* (2013), illustrates changes in the reception of transgenics over a decade and demonstrates a shift towards a more optimistic imagining of the potential for a posthuman world where the defined lines between human and nonhuman have been irreversibly transformed.

Public perception aside, the intervention of transgenic science does demonstrably alter our relationship with the nonhuman and subsequently changes our perception of human exceptionalism. As artist Eduardo Kac claims, his infamous GFP transgenic rabbit named Alba demonstrates a break in the carefully constructed lines between species. Kac states that

[56] Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *The Postmodern Adventure: Science Technology and Cultural Studies at the Third Millennium* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 139.
[57] W. K. Hallman, C. L. Cuite, & Xenia Morin, *Public Perceptions of Labelling Genetically Modified Foods* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013), p. 46.

transgenic art 'offers a concept of aesthetics that emphasizes the social rather than the formal aspects of life and biodiversity, that challenges notions of genetic purity, that incorporates precise work at the genomic level, and that reveals the fluidity of the concept of species in an ever increasingly transgenic social context'.[58] The concern for transgenics emanates from a disturbed 'natural' order, a disruption of traditional human and nonhuman binaries that consecrate the boundaries between species. While transgenics blurs the lines between the human and nonhuman to challenge distinctions between species it also exists as an expression of anthropocentric control over the nonhuman. This demonstrates an entitled justification in our desire to learn, adapt, or improve humanity's wealth of knowledge through nonhuman animal experimentation. Despite its intentions, Kac's art is formed at the expense of nonhuman animals to assert individual human will onto the animal other and ultimately enforces human hierarchies whilst attempting to subvert species stratification.

The longevity of the Robinsonade as a genre allows us to gauge the changing cultural responses to science(s) and its developments. In the Enlightenment era, science and technology reveal the world around the human subject and, by acquiring knowledge, humanity is also able to exert control over the nonhuman. Conversely, Wells' fin-de-siècle novel *The Island of Dr Moreau* demonstrates how scientific developments affect established conceptions of humanity and self. The advent of Darwinism and its absorption into mainstream society altered attitudes towards human exceptionalism that demanded considerable adjustments in the light of animal evolution. The shift from a monotheistic worldview where humankind reflected a God-like image to being related to any other animal had, and *still* has, a significant psychological effect that destabilises notions of anthropocentrism. The change in perception regarding Darwinism is reflected in Wells' *The*

[58] Sasa Savel, 'Fluorescent Bunny Alba: Interview with Eduardo Kac', *Maska*, 9 (2001), 26 – 29 (p. 27).

Island of Doctor Moreau. As Christina Alt recognises, the shift away from human exceptionalism in Wells':

> late-Victorian works of scientific romance […] reveals a pessimistic attitude arising in part from evolutionary ideas circulating at the time [...] in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* he warns of the dangers of scientific overreaching and suggests the ineffectuality of human attempts to intervene in evolutionary processes.[59]

Alt goes on to explain that these late-Victorian works 'convey of a sense of human beings existing at the mercy of natural processes beyond their control'.[60] Darwinian evolution decentres the myth of human exceptionalism and constitutes a decisive blow to anthropocentrism. In the wake of bioengineering, humanity's image in relation to wider ecosystems is further altered. These factors are channelled through Crake's divergent characterisation. As Lara Dodd highlights, 'Atwood creates a near-future fictional world in which the consequences of current cultural and technological trends [and] human-made climate change [...] can be explored through extrapolation'.[61] As such we are able to re-envision human/nonhuman relationships and examine the possibilities of the transhuman. Where Crake demonstrates the hyperbolic extremes of Crusoedian sovereignty, he also challenges human exceptionalism through bioengineering.

The final fragmentation of the Crusoe-figure in the *MaddAddam* trilogy is Toby, who enacts the changes in our interactions with nonhumanity to produce necessary and meaningful alterations between humanity, the environment, and other animals in the Anthropocene.

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[59] Christina Alt, 'Extinction, Extermination, and the Ecological Optimism of H.G. Wells', in *Green Planets: Ecology and Science Fiction* ed. by Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2014), p. 25.
[60] Ibid, p. 25.
[61] Lara Dodds, 'Death and the "Paradice within" in 'Paradise Lost' and Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*', *Milton Studies*, 56 (2015), 115 – 150 (p. 115).

(4.4) Crusoe-figure

Toby, Radical Re-visions to the Robinsonade

Where Snowman and Crake only critique specific aspects of the conventional Crusoe-figure while retaining other aspects of canonical character, Toby represents a significant break from the Robinsonade's bourgeois male protagonists. Toby meets our expectations of a castaway survivalist while appreciating and attempting to understand the nonhuman. As Jennings explains, the *MaddAddam* trilogy's 'redemptive and transformative vision develops in the latter two novels' gendered shift in perspective. In these works, the main female characters, Toby and Ren, provide a different way of seeing and relating to "otherness"'.[62] This section will focus on Toby and her transformative potential for the Robinsonade rather than Ren. Toby's narrative relates more directly to the Robinsonade and enables a closer comparison to the generic functions of the Crusoe story to provide new understandings of otherness to radicalise the Crusoe-myth in the Anthropocene.

Toby's narrative is established recognisably as a Robinsonade from the outset of *The Year of the Flood* in the topography of the familiar environment of the desert island. These features blend with the disintegrating urban surroundings in *The Year of the Flood* to cement Toby's connection to the Crusoe-figure while asserting a unique perspective to dispel the burdensome human/nonhuman dichotomy in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Atwood's description of the surroundings recalls elements of castaway fiction while casting them in a new light, relating:

> in the early morning Toby climbs up to the rooftop to watch the sunrise […] The Abandoned towers in the distance are like the coral of an ancient reef – bleached and colourless, devoid of life. There still is life, however. Birds chirp; sparrows, they must be. Their small voices are clear and sharp, nails on glass: there's no longer any sound of traffic to drown them out. Do they notice that quietness, the absence of motors? If

[62] Jennings, p. 26.

> so, are they happier? Toby has no idea […] she has never been under the illusion that she can converse with birds.[63]

The extract initially establishes a Crusoedian perspective of the island wilderness. In this instance, the wilds that emerge from the vestiges of the city seem as devoid of life as Crusoe's own 'Island of Despair', a wasteland in a state of malaise without the supposedly civilising hand of humanity.[64] This image of the Crusoe-esque wasteland is immediately undercut by Toby's focus on the other forms of life burgeoning in the posthuman world. The intricate description complicates our understanding of what 'nonhuman' means. As discussed in the methodology, nonhuman as a term is fraught with difficulties and in seeking an alternative we might land on the 'posthuman' that seemingly describes the context of the *MaddAddam* trilogy's world after the pandemic.

However, applying the term posthuman is complicated, even in the context of the apocalyptic *MaddAddam* trilogy. Posthuman as a term can only be applied tentatively when we consider the human generated effects that may endure indefinitely as the remnants of human life (e.g., the city ruins, climate change, waste products) that continue to persist despite humanity's absence. Atwood's world is also populated with transhumans, animals that are not strictly human and cannot be wholly defined as not-human, that exist in a state of indistinction. Nevertheless, the term posthuman may help articulate an alternative relationship with *all* animal interactions whereas the 'nonhuman' can inadvertently imply a binary; human vs not human, or the human-animal opposed to all other animals, the human-built environment vs the 'natural' environment etc. Questioning the term 'nonhuman' helps produce a new understanding of animality relevant to the Robinsonade and the Anthropocene as the definition between distinctions diminishes.

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[63] Margaret Atwood, *The Year of the Flood* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), p. 3.
[64] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 60.

In the pre-pandemic sections of *The Year of the Flood*, Toby is saved by the God's Gardeners and then takes on more responsibility in the organisation. However, Toby remains sceptical of the Gardeners' more far-fetched pronouncements such as talking to birds and Atwood's ironic tone encourages us to assume our own healthy scepticism. By acknowledging the limits of human communication, Atwood maintains a crucial distance between Toby and the nonhuman. Recognising this distance is necessary, as the previous extract underscores there are practical difficulties in representing and articulating nonhuman experiences from an inevitably human perspective. Toby questions whether the sparrows 'notice […] the absence of motors? If so, are they happier?' and articulates the restraints of human imagination and modes of representation that are impeded by biological and social limitations. This recalls Clark's question quoted in the introduction to this chapter. Ultimately, nonhumanity remains impenetrable. Accepting this concept is crucial to avoid reductive methods that attempt to 'know' the nonhuman that perpetuates their exploitation. Through Toby, Atwood considers new potentialities for interaction in a posthuman world that vitally raise more questions than provide answers. Despite a lack of any empirical solution it is essential we continue to speculate and attempt to imagine the interior lives of the nonhuman while also respecting that they will in all likelihood remain opaque.

The Crusoedian attempts to 'know' the nonhuman world are in effect efforts to better control and order what is viewed as otherly. As discussed, European colonisation of the tropics projected the coloniser's norms through a moralising landscape aesthetic. This effect is described by the conventional Robinsonade, as the nonhuman becomes an extension of the castaway turned coloniser. As Jennings notes, in Atwood's trilogy 'the primary male characters […] are representative examples of a privileged, imperialist, and masculinist point of view, premised, like many discourses surrounding the Anthropocene, on assumptions of

human exceptionalism'.[65] Snowman and Crake recall Crusoe's patriarchal middle-class background. Despite their ironic subversions, they are limited in their capacity to break free from the dichotomies of the conventional Robinsonade. Conversely, Toby has been underprivileged, subjected to personal and general exploitation by monolithic corporations, and persecuted by the machinations of corrupt male oppressors such as Blanco. As a result, Toby's worldview does not reflect the same desire for the cultivated, manicured, regimented domain Crusoe's island plantation colony comes to resemble as this structure is implicitly related to patriarchal and colonial control.

Atwood's posthuman world abandons the colonial narrative that purports to bring civilisation to the disorderly wilds that is a pretext to justify colonial exploitation. Without strict regimentation, the human-built environment of the city and its multitudinous towers gives way to plant and animal life. As Toby reflects in *MaddAddam*, 'the animals and birds—those that did not become extinct under the human domination of the planet—are thriving unchecked. Not to mention the plant life'.[66] The growth of plants and the emergence of animal life destabilises the monumental reminders of anthropogenic change. Toby remarks that 'already there are weed shoots nosing up through [the asphalt]. The force they can exert is staggering: they'll have a building cracked like a nut in a few years, they'll reduce it to rubble in a decade'.[67] Despite the destabilisation of human constructs, Atwood complicates an Edenic return to the 'natural' as the transgenic plants and animals are neither strictly human nor are they entirely nonhuman. Some animals (such as the Crakers, Mo'hairs, and Pigoons) have human DNA and the invasive transgenic plant life is a pervasive reminder of anthropogenic change. Atwood's narrative motions forward into a changing posthuman world

[65] Jennings, p. 16.
[66] Margaret Atwood, *MaddAddam* (New York: Anchor Books, 2013), p. 209.
[67] Ibid, p. 221.

rather than look back with a nostalgic desire to an ancient or mythic past of pristine wilderness before industrialisation.

As stated, the Anthropocene would not end abruptly with the collapse of human civilisations but rather it stretches into an unknown future. This is not meant as a pessimistic prognosis that nothing could ever change and anthropogenic damage is permanent. On the contrary, it is a recognition that life will continue to adapt to new conditions. Despite its anthropocentric origins, transgenics decentres species exceptionalism and Atwood's trilogy imagines the changing evolutionary pathways that are left to flourish in the posthuman world, or from a Crusoedian point of view have become unruly and grown outside of their prescribed confines. As Toby looks out over the once orderly spa grounds, she reflects that:

> the flower beds, choked with sow thistle and burdock […] The wide lawns have grown up, tall weeds. There are low irregular mounds beneath the milkweed and fleabane and sorrel, with here and there a swatch of fabric, a glint of bone […] The swimming pool has a mottled blanket of algae. Already there are frogs. The herons and the egrets and the peagrets hunt them, at the shallow end. For a while Toby had tried to scoop out the small animals that had blundered in and drowned. The luminous green rabbits, the rats, the rakunks […] now she leaves them alone. Maybe they'll generate fish, somehow. When the pool is more like a swamp.[68]

After the collapse of civilisation, human areas begin to resemble the wilderness of other Robinsonades as they appear at the outset of their narratives: 'overgrown'. In the posthuman world, the topography seems to begin to revert to a pre-human state where nonhumanness asserts itself. However, as stated, the growth in the ruinous city is not a return to an Edenic pre-Anthropocene world but rather it is the slow dissolution of human constructs that mark the remnants and aftereffects of exploitative practices on Earth. Although this might seem to be an arbitrary distinction, it is necessary to recognise that even after the removal of actively

[68] Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, p. 4.

created anthropogenic effects ecological damage is not entirely reversible and the evidence, devices, and effects of exploitative practices endure. This is not to dilute the optimism necessary to produce positive changes in our relations with nonhuman life but to temper the view that we can somehow move back to an indeterminate prelapsarian time before wholesale human changes to the planet occurred.

Toby does not attempt to control the growth or re-establish the semblance of human order but watches the development of the de-urbanising landscape. The above passage envisions the coalescence of transgenic and nonhuman animals, an abundant and diverse array of life that stresses variety and incorporates a relation to others as an interdependent web. This level of detail contrasts with Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* that emphasised the unknown and as such produced the conditions to explore colonial fantasies of "discovery".[69] The descriptions of Crusoe's island and its nonhuman inhabitants either reiterate that they are unknown or are related to a European equivalent. This ineffable quality is present even before the actual island narrative, as Crusoe and a young boy called Xury have escaped captivity and are navigating the west coast of Africa as they hear 'such dreadful Noises of the Barking, Roaring, and Howling of Wild Creatures, of we knew not what Kinds'.[70] The unknowability of these mysterious animals enhances the perception of adventure by indicating the threat the nonhuman poses to human life.

Toby demonstrates an awareness of space that is perhaps initially reminiscent of Crusoe. For example, the AnooYoo spa is referred to as her 'realm' in *The Year of the Flood*.[71] However, this does not lead to the same assertion of androcentric human sovereignty

[69] The term 'discovery' should be scrutinised as it implies that anything—ranging anywhere from whole continents to individual plants—encountered by colonists suddenly come into being at that moment of this encounter. This mentality is central to the phrases 'The Age of Discovery' and 'The New World' or 'New Frontier' that disregards Indigenous knowledge and assumes things only come into being on contact with western civilisation.
[70] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 22.
[71] Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, p. 5.

but demonstrates her precautions to ensure her own continued survival rather than asserting dominion over the environment and others. The scene where Toby feels forced to shoot the Pigoon boar is not an assertion of human will and is a moment that causes Toby to reflect on the practices and rituals of other animals. Toby's drive for self-preservation differs from a Crusoedian understanding of space where the world is made up of exploitable parts or made to resemble human institutions. The differing responses to place are apparent in the descriptions of cultivation/gardens. The following recounts Crusoe's battle to protect his fledgling crops, stating that his:

> arable Land was but small […] I got it totally well fenc'd […] shooting some of the Creatures in the Day Time, I set my Dog to guard it in the Night […] so in a little Time the Enemies forsook the Place […] But as the Beasts ruined me before, while my Corn was in the Blade; so the Birds were as likely to ruin me now, when it was in the Ear […] I saw my little Crop surrounded with Fowls […] I immediately let fly among them (for I always had my Gun with me) […] I foresaw, that in a few Days they would devour all my Hopes […] I resolv'd not to loose my Corn […] tho' I should watch it Night and Day.[72]

Crusoe's ruination at the hands and talons of beasts and birds emphasises the power relations of figurative and literal consuming. The anthropocentric oppositional binaries depict nonhuman animals as antagonistic 'enemies' as the crops must be fenced and guarded. The 'little crops […] surrounded with Fowls' are anthropomorphised to appear innocently helpless as Crusoe rushes to their defence with his ever-present gun. This following extract from *MaddAddam* underscores Toby's understanding of nonhuman life that emphasises connectivity and shows an appreciation for alterity entirely absent from Crusoe's colonial agriculturalism:

> Toby is on garden duty […] Her rifle leans against the inside of the fence: she prefers it within reach, wherever she is, because you never know. All around her the plants

[72] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 99

> are growing, weeds and cultivars both. She can almost hear them pushing up through the soil, their rootlets sniffing for nutrients and crowding the rootlets of their neighbours, their leaves releasing clouds of airborne chemicals.[73]

Atwood moves the Crusoe-figure in a new direction to adapt to our changing social and cultural relationship with the nonhuman. Toby's description of the garden avoids the conventional hierarchical structure imposed on nonhumanity, i.e., there is no moral distinction between weeds, conventionally characterised as corrupting and 'unproductive', and cultivars that are desirable because of their utility—they are both described as 'her plants'. Descriptions of fencing and firearms are present in both extracts, but where Crusoe is always ready to fire at unruly nonhuman animals encroaching on his property Toby needs them to protect against hostile humans. This difference emphasises a shift in the source of anxieties relating to human and nonhuman relationships. Crusoe's anxieties emanate from potentially hostile nonhumanity, but for the castaway in the Anthropocene the threat is very human in form.

Toby's acceptance of otherness is exemplified when she attempts to 'talk' to bees. The rituals involving bees demonstrate efforts to bridge the gap between species distinctions and open a line of communication. Toby learns about the intricate lives of bees and other forms of life from her teacher at the God's Gardeners, Pilar, who instructed Toby to continue her work after her death. The following extract selects parts of Toby's initial address to a swarm she wishes to move into the survivors' encampment. Toby tells Zeb:

> "I need to talk to the bees." It's one of the Gardener practices that, viewed by an outsider, must seem weird; and it still does seem weird to her because part of her remains an outsider […] "Oh bees," she says. "I send greetings to your Queen […]" she waits. The buzzing increases […] They explore her skin, her nostrils, the corners of her eyes; it's as if a dozen tiny fingers are stroking her.[74]

[73] Atwood, *MaddAddam*, p. 208.
[74] Ibid, p. 210 – 211.

Toby's self-awareness as both a convert to the Gardeners' ecocentric religion and her life as an outsider gives a seemingly balanced worldview. Atwood's description offsets the strangeness of the situation with Toby's earnestness as her tone suddenly takes on a formal aspect. The bee scouts' exploration of the newcomer is a homogenous anthropomorphism—the hive is recognised as a singular entity with individual actors performing complex social actions. Toby mimics the Craker mode of addressing others in the exclamation 'Oh'. It is explained in *MaddAddam* that the Crakers are able to communicate with other animals besides themselves and humans. Toby's language imitates the patterns of the Craker's speech to symbolically compensate for the gap between human language and other animal communication. Through Toby, Atwood articulates that it is intention, rather than content, which is key to communicating effectively. Humans place limitations on communication if we only attempt to connect with others in human terms and refuse to step outside conventional confines.[75]

Toby departs from Robinsonade conventions that impose anthropocentric order. Rather than assert human will onto other animals and the environment Toby uses biological knowledge to facilitate imaginative engagements with nonhumans. As discussed, Crusoe's agricultural efforts are attempts to replicate European pastoral landscapes and re-order the wilderness to suit Western norms. Rather than altering the landscape to become a projection of human aesthetics, Toby's body and mindset change through proximity to the nonhuman. She reflects that 'her own hands are getting thicker – stiff and brown, like roots. She's been digging in the earth too much'.[76] Toby's bodily response to the soil echoes the familiar Crusoedian trepidations about the wilderness and the nonhuman. As discussed, Robinsonades explore the isolated individual's fear that their existence outside of human society and

[75] For example, nonhuman animal intelligence is often compared directly, and unfavourably, with human intelligence that reinforces a hierarchical structure to ultimately emphasise human exceptionalism.
[76] Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, p. 16.

continued contact with nonhumanity will render them unrecognisably unhuman. Toby does not demonstrate the same anthropocentric and Crusoedian panic at the changes to humanity, but rather it is simply acknowledged.

Though Toby bridges the invisible divisions between species, Atwood underscores the distinctions and degrees of separation between Toby, the environment, and other animals. Rather than position the castaway in the 'Man vs Nature' binary, Atwood's trilogy recognises that a spectrum of difference often remains, and will presumably continue to remain, between the human and the nonhuman. It emphasises that we need to accept the limitations of our understanding and do so without provoking a hostile response to alterity that renders nonhumanity as an absolute Other to humanity. *The Year of the Flood* voices perhaps a familiar apprehension of 'natural forces' as Toby reflects that:

> Nature full strength is more than we can take, Adam One used to say […] We're no longer at home in it. We need to dilute it. We can't drink it straight […] Ahead of her in the middle distance is the line of dark trees that marks the edge of the forest. She feels it drawing her, luring her in, as the depth of the ocean and the mountain heights are said to lure people […] until they vanish in a state of rapture that is not human.[77]

This expresses two concepts we are familiar with from previous chapters that are fundamental to the Robinsonade and its subsequent re-vision. The nonhuman environment—specifically the indefinite, uncontrollable, impenetrable 'natural forces'—invokes anxious or phobic reactions. The fear of forests in Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is recalled as Toby worries that, 'surely the trees have moved closer'.[78] The concealed, lurking, amorphous presence inside the forest forebodingly invites as well as repulses, something abject. This seems to signal that we are not 'at home' in 'Nature', that humans have become somehow unnatural, or rather we have attempted to ideologically abstract ourselves from natural states

[77] Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, p. 6.
[78] Ibid, p. 329.

to be excluded from processes like the food chain. This makes us self-consciously aware of difference since confronting the similarities between species becomes uncomfortable—e.g., facing our inevitable consumption in death. A binary mindset considers the nonhuman world as resembling an out-there exteriority, something that encircles an interior human world (not only the physical interior of the home but also a mental world, the interiority of the human mind). In this way, exterior 'nature' is seen as uncanny until it resembles a human-imposed structure. Coming to terms with not feeling at home with the nonhuman means recognising that human actions affect and are affected by nonhumanity and as such we cannot be abstracted from 'natural' processes. The posthuman world in the *MaddAddam* trilogy explores the disassembly of rigidly applied divisions between species—dissolving alongside the physical ruins of civilisation are concepts like 'in here' and 'out there'.

As discussed, castaways fear losing their humanity to the nonhuman as an individual outside of a societal collective. Atwood's re-vision does not abandon these elements in her collection of Crusoe-figures. Questions about the nature of humanity in isolation are integral aspects of the Robinsonade's narrative and a necessary hurdle characters encounter. Their responses to these encounters direct the narrative and the nature of their relationships with the nonhuman. The above extract shifts from an actively hostile distrust of the nonhuman that catalyses a desire to control the other to a recognition that the nonhuman inherently affects our definitions of 'human'. This impact on the human psyche is not positioned within a moral system as in *Robinson Crusoe* but reminds us that contact with the nonhuman can and will change human behaviour. The feeling that human identity is altered in the 'wilderness' is stated without indicating to the reader how to react, positively or negatively, to the vanishing sense of human exceptionalism. This is echoed in the ambiguous word 'rapture' that indicates a simultaneously euphoric sensation and a religious phenomenon that recalls the end-of-times ascension of true believers into the heavenly host.

Atwood reframes what Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* sees as a loss of an enclosed hermetic human identity to indicate a more-than-human experience that cannot necessarily be quantified, something 'not human' or not *only* human. Rapture's dual meaning resonates with the God's Gardeners prophesy that the Waterless Flood will wipe away the anthropogenic damage to Earth leaving only true believers in its cataclysmic wake. As Adam One intones:

> We must be ready for the time when those who have broken trust with the Animals – yes, wiped them from the face of the Earth where God placed them – will be swept away by the Waterless Flood.[79]

This rapturous end-times narrative is recalled in the story Snowman, and later Toby, repeats to the Crakers, i.e., that the chaos of the human world was wiped away by Crake. Here the end of civilisation and humanity is positioned as a resurgence of the 'natural' where essentialist humanness can 'vanish in a state of rapture that is not human'. Toby's characterisation presents the above outcomes with more of an objective stance than the pseudo-religious doctrine. Through Toby we find a world that dissolves distinct hierarchies entrenched in hegemonic anthropocentric ideologies that privilege human exceptionalism. Atwood moves away from the polarising binaries established in *Robinson Crusoe* and allows room to explore the effect of what is not human on the castaway's psyche and body outside of Crusoedian moralising.

(4.5) The Crusoe-figure

Toby, re-visioning narrative forms

The Year of the Flood and *MaddAddam* is delivered in part through an epistolary account that recalls Defoe's Crusoe as a diarist. The use of diaries in the novel genre gives the apparent verisimilitude as it follows the progress of an individual, or a collection of individuals, and their journey through the narrative. Toby keeps a diary during her isolation in the AnooYoo

[79] Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, p. 91.

Spa and then later in the compound to give a chronology and summary of events. The role of narrator and storyteller is a crucial aspect to Atwood's re-vision of the Crusoe-narrative. In Defoe's canonical text, one voice is the privileged interpreter of events that are filtered through the lens of a European male colonist. Who has the freedom to write and reproduce their narrative is limited in the canonical Robinsonade. In *Robinson Crusoe* itself, Friday is taught to copy Crusoe's spoken language and is not afforded the creative freedom to write and so define his own story. Friday is taught speech to better serve Crusoe and to enforce Crusoe's own sovereignty in the context of Friday's enslavement and servitude, evident from the following extract:

> I understood him in many things, and let him know I was very well pleased with him. In a little time I began to speak to him; and teach him to speak to me; and first, I let him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life; I called him so for the memory of the time. I likewise taught him to say Master; and then let him know that was to be my name.[80]

Crusoe ensures Friday's indebtedness by naming him for the day he is saved and emphasises that Friday's life is no longer his own but rather Crusoe's. Crusoe also establishes himself immediately as the sovereign head of the island by self-consciously renaming himself 'Master' to reinforce the island's colonial hierarchy. There is no indication in the text that Friday is taught how to write, as such the narrative remains Crusoe's sole possession. The diary in *Robinson Crusoe* is used to promote an apparently true-to-life report but it has a dual purpose in that it establishes Crusoe as the protagonist, the hero, and the novel's authority as only Crusoe's version of the events is reported.

Atwood re-visions the Crusoe/Friday relationship through Toby and Blackbeard. In *Robinson Crusoe,* Friday is only 'understood many things' to better aid Crusoe's exploitation of the island, whereas Blackbeard is allowed the time to explore writing and reading for his

[80] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 174.

own pleasure. Toby's diary becomes intersected with Blackbeard's own entries. Blackbeard's repeated rewriting of his own name impresses upon him the impact of words as a means of self-identification as well as the significance of representing others through writing. Blackbeard eventually keeps his own independent diary and takes over the mantle of record keeper and diarist for the narrative.

As discussed, Toby becomes a positive amalgamation of the consummate survivalist with a willingness to learn from and understand the nonhuman. As Toby encourages Blackbeard to learn to write, his capacity for storytelling becomes more prominent after the climactic sequence inside Paradice in the chapter 'The Story of the Battle'.[81] The shift in narrative from a human perspective is necessary to dispel human hierarchies and move the Robinsonade into a position that can attempt to encapsulate something that is beyond human.

Section 2: Beyond Human Islands

(4.6) Beyond Human islands

Challenging Colonial and Capitalist consumption

In the canonical Robinsonade, the castaway/colonial character is sometimes joined by a racist caricature of an Indigenous islander to fulfil aspects of the colonial narrative's agenda. Earlier colonial Robinsonades used this character as a foil for the Crusoedian coloniser and as a literary device to demonstrate the transformative power of Western civilisation. Defoe's Friday has his previous understanding of space and environment displaced by the coloniser's own ideals.[82] Friday's behaviour and appearance are described to satisfy Western aesthetics

[81] Atwood, *MaddAddam*, p. 357.

[82] Ignorance of Indigenous knowledge remains an issue for effective responses to climate change in the Anthropocene when the global market's reliance on exploitation and the influence of corporations is given preference. The 'Green Washing' promises of sustainability fall short of the requirements needed to substantiate meaningful change in our responses to the nonhuman. 'Indigenous Knowledge' as a phrase is generalised and does not account for the difference in practice, place, culture. In the Americas alone the Indigenous population accounts for over 50 million people.

and demonstrate a willing subservience to the coloniser's demands. Friday's physical appearance is described at length in the following extract that highlights his features and their conformity to European desires—figuring him as both the 'exotic other' while also resembling the Euro-centric expectations of beauty. Crusoe relates that Friday was:

> a comely, handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight, strong limbs, not too large; tall and well-shaped […] He had a very good countenance, not a fierce and surly aspect […] he had all the sweetness and softness of a European […] His hair was long and black, not curled like wool; his forehead very high and large; and a great vivacity and sparkling sharpness in his eyes. The colour of his skin was not quite black, but very tawny; and yet not an ugly, yellow, nauseous tawny, as […] other natives of America are, but of a bright kind of a dun olive-colour, that had in it something very agreeable, though not very easy to describe.[83]

The specific physical traits that Defoe highlights are associated with particularly desired attributes detailed in the pseudo-science physiognomy—popularised by practitioners such as Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici* (1643). The erroneous relation between physiognomy and personality is summarised by Browne, who states that 'there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our Souls'.[84] Friday's bodily characteristics are used to define him as both racially other than Crusoe but also as distinct from other non-white people. While conforming to Crusoe's idealisations, Friday's racial otherness reinforces—in the Crusoedian and colonial mentality—Friday's subservience in the island's hierarchy.

Crusoe's aim to 'civilise' Friday is in actuality an effort to make him a more valuable asset in the expansion of colonial control. As discussed, Crusoedian characters use violence

[83] Defoe, p. 245 – 246.
[84] Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici: or The Religion of a Physician* (London: J. Torbuck, 1758), p. 156.

to enforce their sovereign rule but also use language as an ideological tool to reaffirm their control. This is demonstrated in Crusoe's reflections:

> I was greatly delighted with him, and made it my Business to teach him every Thing, that was proper to make him useful, handy, and helpful; but especially to make him speak, and understand me when I spake.[85]

As discussed, Crusoe's deliberate and self-conscious assertion of his name as 'Master' appears alongside Friday's re-naming as an attempt to erase his previous identity and imposes the colonial narrative of 'discovery'—for the imperialist, Friday only comes into being on meeting and being renamed by Crusoe and part of this renaming is to coerce Friday into a lifelong condition of slavery. Crusoe never considers that Friday may know a great deal more about the world surrounding them than he does, rather Friday must be indoctrinated and taught in order to make him 'useful' to Crusoe's colonial ideal of the plantation in order to keep the nonhuman world in an arrested state of colonial design and remove Friday's understanding and connection to place.

As in Tournier's *Friday*, attempts are made in Robinsonade re-visions to subvert Crusoedian ontologies by emphasising Indigenous understandings of place contrast with the castaway's own sense of anatopia. They recognise there are more effective and beneficial ways of engaging with the world outside of capitalist exploitation. As highlighted, the plantation system is central to colonial control and substantially affects relationships to the nonhuman world and other people in its arrangement. Malcolm Ferdinand contextualises the plantation and its impact, stating that:

> At the center of the colonial inhabitation of the Earth is found the *Plantation* […] a violent, patriarchal, and misogynistic system, the forced transformation of the Caribbean islands translates into massive environmental destruction […] colonial

[85] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 177.

> inhabitation is an ecological engineering of the Earth's landscapes by plantations to create profits for European colonists […] that subjugates humans and non-humans to these plantations; and an *ontological imperialism*, meaning the imposition of a singular understanding of what the Earth is and what those exist upon it are.[86]

Colonial ideology is enforced through the plantation system that pursues capital and profit, a system maintained through the enslavement of people and the nonhuman. Any other method of relating to place is supplanted by the coloniser's ideals and previous relationships between people and the nonhuman are severed. In the system of the plantation non-Europeans, nonhuman animals, and local/global environments are reduced to variables. This colonial attitude has led to what Ferdinand refers to as the Plantationocene that has 'reduced the world to a market of consumable resources when it made the plantation the principle mode of inhabiting the earth'.[87] The plantation mentality psychologically and physically changes our relation to the world, with considerable material effects on the world itself. To overcome the existence of the Plantationocene, Ferdinand states that we require:

> a decolonial ecology that gets rid of the Anthropocene's colonial constitution so that the horizon of the world can be opened […] it is not a matter of being done with the universal, but of being done with this vertical universalism that makes the West the measure of all culture and history, the one that looms over, establishes, and dominates, in favour of a "truly universal universal" […] that gathers, that listens, and that celebrates encounter.[88]

Desert island worlds separate the castaway from systems of control and present the vital chance to imagine other ways of being outside of an exploitative capitalist ontology. This is notable in Tournier's *Friday* as Robinson eventually adapts his understanding of place through Friday's example as the simulation of the European pastoral idyll collapses. These

[86] Malcolm Ferdinand, *Decolonial Ecology: Thinking from the Caribbean World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022), p. 38.
[87] Ibid, p. 108.
[88] Ibid, p. 244.

apparently new methods of being and dwelling are indebted to Indigenous understandings of place. As western theorists attempt to articulate new relations with the nonhuman, it is essential we incorporate Indigenous science and conceptions that already acknowledge the inherently affective relationship between people and their environment.[89] As Ferdinand indicates, we must escape from considering Western ideals as a universal goal and embrace encounters with alterity.

Colonial narratives such as *Robinson Crusoe* contributed to the justification of European expansion by representing Indigenous people as either accepting of colonial imposition, as seen in Friday's passive characterisation, or as 'savage' and in need of colonial control. In both literary and historical colonial accounts, this supposed savagery is frequently asserted in the erroneous and derogatory claim that all Indigenous people were cannibalistic. As Huggan and Tiffin indicate, 'if colonialism can be said to have its own origin myths, none is more powerful than the suppression of the threatening 'other' – the disavowed animal rival, the cannibal gnawing at the human heart'.[90] Accusations of anthropophagy are even embedded into western language systems. As Rebecca Earle underscores, the 'connection between the Indies and cannibalism, immortalised in popular prints […] [and] the very word 'cannibal' (a variant of the term 'Carib'), led some Europeans to believe that the concept itself originated in the new world'.[91] The presence of these assumptions registers in Defoe's narrative as Crusoe speculates that the island may be near 'the savage coast between the Spanish country and Brazils, where are found the worst of savages; for they are cannibals or men-eaters, and fail not to murder and devour all the human bodies that fall into their

[89] Gloria Snively and John Corsiglia, 'Indigenous Science: Proven, Practical and Timeless', in *Knowing Home: Braiding Indigenous Science with Western Science* ed. by Gloria Snively and Wanosts'a7 Lorna Williams (British Columbia: University of Victoria, 2016).
[90] Huggan and Tiffin, p. 168.
[91] Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, race, and the colonial experience in Spanish America, 1492–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 122.

hands'.[92] These speculations are presented as factual and cannibalism as a pervasive danger for aspiring colonists.

Crusoe's fear of being consumed is epitomised in his phobia of cannibals and he elaborately demonstrates his abhorrence at the idea of cannibalism at several junctures. Crusoe's aversion to cannibalism and being eaten generally is motivated by the fear that his own exploitative practices will themselves be reversed: becoming consumed rather than the consumer. In this instance, Crusoe dehumanises native people in the racist differentiation between the 'human bodies' that would be 'devoured', devouring being an implicitly animalised version of eating. Ecophobic and xenophobic language conflate in the Crusoedian imagination. As in the binary between human/nonhuman used for self-identification, dehumanising others reinforces Crusoe's notions of humanity and is used by Defoe to legitimatise colonial expansion. Friday is eventually converted 'from the Relish of a Cannibal's Stomach' to demonstrate the 'civilising' mission Crusoe embarks on.[93] Crusoe relates that:

> I found Friday had still a hankering Stomach after some of the Flesh, and was still a Cannibal in his Nature; but I discover'd so much Abhorrence at the very Thoughts of it […] I had by some Means let him know, that I would kill him if he offer'd it.[94]

Friday's cannibalism is posited as part of 'his Nature' that can only be purged by Crusoe's colonial control. This explicitly articulates a Euro-centric ideological position that attempts to legitimise violent colonial expansion.

As Earle indicates, 'regardless of whether any individual settler ever encountered actual incidents of cannibalism, everyone knew the continent was full of bloodthirsty cannibals' and emphasises that there 'is a substantial literature on the ways in which

[92] Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe,* p. 133 – 134.
[93] Ibid, p. 177.
[94] Ibid, p. 175.

Europeans used accusations of cannibalism to justify colonisation and conquest'.[95] *Robinson Crusoe*'s colonial agenda is to establish the supposed need for European colonisation by reiterating Indigenous people are cannibalistic and as such should be treated as less-than-human. The *MaddAddam* trilogy reverses the role cannibalism plays in the Robinsonade. The ostensibly civilised world pre-pandemic becomes both literally and metaphorically cannibalistic. In an analogous sense, policies that support unsustainable practices cannibalise a future that is eaten away by over-production and waste. Atwood also literalises cannibalism by complicating eating meat through transgenics and considering the implications of human DNA in other animals consumed by humans.

The pre-pandemic society in Atwood's trilogy is characterised by exploitative environmental practices and overconsumption that parallel Crusoe's own plantation colony as well as our own reality in the Anthropocene. The methods of capitalist society are a continuation of colonial exploitation that produces the destructive effects of anthropogenic climate change as well as artificially arranged social conditions that ensure global inequity. Linking historical colonial practices to modern-day capitalism reconceptualises the mechanism that enables the exploitation of resources, the nonhuman, and labour in modern-day slavery. In Atwood's re-vision, the castaways surviving in the post-apocalypse consider new modes of being after previous human systems are removed or become obsolete. Atwood's speculative fiction exercises concerns for the future of the Anthropocene and considers the consequences of not adapting to a world in flux. The current rate of overconsumption is dependent on the enslavement of others and the subjugation of nonhuman animals and environments. As we retroactively consider how colonialisation produced the

[95] Earle, p. 122 – 123.

conditions that established the Anthropocene, it is apparent that the same systems of exploitation are still in effect.

The patterns of exploitation highlighted in the *MaddAddam* trilogy led Danette DiMarco to draw parallels with Atwood's interest in the cannibalistic Wendigo, a spirit from North American Algonquian culture.[96] The notion of cannibalism, and specifically the fear of being consumed by another human, are integral to the Crusoe-esque Robinsonade. In Atwood's trilogy, it is capitalist and colonial systems that are positioned as cannibalistic. Reversing this trend reframes how we approach this particular hallmark of the Robinsonade as Crusoe's fear of being consumed—by 'savages', nonhuman animals, the sea, the forest, and his own isolation—becomes instead the realisation of capitalism as an unsustainable burden on Earth systems. The Wendigo's insatiability becomes an analogy for colonial exploitative practices, as DiMarco highlights:

> in non-native tales, the Wendigo often emerges during times of imperial assertion, since imperialism relies upon an uncompromising path toward domination and its negative impact on people and their environments […] Atwood does not represent Wendigo tales as manifestations of "native" culture. Rather, she turns to them to reveal western culture's unhealthy and systemic commitment to over-consumption.[97]

The comparison reverses the implications of cannibalism directed at Indigenous peoples, where in fact the capitalist attitude of exploitation and consumption is the manifestation of cannibalism. In this analogy, it is characterised as something insatiable and bloated that consumes the possibility of its own future in its pursuit of production. While the Crusoedian character harbours a deep-rooted fear of being consumed, either by being literally subsumed into the environment or becoming non-human through association with the wilderness, their

[96] Danette DiMarco, 'Going Wendigo: The Emergence of the Iconic Monster in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and Antonia Bird's *Ravenous*', *College Literature*, 38 (2011), 134 – 155.
[97] Ibid, p. 135.

efforts to transform the island become all-consuming themselves. This attitude is explored in Atwood's trilogy as capitalism's monstrous appetites and patterns of overconsumption have become the manifestation of the cannibalistic and insatiably hungry Wendigo.

As well as the analogous comparison between exploitative attitudes and the Wendigo, the implication of cannibalism is literalised in human/nonhuman transgenics that query the ethics of killing and eating animals with human tissue and by extension all sentient life. Eating transhumans in the *MaddAddam* trilogy complicates socially accepted meat-eating practices as the pursuit of more, faster, and cheaper meat results in human-animal food splices. Atwood's speculative fiction draws on the realms of possible and current science as the issue of human genetic material in nonhuman animals that are then designated as food has been a subject of debate for decades. As Richard Ryder highlights, 'human growth hormone genes […] have already been injected into the embryos of pig […] this would mean *eating* human genetic material! It might only be a minute proportion of the chop, but all the same, would it not be a partial cannibalism?'[98] Not only does the inclusion of human genes in a nonhuman animal disrupt the once firm boundaries between species, but it also reframes the colonial accusations of cannibalism that attempted to justify colonial expansion.

Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy forces us to reconsider how we intend to adapt our practices in light of the diminishing difference between humans and nonhumans. As Ryder speculates:

> When we create new species containing human genetic material then what is the moral and legal status of such creatures? […] Either we will treat these 'humanised' creatures in the same tyrannical way in which we have treated non-humans for

[98] Richard Ryder, '*Pigs* **Will** *Fly*', in *The Bio-revolution: Cornucopia or Pandora's Box?* ed. by Peter Wheale and Ruth McNally (Winchester: Pluto Press, 1990), pp. 189 – 194 (p. 190).

> thousands of years […] or we must take up our moral duties to all sentient beings and stop wilfully inflicting suffering upon them.[99]

The inclusion of human genes in transgenic life invites adjustments to the treatment of all other animals. In *MaddAddam*, the presence of transhuman animals—even without the human cortex—generates discomfort. As Toby relates after one of the flocks of Mo'hairs (sheep-like animals with human hair) gives birth to lambs: 'Another of the ewes – a blue-haired one – has given birth to twins, a blonde and a brunette. There have been some jokes about lamb stew, but no one wants to go there: somehow it would be hard to slaughter and eat an animal with human hair'.[100] The description demonstrates the shift in status from domestic animals to include a human equivalent. The reference to their blonde and brunette hair recalls the presence of human DNA. The reference to 'twins' humanises the birth and moves their status away from being purely working animals. Any semblance of a human equivalent forces the survivors to reconsider animal sentience and question the ethics of their interactions. Kozioł highlights the changes in our relation to the nonhuman in the *MaddAddam* trilogy:

> the vast "gulf between civilized man and the brutes" that allows most of the humans to eat animals and experiment on them without any qualms becomes problematic with the arrival of transgenic experimentation involving human genes, which is responsible for the mutual contamination of the heretofore clean and clearly separated fields of the human and the animal other.[101]

The previously immutable barrier between humans and nonhumans proves to be more permeable than proponents of human exceptionalism have maintained. Despite the human entitlement involved in producing transgenic animals, its reality raises urgent questions about our interactions with other animals. The addition of transgenic animals in the *MaddAddam*

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[99] Ryder, p. 193.
[100] Atwood, *MaddAddam*, p. 205.
[101] Sławomir Kozioł, 'From Sausages to Hoplites of Ham and Beyond: The Status of Genetically Modified Pigs in Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* Trilogy', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 54 (2018), 261 – 295 (p. 267). [In the extract, Kozioł quotes Thomas Henry Huxley, Victorian biologist and advocate for Darwin's theory of evolution].

trilogy reframes our interactions with nonhuman animals in fiction and everyday life. Though this realisation only becomes a more pressing concern after other animals have been humanised, we can begin to contextualise the ramifications of exploitative relationships. Though it might seem contrary to the aims of this thesis, the Robinsonade in the Anthropocene necessitates some humanisation to enable us to imagine and develop new modes of engagement with the world outside of a human-centric worldview. It is a necessary step that moves away from the insular Crusoedian desert island to open new pathways for future Robinsonade narratives as we consider a posthumanist position.

Indigeneity has complex ramifications for Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy in light of the transhuman and transgenics. The comparison between humans and Crakers might be cautiously applied to the colonialist and Indigenous dichotomy in the Robinsonade to explore contrasting ideas of anatopia vs belonging to place. This is indicated in the following quote:

> "He [Crake] […] would have seen the Crakers as indigenous people, no doubt," says Ivory Bill. "And *Homo sapiens sapiens* as the greedy, rapacious Conquistadors. And, in some respects".[102]

As indicated, the end of human civilisation does not mean the end of the Anthropocene and its adverse conditions. The *MaddAddam* trilogy describes inhospitable weather events intolerable for human survivors of the pandemic. Compounding the environmental dangers are transhuman predator animals as well as the absence of a dependable food source. All this demonstrates the human survivors' initial out-of-placeness. In contrast, the Crakers are protected from harmful UV rays. They have non-lethal ways of keeping predators at bay, and they live off an ever-abundant leaf-based diet. As such, the Crakers are the successful inheritors of the world post-humanity. The above reasoning serves to position the Crakers as native to a given environment—as in their sense of belonging to a place without disrupting its

[102] Atwood, *MaddAddam*, p. 140.

balance—while the human survivors and the human precursors who died during the pandemic are placed in the role of the destructive invasive coloniser.

Though this analogously demonstrates the capitalist and colonial effect on environmental change and returns to the idea of Crusoedian out-of-placeness it also presents issues in terms of representation. As Lee Frew underscores, 'the Crakers can be read as examples of Donna Haraway's liberatory image of the cyborg […] the Crakers as such also appeal—and herein lies their underlying utopian aspect—to indigenizing fantasies of incorruptible, primeval indigeneity'.[103] Creating a direct parallel between the Crakers and real Indigenous people would reductively Other actual indigeneity and inadvertently recall the racist imagery used to dehumanise non-European people. As discussed in my methodology, hegemonic ideologies rely on the concrete differences between humans and nonhumans—removing someone's humanity by comparing them to nonhuman animals attempts to remove that person's human rights and justify treating them as less-than-human. Though the introduction of transhuman genetics in Atwood's trilogy problematises the 'sacred' divisions between human and not-human to destabilise authoritarian structures, it is still burdened with the historical implications of racist imagery. While Atwood's depictions of the Crusoe-figure create radical alternatives that diverge from the canonical narrative, the issue of indigeneity is a problem that the text does not adequately reassess. Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy is a world of extremes, occasionally grotesque and absurd, but also ultimately retains an idealistic vision for restructuring material relationships after calamity.

The transhuman future that concludes the trilogy encourages us to envision a hopeful eventuality in the Anthropocene, though this has been described by Debrah Raschke as a 'too

[103] Lee Frew, '"A Whole New Take on Indigenous": Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* as Wild Animal Story', *Studies in Canadian Literature*, 39 (2014), 199 – 218 (p. 212).

chirpy, too neat survivalist ending of the post-apocalypse'.[104] Atwood's trilogy does not present itself as realist fiction, it is speculative in its intent and asks the simple question, what if? From here we can continue to imagine and engage with the future and consider the ramifications of bioengineering, overconsumption, exploitation of resources and labour, and other features of the Anthropocene. What if we overcome the colonial mind-set and stopped prioritising capitalist wants? As we have seen in other contemporary Robinsonades, the physical and conceptual break from human society allows for the exploration of new ontological modes.

Currently, we live in a time of uncertainty. The possible ramifications of the Anthropocene are still being mapped out into a future that is still unfolding but appears, from the outset, daunting. The hopeful finality of the trilogy offers us a positive outcome. Given the tenuous position we find ourselves in currently this positive turn of events might be met with cynicism. At a critical and precarious point in global history, it is critical to present a possible eventuality that inspires hope while recognising the changing face of an increasingly volatile world. Atwood does not shy away from the horrors of a global pandemic or downplay the ravaging effects of anthropogenically induced climate change. If we are to avoid apathy, it is necessary to provide the reader in the Anthropocene some semblance of a future as we navigate a time fraught with monolithic issues of our own design. Previously, I have asserted that we have to let go of a historical past informed by the linear progression of time in order to reimagine our relationship with the world around us—but it is also necessary to let go of the notion that we can return to a time *before* anthropogenic changes, a pristine past without climate crisis. As speculative fiction demonstrates, there is only a future and what we make out of it.

[104] Debrah Raschke, 'Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* Trilogy: Postmodernism, Apocalypse, and Rapture', *Studies in Canadian Literature,* 38 (2014), 22 – 44 (p. 36).

Thesis conclusion
Future Islands

Contemporary Robinsonade re-visions emerge from a tradition previously steeped in finitude to reveal boundless potential narratives. The Crusoedian island is a world defined by insular interiority with a horizon that extends only to a blank inscrutable distance, a hermetic space used only to establish a facsimile of human European society. In the colonial and territorial imagination, the island begins as a site of ecophobic fear that is, as Diana Loxley highlights, 'inscribed in physical space as a form of monstrosity […] through the process of colonisation, a transmutation of this site of radical alterity into a site of total familiarity'.[1] This process renders the mysterious and monstrous island knowable, quantifiable, and as such exploitable. This ideology has affected the course of our relationships where the nonhuman world is concerned and steered us towards ecocide. The Anthropocene's ecological crisis emerges from several sources. One such origin I have indicated is the psychological division between humanity and nonhumanity—a mindset enshrined in the narrative of *Robinson Crusoe*.

My thesis has investigated the construction of the human/nonhuman binary in the conventional Robinsonade and has explored nonhuman and human relationships in a selection of contemporary re-visions that separately destabilise the sovereign reign of the Crusoe-figure.[2] The dichotomous human/nonhuman dynamic is maintained through the exploitation and consumption of nonhuman animals and environments as symbols of human

[1] Loxley, p. 49 – 50.

[2] As previously mentioned, questions of indigeneity and the characterisation of Friday as a literary figure has not been a primary focus of analysis as the thesis concentrates on re-visionary portrayals of Crusoe that dethrone the idea of sovereignty rooted in colonialism. Future research into the Robinsonade would prioritise representations of Indigenous people, environments, place, and identity to explore the changing perceptions of indigeneity. This is also the case for female Robinsonades that have been absent from my analysis, pioneering texts such as *Angel Island* (1914) by Inez Haynes Irwin, *Suzanne et le Pacifique* (1939) by Jean Giraudoux, *Robinson* (1958) by Muriel Spark, and *Foe* (1986) by J. M. Coetzee to name a few provide a much-needed perspective outside of Robinson Crusoe's hyper-masculine narrative.

dominance and anthropocentric control. Crusoe-figures establish physical and conceptual systems that transform the island into an echo chamber of individualistic human identity. This subjugation emerges out of an ecophobic fear of the nonhuman Other, the supposed antithesis of civilisation. My thesis has demonstrated that this fear of the nonhuman exists due to the oppositional and hierarchical human/nonhuman binary that breeds hostility. I have investigated how re-visions of the Robinsonade emphasise the island's resistance to the capitalist and colonial narrative of linear progression and expansion to explore alternative methods of engagement with the nonhuman.

I have identified pivotal moments in canonical and re-visionary Robinsonades that further our understanding of the interlinking issues we face in the Anthropocene born from a colonial legacy. As previous post/decolonial interventions into the Robinsonade have indicated, the genre's history cannot be disentangled from the history of colonialism. An ecotheoretical approach must also question the capitalist and colonial narratives of unceasing linear progression that orders the world around an elitist human subject who turns everything outside of narrow parameters of privilege into dispensable resources. This study demonstrates the necessity of environmental critical interventions into the Robinsonade. I have explored causes and manifestations of ecophobia, questioned how we physically and psychologically dwell, highlighted acts of physical and metaphorical consumption, and considered how we narrate and imagine nonhumanity.

I have demonstrated how re-visions of the Robinsonade often critique the Crusoedian narrative by treading in Crusoe's own footprints to highlight the patriarchal, Eurocentric, and anthropocentric framework that maintains established power structures. Golding's *Lord of the Flies* begins by establishing the narrative conventions of imperialist conquest to draw out the implicit xenophobic and ecophobic tenets foundational to the conventional Robinsonade. *Lord of the Flies* foregrounds intertextual links with the castaway narrative that encouraged

hypermasculinity and endorsed violence as a masculine norm. In conventional adventure stories, violence is directed towards the nonhuman world and untethered in the isolation of desert islands to exercise male desires in the intoxicating effects of isolation from the mainland. My thesis has demonstrated how re-visionary Robinsonades use this separation—the gap between the island-world and mainland society—to establish the critical distance necessary to reassess customs that had been previously understood as 'natural' or universal behaviours. I have demonstrated how the desert island can be read as both a liberatory place to rid ourselves of the influence of mainland hegemonies but also allows us to scrutinise previously acceptable behaviours by returning to their anthropocentric source.

As I have reiterated throughout the thesis, acts of consumption are crucial for reading Robinsonades from an environmental critical perspective to reassess our relationships with the nonhuman. Crusoedian characters assume colonial and capitalist interactions with animals and environments to transform nonhumanity into a collection of exploitable and consumable resources fuelling the pursuit of elusive concepts like 'productivity'. In this pursuit, nonhuman animals and environments are consumed as physical and metaphorical symbols of anthropocentric and androcentric control. Understanding this dynamic has been central to an environmental critical and animal studies approach to the Robinsonade. I have established how the Crusoe-esque castaway is haunted by the fear that the 'natural hierarchy of bodies' formalised by the act of eating will be disturbed.[3] This preoccupation follows Defoe's Crusoe throughout his misadventures and is consciously interrogated by later re-visionary Robinsonade authors like Golding and Banks. Their texts reveal how definitions of human exceptionalism are held together by tenuous distinctions. The insistence that we are essentially different from all other life is destabilised by the recognition of our shared bonds

[3] Bennett, p. 47.

with other animals and environments, a realisation that necessitates changes in our relationships with nonhumans.

The grotesque violence in Banks and Golding's re-visions emphasise the dependence authoritarian systems have on repressive means of control used to enforce human order onto a non-compliant nonhuman world. I have demonstrated how these systems are crucial to the exploitation of other animals and environments. In chapter two, I introduced the concepts of sacrifice that formalise the implicit symbolic role nonhuman animals have performed as signifiers for human dominance. The function of sacrifice to exorcise feelings of abjection through a scapegoat emerges from an ecophobic aversion to the nonhuman that is viewed as a hostile other that cannot go unbridled. Sacrifice turns an animal into a cultural artefact by depriving them of a whole form. Along with the fragmentation of the sacrificial animal's body, the act of sacrifice breaks a wider concept down to reducible parts to excise a specific fear. My consideration of sacrifice provides new insights into both the Robinsonade as well as the mechanisms of human and nonhuman relationships as the need to move away from reductionism and ecophobia becomes imperative in a time of climate crisis.

How we engage with the world around us shapes and in turn is shaped (willingly or unwilling) by our environment. The issue of how we physically and conceptually dwell should be a priority in an age characterised by climate change and other interrelated issues. The Robinsonade provides an ideal site to consider these issues as the castaway narrative's premise problematises dwelling. The Crusoedian castaway is jettisoned outside of human societal structures onto the nonhuman desert island, a world that appears uninhabitable, hostile, and without the desired definitive distinctions between humans and nonhumans. My thesis develops Deleuze's concept of the 'Other' in his interpretation of Tournier's *Friday* to explore the wider issue of dwelling in the Robinsonade from an environmental critical perspective to emphasise human and nonhuman relations. Though the shipwreck severs the

castaway's physical connection to the mainland, the Deleuzian Other remains ever present as Crusoe-esque characters attempt to instate human systems on the desert island to alleviate their out-of-placeness: a sensation I have termed 'anatopia'. My definitions of anatopia and anatopic attempt to encapsulate the interconnected feelings of the uncanny, alienation, angst, and out-of-placeness experienced in a variety of different environmental contexts. The terms can be applied to a variety of physical, psychological, and virtual spaces to help us understand the world. For example, in light of climate change, the world we knew is rendered unrecognisable and unfamiliar. It causes both people and other animals to become dislodged from their homes and thrown into a transient state of out-of-placeness and homelessness. As well as global climate change, we might consider anatopia and anatopic in reference to the rate of building development that has a dramatic effect on the environment (such as declines in biodiversity, severe weather, climate change etc.) and creates a world characterised by impermanence.

I explored the Crusoedian desire for order and productivity that reshapes the supposed moral and physical malaise of the 'wasteland' island but is moreover a reaction against this sense of anatopia. The reason for an ideological imposition represented by physical buildings is highlighted by Di Palma who states that 'although wasteland may be many things, what it does is provide a space that figures as the antithesis, the absolute Other, of civilisation'.[4] Tournier's Robinson initially recoils from the alienating sensation of being out-of-place in an ecophobic and xenophobic reaction that amplifies Defoe's canonical Crusoe. Tournier exaggerates the Crusoedian inclination towards unceasing and self-punishing labour as well as the obsession with order and Christian morality that imagines the nonhuman only in terms of its utility to human 'advancement' and productivity. If things fall outside of these narrow parameters they become unknowable, potentially dangerous, immoral, or simply surplus to

[4] Di Palma, p. 4.

requirements. A desire for an empirically measurable universe, governed by human reason and logic, escapes material realities and our lived experience of the world.

My thesis demonstrates how the distinctions between humans and nonhumans are removed when we become open to the radical possibilities presented by the desert island. In the absence of authoritarian social structures that predetermine our responses to the world, we can consider other methods of engagement. Tournier articulates our desire to be freed from repressive structures as Robinson enters the '*other island*', the 'island hidden beneath the buildings and the tilled fields I had created'. The idea of uncovering a new relationality with the world underneath anthropocentric contrivances is reminiscent of our life in the Anthropocene. We attempt to unpick the vestiges of colonialism to reveal alternative relationships while we labour under the imposition of an elitist human vision of the nonhuman world.

In Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe,* the island is exoticized, foreign, and otherly—the source of intense fascination as a potential future outpost of colonial expansion but also as an abject, primaeval, uncivilised wilderness. The island is seen as the site of otherly abjection in the conventional Robinsonades that depicts the 'Man vs Nature' narrative where the struggle between humans and nonhumans is not just a physical battle but also a fight to preserve the castaway's humanity outside of civilisation. My thesis questions this narrative through Ballard's literalisation of the island-as-wasteland trope that moves the island into the heart of the capitalist metropolis. As I have indicated, our representations of nonhuman environments are inflected with our subjective cultural preconceptions of those specific places. The remote island world is not the source of an 'animalising' or primordial feeling. As I have demonstrated, Maitland's characteristics are already formed before he entered the island. His inclination towards hierarchical structures enforced through violence is a product of the surrounding capitalist city. As asserted throughout the thesis, the island's separation from

everyday life accommodates alternative behaviours but it is not by any means a blank canvas. As Di Palma iterates, the 'wasteland is a cultural construct, a creation of the imagination, a category applied to landscapes rather than an inherent characteristic of them'.[5] Ballard's island is a product of the society that surrounds it, its existence born from over-production and waste products overflowing from the city. Developing Kelly Oliver's reference to islands and the abject in *Earth and World*, my thesis has demonstrated that the wasteland/island is something we are drawn to but also attempt to look away from. Through this sense of abjection and the uncanny, I have uncovered complications in our engagement with the nonhuman world as we deal with the consequences of overconsumption and waste.

In witnessing the extent of human waste and the consequences of over-consumption we are met with an uncanny twin. Though we are not all equally responsible for the existence and creation of this waste, we can still see something both human and inhuman in its formulation. To borrow Kristeva's terminology, waste is that which we must 'permanently thrust aside in order to live. These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death'.[6] Waste here is connected to the human-self—some internal part of us that breaches a bodily barrier that reminds us of our future death—but we can also apply the abject to what we might consider external or inhuman waste, though its existence is a distinctly human biproduct. The hallmarks of the Anthropocene such as the climate emergency caused in part by overwhelming human waste becomes the uncanny reflection of humanity's self-image. Seeing the self, or at least the human, in waste and climate catastrophe is the legacy of the Anthropocene. Coming to terms with the existence of this apparently external waste is crucial to stemming its growth. Whereas uncultivated sites characterised as wastelands or deserted spaces are the liberatory

[5] Di Palma, p. 9.
[6] Kristeva, p. 3.

antithesis to capitalist civilisation waste products are an abject reminder of damaging human effects and the physical manifestation of unceasing human 'progression'.

I have demonstrated the flexibility of the re-visionary Robinsonade's narrative that is able to speculate on potential near-future narratives of the Anthropocene and the realities of resource depletion, biodiversity decline, mass extinctions, climate change, unmanageable waste, and deadly manufactured diseases.[7] The presence of these factors necessitates new modes of representation. Eco-fiction, cli-fi, and speculative fiction seek new ways of narrating global events to consider human and nonhuman relationships outside of a singular human perspective. In this light, my thesis has supplied new interpretations of Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy to view the whole series as a Robinsonade that changes both how we view the trilogy and understand new forms of Robinsonade narratives. Atwood uses several different characters that I argue become castaway figures in the post-pandemic dystopian world. Toby as a Crusoe-figure presents us with an example of a castaway who does not assume an anthropocentric worldview to give a radical re-vision without being a parodic or hyperbolic re-imagining of Crusoe. I assert that utilising several castaway figures enables re-visionary Robinsonades to explore its liberatory possibilities while also keeping in focus the necessary scrutinization and critique of the Robinsonade's colonial origins.

As discussed in the methodology, and central to the thesis in my ecotheoretical position, repressive structures of power enforce narrow definitions of 'human' identity

[7] Future research would also consider further speculative and SF re-visions of the island story and compare the surge in final frontier space colonisation narratives during the space race with more recent sophistry regarding human space exploration in the wake of the launch of New Shephard from 'Blue Origin,' the existence of Virgin Galactic's space tourism, as well as SpaceX's Mars colonisation proposal. The Billionaire's space race raises urgent issues regarding the terrestrial climate crisis and the anthropocentric/plutocratic desire to leave Earth. I would employ an intermedial approach that compares novels, such as Brian W Aldiss's *Moreau's Other Island* (1980) and *Tunnel in the Sky* (1955) by Robert A. Heinlein, films like *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964) dir. by Byron Haskin, and short stories like 'Colony' (1953) by Philip K. Dick, 'A Pail of Air' (1951) by Fritz Leiber, and 'Junkyard' (1953) by Clifford D. Simak. SF Robinsonades explore posthuman futures, dystopian and utopian possibilities, as well as the recurrent theme of survival and isolation in a new context that is relevant to the current climate of the Anthropocene.

asserted erroneously as a universal objective experience. Authoritarian systems rely on an absolute difference between what is human and what is nonhuman with an impermeable barrier maintained between the two classifications that keeps nonhumanity as a disposable resource. These same structures also rely on this binary division to reinforce the effects of dehumanisation used to disenfranchise and exploit other human beings. Re-visionary Robinsonades consider these interrelated issues but can also demonstrate the possibility of moving beyond anthropocentric attitudes (it should be reiterated here that 'anthropocentric' has similar limitations to 'Anthropocene' as discussed in chapter one and chapter four). My use of both terms is to account for the belief in 'human' exceptionalism while recognising that the human described is privileged, elitist, and an active part of a wider authoritarian system. I have established how castaway figures, like Atwood's Toby, can move away from the anthropocentric mindset that asserts the binary difference between humans and nonhumans. Toby's narrative explores familiar themes of survival and isolation from others, but rather than alleviating feelings of alienation by violently asserting human-entitled sovereignty she is drawn to the new life flourishing in the wake of civilisation's sudden ebb. Toby responds to the world as a living animate being, whereas Crusoe's world either sees nonhumanity as a collection of resources contrived for human use and any underlying motivations animals or environments might maintain are purely hostile.

What does the Crusoedian imagination see on a desert island? A wealth of potential resources, a fantasy of total control, a blank canvas, and an underlying ecophobic fear of nonhumanity where desertedness means a moral and physical wasteland in need of human structure. Re-visions of the Robinsonade see a world of receptivity, connectivity, and radical alternatives that break from conformity. Throughout this project, I have stressed the need for alternative ways of being and interacting with the world around us. Thinking of an 'alternative' might inadvertently conjure the image of something that is a shadow of the

‘authentic’—something like (but not quite) the original and merely a substitute, an approximation, a compromise. This is a narrative we need to struggle against as it becomes increasingly imperative to form new interactions with the nonhuman in the Anthropocene. Imagining alterity is a profound new beginning for human and nonhuman relations that rids us of oppositional differences that have long outlived any relevance. Defoe’s Crusoe experiences a totalising aloneness on the desert island because he fails to recognise the animacy of the nonhuman world. Re-visions of the Robinsonade demonstrate that we do not have to persist with the same regressive behaviours out of tradition: the Crusoe myth that glorifies Eurocentric exploitative practices can be rewritten. We must keep envisioning interactions with nonhumanity and question conventions taken for absolute truths.

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