

Interpretation

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Rousseau's Adventure with Robinson Crusoe

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Rousseau banishes poetry altogether and suppresses all lies. At most he gives Emile Robinson Crusoe, who is not an "other" but only himself. Above all, no gods.

Allan Bloom, "*Emile*"

I took up the Bible and began to read . . .; only having opened the Book casually, the first Words that occur'd to me were these, *Call on me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me.* . . . And I add this Part here, to hint to whoever shall read it, that whenever they come to a true Sense of things, they will find Deliverance from Sin a much greater Blessing than Deliverance from Affliction.

Robinson Crusoe²

Some centuries ago *Robinson Crusoe* suffered a shipwreck. Allan Bloom, unawares, testifies to its aftermath. Juxtaposed with the meditation by Robinson on a verse from Psalm 50, Bloom's observation suggests that he had not read Daniel Defoe's novel. But how could this be? One may assume that Bloom, not a careless scholar, had read a work both entitled *Robinson Crusoe* and attributed to Defoe. Yet many of the more than twelve hundred editions of the novel to appear in English have not been editions at all.³ Many have been versions, rewrites, bowdlerizations. Title pages can give no hint of this, as if there has been among some publishers little awareness of the fact.

The surprising truth is that the common experience of Robinson Crusoe cannot mainly be traced to Defoe, but instead to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Literary historian Martin Green argues that most of the world since 1762 "has taken *Robinson Crusoe* to be what Rousseau made of it."⁴ And Rousseau made of it what he did through "a ruthless act of editing." His discussion of the story "radically, though nonchalantly, changed the text Defoe had written" (p. 39). Rousseau's effort "had a remarkable effect," notes Green:

it transferred Defoe's book from one (very humble) niche in the literary system, marked "pastime reading for the nonliterary," to a different and exalted niche, marked "the one book needful" or "the textbook of our times." And other intellectuals followed his lead. There have been few such dizzying changes of intellectual fortune for a single book.

Thanks are due to Ernest L. Fortin, Daniel J. Mahoney, and Paul Seaton for insightful comments on earlier drafts, and to the Bradley Foundation whose fellowship made research and writing possible.

For one result of Rousseau's recommendation of this one book (out of the dozens [Defoe] had written) was that Defoe entered into literary immortality, some thirty years after his literal death. After *Emile*, literary critics talked about *Robinson Crusoe*. (Pp. 41–42)

Soon after the publication of *Emile*, Rousseau-inspired revisionism commenced in several languages, and *Crusoe* grew in a popularity that continues unabated. If, then, a "shipwreck" of Defoe's own *Crusoe* can be credited to Rousseau, so also can he be credited with one of the most spectacular salvage jobs in literary history.

Rousseau could not, of course, have predicted the widespread refashioning of *Robinson Crusoe* that *Emile* was to prompt. He thus could not have predicted the effect his use of the novel in *Emile* would eventually have on popular knowledge of Defoe's book, namely, that such knowledge has largely been effaced. To illustrate this loss, let us review in outline what is commonly assumed about Robinson. He is shipwrecked without resources on a desert isle, survives only by his wits, discovers a footprint that turns out to belong to Friday, and is finally rescued. "Such is our common store of Robinsoniana," writes Philip Zaleski of Wesleyan University.⁵ It is the stuff of a child's adventure story, much like the adventure story offered the young *Emile*. And all of it is wrong.

The interest of the present essay is not, however, to trace the remarkable Rousseauan lineage of a hero from childhood. Neither is it simply to consider Defoe's masterwork in its integrity or his intention with it, although some considerations along these lines will be necessary. The main interest is rather to inquire into *Rousseau's* intention in utilizing *Robinson Crusoe* in the first place. If Defoe's novel had to undergo subsequent transformation to be suitable for purposes to which Rousseau endeavors to employ it, why did he choose that particular book? Green suggests that Rousseau's choice of *Crusoe* "may even be in part accidental. Another book might replace that one in a pinch" (p. 41). Alexander Selkirk's celebrated survival on an island (1704–9) had, after all, inspired several published accounts. Further, the voyager-surviving-shipwreck story amounted at the time to something of a genre, as Swift's best-known satire well attests.

Yet I cannot agree with Green's conjecture. A philosopher who, in a work subtitled "On Education," declares, "I hate books" (*Emile*, p. 184), and then two paragraphs later names a book, a single book, on which his protagonist's pubescent education will hinge, does not randomly pluck a volume from a library's travel section. Green may see Rousseau's choice as possibly accidental because he is (and we are) puzzled by it; Defoe's book ranges so far afield from Rousseau's characterization that it is difficult to see its aptness. I seek here to make sense of our puzzlement. If Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* ill suits Rousseau's stated purposes, might Rousseau have had unstated purposes in adverting to it?

I. RIGMAROLE

“Jean-Jacques,” Emile’s pedagogue, gives his charge *Robinson Crusoe* because through it the boy will come to see himself, for a while anyway, in Robinson’s state, a state “not that of a social man.” On the basis of this experience of solitariness Emile will be raised above prejudice and placed beyond both societal expectation and the moral dimension of human interdependence.

Rousseau, Allan Bloom said, “suppresses all lies.” This is at least partly true. The hero Rousseau gives Emile is in truth what Bloom said of him: Robinson is “not an ‘other’ but only [Emile] himself.” But the hero Rousseau gives Emile is practically made out of whole cloth. As will be seen, the Robinson of Defoe’s novel, whose life from a Rousseauan perspective could be regarded as a web of lies, must himself be suppressed if any Rousseauan truths are to be served.

Rousseau hints at his deed of suppression and its scope. “This novel,” he writes,

disencumbered of all its rigmarole [*tout ce fracas*], beginning with Robinson’s shipwreck near his island and ending with the arrival of the ship which comes to take him from it, will be Emile’s entertainment and instruction. (P. 184)

Emile will know nothing of the beginning or the end of the story (nearly one third of the whole) and nothing of a fair amount in between. Although Rousseau does not explain what constitutes the expungeable “rigmarole,” this readily becomes discernible through even a casual reading of Defoe’s text. Let us then undertake a casual reading specifically for this purpose, prescinding for the moment from theoretical difficulties.

The earliest word about Robinson is that his seafaring proclivity made him a prodigal son. “My Father . . . asked me what Reasons more than a meer wandering Inclination I had for leaving my Father’s House and my native Country, where I might be well introduced, and had a Prospect of raising my Fortune by Application and Industry, with a Life of Ease and Pleasure” (p. 5). His father pleads with Robinson to be satisfied with “the middle Station of Life.” Such a life is blessed with “all agreeable Diversions, and all desirable Pleasures.” Application, industry, fortune, ease, pleasure, diversion. Robinson’s father is an economic man of the Lockean vein, and wishes his son to be the same. Neither here nor anywhere else in the novel does Robinson (who narrates) disparage his father’s view. Rather, Robinson is convinced by misfortunes that, having himself shunned paternal advice, his father’s prophecy is fulfilled: “God would not bless me.”

Robinson eschews the middle station of life not only to indulge a wanderlust, but also to amass wealth. When misadventures land him in Brazil, Robinson turns to planting. Soon finding himself on the brink of great success, he is lured by still another voyage.

As I had once done . . . in the breaking away from my Parents, so I could not be content now, but I must go and leave the happy View I had of being a rich and thriving Man in my new Plantation, only to pursue a rash and immoderate Desire of rising faster than the Nature of the Thing admitted. . . . (P. 32)

What was the purpose of this irresistible voyage that promised to expedite Robinson's rise? Acquiring slaves on the shores of Africa. Why would a well-to-do planter leave his estate personally to risk such a voyage? As supercargo, "I should have my equal Share of the *Negroes* without providing any Part of the Stock" (p. 33). In other words, he would have his chattels without needing to pay. This was the mission that aborted by shipwreck, stranding our hero on the famed isle.

That the author of *Emile* should find such early elements of the novel objectionable is plain to any having even a passing familiarity with Rousseau. (No wonder the philosopher who bemoans man's lot "in chains" prefers the reader of *Robinson Crusoe* to begin with the shipwreck and not the voyage!) And, when subjected to Rousseauan scrutiny, the novel's conclusion is little better. Robinson reaps an enormous fortune in the sale of his Brazilian estate and then settles back in England, presumably to live the life of ease and pleasure recommended by his father. He does end up considerably richer than his father would have found prudent—and Robinson is surely the better Lockean for that.

The image of the prodigal son with which the novel begins, evoking as it does the parable from Luke's Gospel, is in the end neither allegory nor metaphor but mere literary allusion. Robinson is not contrite upon his return to England. His father is dead, so there is no reconciliation, no family reunion. This prodigal returns to his native country with his economic view of life intact albeit enhanced by the memory of diverting adventures and, Defoe hints, the prospect of more to come. The adventures are, precisely, diversions. Robinson has gained no substantive insights into man's nature, situation, or fulfillment from his travels or from his encounters with exotic peoples. If Robinson Crusoe is not the prodigal son of Luke, neither is he a modern Odysseus.

Nor, as the island narrative plainly shows, is he that "natural man" of Rousseau, whole, undivided, and concerned primarily with simple "natural" needs. On the contrary, Robinson considers life according to "Principles of Nature" to be that of the "meer Brute" (p. 71). He readily distinguishes himself from African and American native peoples, whom he regards variously with condescending curiosity, contempt, or, more often, horror and fear. In Robinson's view, any precivil human being is likely to be a cannibal. This expectation is not disappointed. Robinson's island, it turns out, is a destination for savages from the nearby mainland who wish to gratify a passion for "inhumane Feastings." Friday himself does not just happen onto the island but is brought captive, slated for devouring. Robinson, both Friday's liberator and new captor, soon learns that his man too is a cannibal, and promptly undertakes to wean him of the

apparently natural lust for human flesh. (The present-day reader finds a comic aspect in Robinson's effort to persuade Friday that alternative victuals provide tolerable substitutes.) Natural man in *Robinson Crusoe* is red in tooth and claw.

Reeling from his first discovery of a "Shore spread with Skulls, Hands, Feet, and other Bones of humane Bodies," Robinson

stood still a while amaz'd; and then recovering my self, I looked up with the utmost Affection of my soul, and with a Flood of Tears in my Eyes, gave God Thanks that [he] had cast my first Lot in a Part of the World, where I was distinguish'd from such dreadful Creatures as these. . . . (Pp. 129–30)

Robinson sees his Englishness (or, more broadly, his Europeanness) as essential, as that alone which separates him from the depravity to which uncivilized man is prone. It would be inaccurate to describe the heart of this novel as concerning Man on a desert isle. Rather it concerns a late seventeenth-century Englishman on a desert isle. Robinson's Englishness is accented throughout the island narrative. Wherever possible, he seeks to imitate his nation's social and political customs.⁶ An early project is to fashion a table and chair so that he may dine properly. Robinson designates himself king, with subjects including a parrot, a dog, and housecats. He declares the island his "realm." His rude cave-dwelling he dubs a "Castle." He is "Master" to Friday. When men come ashore from the vessel in which he eventually leaves, he becomes their "Governour." On his island, he is legislator, judge, and executive; at times he deliberates over justice, takes prisoners, holds hostages, wages battle, grants amnesty. Yet for all his fondness for his homeland and appropriation of its customs, the very fact of his situation on a desert isle attests to an ambiguity in Robinson's relationship with England: a citizen does not forsake his city; a subject does not crown himself king. While England lives in him, Robinson in no way lives for England. Never in the story is there consideration of duty or service to country. Wherever he finds himself, Robinson benefits from a common national store of experiences and mores; but he is unobliged. He comes and goes as he pleases and if he pleases. His attitude toward country is wholly different from that of, say, the Pilgrims to America, who journeyed two generations earlier.⁷ His is an Englishness that can altogether do without England. This is a novelty, one characterizing a new type of man, the man Rousseau disparagingly called the bourgeois.

That Robinson is a bourgeois is evident in the picture that emerges on the island. He seeks control over things and men. He views other human beings as instrumental, either to his business success when off the island or to his escape when on it. He is not ungrateful, but his gratitude to others invariably pays dividends. There is no controlling bond of family, friendship, or fatherland. There is no earthly common good. And consider Marx's reflections on Robinson's island economics:

Despite the diversity of [Robinson's] productive functions, he knows that they are only different forms of activity of one and the same Robinson, hence only different modes of human labor. . . . Our friend Robinson Crusoe learns . . . by experience, and having saved a watch, ledger, ink and pen from the shipwreck, he soon begins, like a good Englishman, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a catalogue of the useful objects he possesses, of the various operations necessary for their production, and finally of the labour-time that specific quantities of these products have on average cost him. All the relations between Robinson and these objects that form his self-created wealth are . . . simple and transparent . . . [, and] contain all the essential determinants of value.⁸

Robinson on the island is the *homo economicus* that he was before he landed and after he departs.

Yet the picture of Robinson-as-mere-bourgeois becomes blurred. During his first year of solitude, when suffering a life-endangering bout of "the ague," Robinson is moved to reflect on his life and lot. He rebukes himself for having long ignored the hand of Providence, for having so long applied himself only "to the Works proper for my Preservation and Supply. . . ." Amidst the struggle with illness, he is seized by "the Horror of dying in such a miserable Condition . . ." (p. 72), and his mind turns heavenward. He begins to recognize a radical dependency on God, and to read in his life a Providential script. He will come to subordinate his self-preserving activities to the will of God as he understands it. His fear of miserable death will become an impetus for a wholesale religious reinterpretation of life. This is not exactly the self-preserving impulse of Lockean contractarianism. And Robinson's religion is not the tame, civil religion of Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Defoe's island narrative is the omnipresence of Protestant reflection on Providence, sin, repentance, and redemption. All the more astonishing, in this light, is a comment of Marx that betrays a Rousseauan pedigree: "Of [Robinson's] prayers and the like, we take no account . . . , since our friend takes pleasure in them and sees them as recreation" (p. 169). Pleasure? Recreation? Consider: during his affliction with the ague, Robinson begins to perceive the reality of divine retribution.

[T]hro' all the Variety of Miseries that had to this day befallen me, I never had so much as one Thought of it being the Hand of God, or that it was a just Punishment for my Sin; my rebellious Behaviour against my Father, or my present Sins which were great; or so much as a Punishment for the general Course of my wicked Life. . . . I was meerly thoughtless of a God, or a Providence. . . . (P. 72)

Robinson does not stop at feverish musings. He undergoes a powerful Christian conversion that same first year.

July 4. In the Morning I took the Bible, and beginning at the New Testament, I began seriously to read it, and impos'd upon my self to read a while every Morning

and every Night . . . : It was not long after I set seriously to this Work, but I found my Heart more deeply and sincerely affected with the Wickedness of my past Life: . . . and the Words, *All these Things have not brought thee to Repentance*, ran seriously in my Thought: I was earnestly begging of God to give me Repentance, when it happen'd providentially the very Day that reading the Scripture, I came to these Words, *He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance, and to give Remission*: I threw down the Book, and with my Heart as well as my Hands lifted up to Heaven, in a Kind of Extasy of Joy, I cry'd out aloud, *Jesus, thou Son of David, Jesus, thou exalted Prince and Saviour, Give me Repentance!* (P. 77)

The prose is virtually Augustinian, and the foregoing is hardly an isolated example. Toward the end of his long years on the island, Robinson rejoices that Friday is brought to “know Christ Jesus, *to know whom is life eternal.*” When Robinson would reflect on this, “a secret Joy run through every Part of my Soul, and I frequently joyc'd that ever I was brought to this Place, which I had so often thought the most dreadful of all Afflictions that could possibly have befallen me.” To have saved a soul seemed to him at that time to have made it all worthwhile.

In this thankful Frame I continued all the Remainder of my Time. . . . The Savage was now a good Christian, a much better than I; though I have reason to hope, and bless God for it, that we were equally penitent, and comforted restor'd Penitents; we had here the Word of God to read, and no farther off from his Spirit to instruct, than if we had been in England. (P. 172)

The savage and the Englishman are united at last, not by any “natural” condition, not by consanguinity, not by love of a fatherland, but by something that both transcends and attenuates other ties, the *unum necessarium*. In this their differences fall by the wayside.

Like Emile, Robinson and Friday have but one book as a constant companion. Their book, of course, the young Emile is not to encounter at all. So in order for Emile to avoid that book—and to avoid so much more—the *Robinson Crusoe* that is to be his constant companion must necessarily be “disencumbered” of a *vast* amount of “rigmarole.”

II. DEFOE AND *CRUSOE*: SOME CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When a reading of *Robinson Crusoe* turns from casual to inquiring, difficulties emerge from the text. How is it possible to square Robinson's religious reinterpretation of life with his lack of contrition, upon returning to England, for having ignored his father—an act which he had termed his “Original Sin”? The reader is at a loss, for that matter, to identify exactly of what sins Robinson repented when given repentance. Certainly he had no qualms about having em-

barked on a slave-trading expedition, although this would seem to have been the proximate cause of his island distress and thus might easily have been interpreted as an invitation to divine retribution. How, further, can Robinson's powerful Christian conversion be squared with the bourgeois self-interest that continues most to characterize him throughout the novel?

The above are but a sampling of difficulties that have provided grist for the mills of over two centuries of criticism.⁹ These and other elements of the novel coexist in considerable tension that is never resolved in its pages, despite critical attempts to see such resolution. The tension, for example, between Robinson's conversion and the ongoing bourgeois character of his soul cannot, as has been argued, be resolved by chalking it up to a nascent Protestant Ethic.¹⁰ An appraisal in light of the "Weber thesis" proves unsatisfactory; Robinson never successfully integrates his religious musings, typified by a tone of ascetic resignation, into a life of otherwise blatantly worldly strivings.

Did Defoe intend to leave unresolved tensions? What kind of a writer was he? A study by Thomas S. Schrock, "Considering Crusoe,"¹¹ suggests that Defoe did intend to leave tensions in the novel. In a *tour de force* of close reading and the best overall analysis available, Schrock reveals a depth to Defoe's work belying Green's view that *Crusoe* could initially have been deemed "pastime reading for the nonliterary." He even makes a solid argument to the effect that Defoe was a sort of esoteric writer. His method involves comparison of *Robinson Crusoe* with two lesser known works by Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, and *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*. "I take all these neglected writings seriously," he notes,

. . . because I believe that, when an author presents a work of ostensibly connected parts, all said to come from the mind and experience of the same protagonist-narrator, the presumption—rebuttable to be sure—is that he wants us to read them as connected, i.e., as parts of a whole which, as such, are likely to be more reliable guides to the interpretation of each other than are any extraneous documents. . . . [I]n the case of *Crusoe*, sympathetic reading elicits enough real interdependence in the volumes to justify saying it would be as arbitrarily foolish to ignore the lesser known portions of the work as it would be to interpret the island narrative *mechanically* in light of those portions. (Pp. 78–79, n. 6)

Schrock's interdependence hypothesis stands in contrast to a tradition that has generally taken the *Farther Adventures* as an afterthought (begun and completed within months of the first volume's appearance) designed to cash in on the original's popularity, and the *Serious Reflections* as a disjointed assortment of Defoe essays packaged for marketing purposes under the name of his famous protagonist. Schrock's hypothesis would seem to be supported by Crusoe himself, who says in the preface to the *Serious Reflections*,

As the design of everything is said to be first in the intention, and last in the execution, so I come now to acknowledge to my reader that the present work is not

merely the product of the two first volumes, but the two first volumes may rather be called the product of this. The fable is always made for the moral, not the moral for the fable.¹²

The moral that Schrock draws from the three volumes is, roughly, fourfold: (1) there is no God; (2) à la Machiavelli, man is compelled by a necessity which grace itself cannot overcome; (3) à la Hobbes, fear of violent death—especially at the hands of men—is the human being's fundamental animating principle; and (4) à la Locke, material comfort is the sine qua non of anything that could be deemed happiness or blessedness.

That the whole of this moral can be extrapolated through painstaking comparison, contrast, and analysis of the three texts is, I concur, plausible. Schrock's case is strong. Less compelling would be an argument—which, granted, Schrock avoids making explicitly—that Defoe intended such esoteric moralism in toto. Robinson's statement in the *Serious Reflections* that "the two first volumes may . . . be called the product of this" should be viewed cautiously as what it was, a statement made after the fact and on the heels of earlier popular success. I have discovered no corroborating evidence that Defoe penned *Robinson Crusoe* as the opening installment of a three-volume opus. It could of course be that Defoe's Robinson intended a moral to be drawn from the narrative volumes that the latter collection of essays refines and elaborates, even a moral largely corresponding to Schrock's portrayal of it. Schrock does convince, along with critic Maximillian E. Novak, that Defoe had some interest in and knowledge of early modern political philosophy that is at least in part displayed in Robinson.¹³ Defoe was, clearly, a kind of political thinker, if not one of the first rank. He flirted with Grotianism, as evidenced in an early pamphlet, and, as Michael Zuckert has observed, "sooner or later he started to make Lockean arguments instead, or in addition. By 1701 . . . Defoe had embraced Lockean principles."¹⁴ It is quite possible (as has often been done) to extricate Lockean principles from the *Crusoe* trilogy, and also elements of the "first wave" of modernity that was to culminate in the thought of Locke. Yet Schrock appears to be unique among serious *Crusoe* scholars in his contention that Defoe, or at any rate Robinson, discounts God or Providence. He stands against what he acknowledges to be the "prevailing view, indeed the great theme of present day Crusoe studies," to wit, "that religion is his vital principle" (p. 76).

The uniqueness of what I shall call Schrock's irreligion thesis could naturally be as much a sign of accuracy as of idiosyncrasy. Let us then briefly investigate key components of the argument.

The crux of the thesis he summarizes as follows:

All [Robinson's] talk about the blessings of religious deliverance has to be read in the light of his virtually ceaseless endeavor to deliver himself back into what he all along regarded as the only necessary and sufficient salvation—civil society. For him, the fear of God is as nothing next to the fear of man. He relied on his own

fear and prudence—not on prayer or Providence—to free himself from the primary evil, which is the state of nature and not the state of sin. (P. 77)

Robinson speculates routinely on the threat of falling prey to rogues and savages, but not on the relationship of repentance to the threat of hell (see *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 77). When a demonic vision troubles him, he views it as a warning sign of all-too-human perils.¹⁵ That this vision is more real to Robinson than any vision of God, Schrock calls “the principal defect in Crusoe’s conversion.”

One can detect philosophical and theological problems in Defoe’s presentation of Robinson’s religion that smack of Locke’s veiled disingenuousness on the subject of Christianity. After his conversion, Robinson says that he would be satisfied to pass his life in solitude, knowing the comfort of salvation; yet he labors and plots endlessly to return to civilization and to appropriate companions in the meantime who represent that larger goal in microcosm and are instrumental to attaining it. Is there not contradiction here? Moreover Robinson has a tendency, intimated at points in the narrative and more pronounced in the *Reflections*, toward subordination of Providence to necessity or toward the suspension of Providence altogether (Schrock, pp. 87–92, 97–104). Is not this evidence of “atheism,” to use Schrock’s word?

But showing that elements of Defoe’s presentation smack of a Lockean disingenuousness is not identical with showing that the presentation is itself disingenuous. Defoe’s presentation may, alternatively, betray a confused sincerity, born of an embrace of Lockean principles that falls somewhat short of theoretical understanding or consistency. Robinson’s religion is not, it bears repeating, that of Locke in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. Defoe expends no effort on making it appear “reasonable” in any modern philosophic sense. Textual examples quoted in section one of the present essay illustrate, rather, what I have called the virtually Augustinian character of Robinson’s religious musings.

Schrock, however, attempts to enlist Robinson against himself on the subject of religious sentiment, revealing, he suggests, a satiric and even polemical intention in the narrative’s religious contents. “Crusoe’s conversion occurred during a bout of a seventeenth century version of the Hong Kong flu,” observes Schrock (p. 79). He interprets as evidence of conversion a part of the June 28 journal entry in which an ailing Robinson ponders words of the psalmist: *Call on me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me*. “To be sure, Crusoe may have experienced some religious feelings during his illness. But his last word on sickbed conversions is that a man is not ‘fit . . . for Repentance on a Sick Bed’” (p. 91). Schrock understands Robinson to be subtly telling the reader that “at best his religious feelings were spurious” all along.

The startling revelation of a veiled disavowal of faith by Robinson hinges on Schrock’s June 28 placement of the conversion. And this placement is oddly chosen. Robinson had on that occasion “opened the Book” only “casually,” and

the psalmist's were but "the first Words that occur'd to me." He avers that "my Head was too much disturb'd with the Tobacco to bear reading, at least that Time." This same tobacco had "at first almost stupify'd my Brain." Robinson concludes the evening by downing tobacco-steeped rum, which "flew up in my Head violently" (p. 75). Although the biblical "Words made a great Impression" on him, and he was to think "upon them very often," Robinson is at pains to convey that on the twenty-eighth he did not fully have his wits about him. There is no intimation of a proper conversion experience, no hint that his experience *that night* was itself decisive.

A much better placement of the conversion is July 4, a date about which Schrock says only that "Crusoe began serious study of the Bible." Yet it was on this date that Robinson, "in a Kind of Extasy of Joy . . . cry'd out aloud" for Jesus to give him repentance. Devoted biblical inquiry, ecstatic movement-in-the-Spirit, and repentance are all reliable signifiers of *metanoia*, conversion to God. And the conversion did not take place on a sickbed. In a state of awe the day before Robinson had written, "Have I not been deliver'd, and wonderfully too, from Sickness?" "Immediately" he had knelt down and given "God Thanks aloud, for my Recovery from my Sickness" (pp. 76–77).

Schrock understands Robinson elsewhere to be informing the reader that after discovering the footprint in the sand, his religious feelings altogether "vanished" (Schrock, p. 77). This is not, though, what could be gathered from a more inclusive evaluation of Robinson's reflections after that discovery. Schrock makes much of a particular reflection following Robinson's initial shock: "Thus my Fear banish'd all my religious Hope; all that former Confidence in God which was founded upon such wonderful Experience as I had of his Goodness, now vanished . . ." (*Robinson Crusoe*, p. 122). But in order to make so much of this statement, Schrock must make nothing at all of a lengthy passage *on the very next page*.

How strange a Chequer-Work of Providence is the Life of Man! and by what secret differing Springs are the Affections hurry'd about as differing Circumstances present! To Day we love what to Morrow we hate; to Day we seek what to Morrow we shun; to Day we desire what to Morrow we fear; nay even tremble at the Apprehensions of; this was exemplify'd in me at this Time in the most lively Manner imaginable; for I whose only Affliction was, that I seem'd banished from human Society, that I was alone, circumscrib'd by the boundless Ocean, cut off from Mankind, and condemn'd to what I call'd silent Life; that I was as one who Heaven thought not worthy to be number'd among the Living, or to appear among the rest of his Creatures; that to have seen one of my own Species, would have seem'd to me a Raising me from Death to Life, and the greatest Blessing that Heaven it self, next to the supreme Blessing of Salvation, could bestow; *I say*, that I should now tremble at the very Apprehensions of seeing a Man, and was ready to sink into the Ground at but the Shadow or silent Appearance of a Man's having set his Foot in the Island.

Such is the uneven State of human Life: And it afforded me a great many curious Speculations afterwards, when I had a little recover'd my first Surprise; I considered that this was the Station of Life the infinitely wise and good Providence of God had determin'd for me, that as I could not foresee what the Ends of Divine Wisdom might be in all this, so I was not to dispute his Sovereignty, who, as I was his Creature, had an undoubted Right by Creation to govern and dispose of me absolutely as he thought fit; and who, as I was a Creature who had offended him, had likewise a judicial Right to condemn me to what Punishment he thought fit; and that it was my Part to submit to bear his Indignation, because I had sinn'd against him.

I then reflected that God, who was not only Righteous but Omnipotent, as he had thought fit thus to punish and afflict me, so he was able to deliver me; that if he did not think fit to do it, 'twas my unquestion'd Duty to resign my self absolutely and entirely to his Will; and on the other Hand, it was my Duty also to hope in him, pray to him, and quietly to attend to the Dictates and Directions of his daily Providence.

These Thoughts took me up many Hours, Days; nay, I may say, Weeks and Months. . . .¹⁶

This from a man from whom all religious feeling supposedly had vanished?

There are other difficulties with Schrock's irreligion thesis, but our consideration thus far should suffice to render it, at the very least, problematic.¹⁷ Schrock is correct in insisting on the error of seeing in the post-conversion Robinson a uniform manifestation of some religious orthodoxy, or a new steadfastness in trusting God. The passage reproduced above, with its tone of pious resignation, is not Robinson's last word in religious sentiment any more than was the prior passage highlighted by Schrock. And indeed Robinson's dread of the threat represented by the footprint soon returns. The point is, there is no last word in religious sentiment or on religion itself, and an effort to elicit one cannot succeed.

As observed, Schrock views the great realism of Robinson's fear of man, in contrast with any fear of God, to be the principal defect in the conversion to Christianity. It may in truth be a grave defect from the vantage of orthodox Calvinism—an orthodoxy with which some critics have wrongly, Schrock proves beyond doubt, associated Robinson. But why should a Calvinist standard of orthodoxy be similarly applied by Schrock in *dissociating* Robinson from religion? That Robinson's creator was a Dissenter is a matter of record, but this does not of itself suffice for, and might even militate against, positing orthodox Calvinism as a standard by which Defoe's religious views or those of his characters should be judged.¹⁸ Defoe never tells the reader Robinson's Protestant affiliation and is almost silent about his churchgoing. Schrock takes this as still more evidence of Robinson's atheism. More likely, I think, is that it indicates the same thing as do the variety and irreconcilability of Robinson's religious expressions and reflections, namely, an eclecticism or, to state it differently, a

confusion. Robinson's religion may or may not be Defoe's, whatever Defoe's was (a perennially contested issue), but Robinson's religion would not have been unrecognizable in the increasingly variegated terrain of English Christianity during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹⁹ Defoe's silence about Robinson's denominational affiliation may well have served to turn Robinson into a religious Everyman for a popular audience. It is, further, the very *recognizability* of Robinson's views that has fostered the prevailing critical notion that religion is his vital principle.

Robinson's ongoing desire to be delivered from the "state of nature," his conflicting statements about Providence, his lack of contrition for or even awareness of certain sins, and other tensions between thought or belief and action, all present serious theoretical problems that could be interpreted by the theorist as marks of atheism. But to credit Defoe's Crusoe with atheism is to give him too much credit. It is to see in him a theological and philosophical coherence that simply does not exist, and, by extension, to attribute to Defoe a synoptic grasp of theoretical implications of early modern political philosophy warranted neither by his biography nor by his *oeuvre*.²⁰

"The fable is always made for the moral," Robinson said in *Serious Reflections*. We are now left with three prongs of Schrock's fourfold moral, its Machiavellian element (if tempered), and its Hobbesian and Lockean elements—this because although Schrock is correct in sensing that consistency would seem to require it, part of the intended moral is not that there is no God.

III. ROUSSEAUAN TRUTHS ABOUT ROBINSON CRUSOE

We return to a question with which we began: why might Rousseau have chosen *Robinson Crusoe* and not some other book? The suggestion that Rousseau selected *Crusoe* accidentally is not, I have argued, supportable. Nor would be a suggestion that he read the book only cursorily: his acknowledgement of "rigmarole" that must be dispensed with shows care in determining what constitutes the rigmarole. And he makes reference to minute detail, as in describing Robinson's apparel. He bothers even to note that Emile will do without the parasol (*Emile*, p. 185).

The adoption and thoroughgoing recharacterization of a popular book by a writer of books who pronounces his hatred of books suggests instead a deep reading and a studied intention. It is surely significant that Rousseau never mentions Defoe, thereby effectively displacing him as author. Yet if objectivity requires that an author first be understood as he understands himself, then some readers of *Emile* cannot but wish to encounter the real writer of *Robinson Crusoe*. Indeed we may assume that, in calling the attention of his audience to one book alone, Defoe's novel, it was Rousseau's expectation that some *should* encounter Defoe.²¹ Only by reading Defoe could the reader of

Emile become aware of those elements Rousseau suppressed. Only by reading Defoe might the attentive student discover that, in drawing attention to those very elements by his silence, Rousseau appears to be engaging an enemy.²² Not unlike the Socrates of Plato's *Republic* (329b), Rousseau forbids his poet to say certain things and orders him to tell tales about their opposites. In this sense, what Bloom wrote of Rousseau remains true: he banishes poetry altogether.

Rousseau implicitly rejects Schrock's approach of taking *Robinson Crusoe* as the first installment in a trilogy of unified intention, only in light of the whole of which can any of its parts be adequately understood. Rousseau too must have recognized the tensions among philosophy, theology or religion, and action in the first volume that prompted Schrock to seek their resolution elsewhere. Indeed the "rigmarole" comprises the elements that cause the tensions. Rousseau's recommendation of but the one volume may indicate an appraisal that certain tensions in Defoe's *Robinson* are *fundamentally* irreconcilable, with or without the latter volumes, and also perhaps a final judgment on the quality and coherence of *Robinson's* thought.

If, though, Rousseau is engaging an enemy in his use of Defoe's work, the engagement must be of something other than shoddiness or incoherence. If he is banishing a poet, it must be for cause.

Rousseau's *Emile* presents the education of the first renaturalized political man and is thus a crucial element in the articulation of a new political philosophy. Defoe's popular novel presented a character in part based on teachings of earlier modern political philosophers whom Rousseau's political philosophy explicitly engages. Defoe's novel and its hero could, then, be seen to be ripe for a dialectical encounter with Rousseau's novel and its hero. *Robinson* provides the quintessential portrait of a problem Rousseau identified in his predecessors. About Defoe and his creation Rousseau could have said, derivatively, what he does say of Hobbes and Locke: "they spoke about savage man and they described civil man."²³ Their man in the state of nature is characterized by need, avarice, oppression, desires, and pride, all of which Rousseau deems imports from civil society; *Robinson* on his island manifests all these dangerous characteristics, and the fact of their importation from the place to which he longs to return.

There is an irony in *Robinson's* impulse to return to civil society. When there—in England, Brazil, wherever—he is bored to distraction. He needs civil society but has no vision of what happiness in its bosom would be. In its bosom, he invariably wants to leave. His life is finally what Leo Strauss, in an analysis of Locke, memorably phrased a "joyless quest for joy."

But *Robinson's* need for diversion is rendered a bit less Lockean and perhaps a touch more Pascalian by his disconcertingly incongruous religiosity. The dangerous characteristics that threaten the potential for happiness *Robinson* neither attributes to nature, as had Hobbes and Locke, nor to the *amour-propre*

born of society, as did Rousseau. When Robinson recognizes dangers at all in any of these characteristics he attributes them rather to sin. Unlike deformations wrought by dumb nature or societal convention, the sin of fallen man is not amenable to merely human correction. And if one considers sin in light of a Robinsonian confusion about Providence, it is impossible to judge with clarity whether its deformations are amenable to any correction.

For the attentive student of *Emile*, Defoe's Robinson betrays the failure of early modern political philosophy to apprehend human passions in their origin or in what is required for their containment, direction, and satisfaction. He further offers a case study in their failure to understand the socialized human being's intrinsic religiosity, or to deal effectively with the delicate interplay of this dimension of soul on the one hand and societal convention on the other.²⁴

For the general reader of *Emile*, Defoe's Robinson is a recognizably "civil" man stranded on an island, whose economic ingenuity, cunning, adventure-someness, and piety are immediately attractive. And Robinson was immediately attractive to a popular readership in eighteenth-century England. Defoe gave his audience an agreeable hero blessed with a highly diverting life; I say blessed where Robinson says cursed because early readers of the novel (and most readers since) would not typically have left with the impression that Robinson was cursed. They would have wished they could trade their lives for his, and would have eagerly awaited reports of Robinson's "farther adventures." They would have seen in Defoe's hero one who, in attitude and aspiration, was one of them—only more interesting. With a little luck and a little gumption, anyone among them could be Robinson Crusoe.

Defoe could be said to have epitomized a new and (to Rousseau) dangerous breed of unseemly creature, what might be called the bourgeois poet.²⁵ He ennobles an essentially self-interested contractarian by charming all the while with his hero's complexity of character: Robinson evidences vestiges of chauvinism, and also of apolitical otherworldliness—an impossible *mélange*, according to Rousseau.²⁶ The general reader charmed by Defoe's novel would have been unlikely to have experienced a tension between being citizen or subject and being what would come to be called bourgeois. And he would have felt no tension between any of these and his religion. He would have been, as Robinson is, a peculiarly confused modern hybrid.

This confused modern hybrid, so typical of actual bourgeois societies, presented special challenges to a philosopher who sought to overcome the bourgeois in the names of nature and the city. This hybrid could not easily be made to see himself as debased or contemptible; he would not shudder with recognition at Nietzsche's portrait of the "last man." He did not perceive the divisions within his soul. Having toppled real thrones and real altars, he had rebuilt facsimiles of them within, and so had not genuinely overcome them. Yet in need of liberation, he no longer experienced the need.

Still, as a close study of Robinson suggests, the hybrid man was not fully

self-satisfied either. He was educable. In Robinson, we witness one such man in a situation rife with human possibility. His island is a State of Nature, but he is constitutionally blinded to the possibilities of original freedom. Rousseau redraws Robinson, supplying him with the nature denied him by Defoe and misunderstood by Defoe's philosophic teachers. Rousseau's young Emile is not at all, in the end, made to become like Robinson. Rather, through Rousseau's legerdemain, Robinson is made to become like Emile. Rousseau invites the charmed reader of *Robinson Crusoe* to recast the experience of that novel in a way that enables him to inhabit Rousseau's novel instead—in a way that enables him to share Emile's education. Only thus may the hybrid man discover in himself the confusion that must be overcome. Only thus may he discover his unfelt needs. Only thus may he gain some inkling of a way to their satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Schrock's insightful analysis has been crucial in leading us to discover the heart of a problem that Rousseau addressed through his use of *Robinson Crusoe*. Robinson's bourgeois soul, in large measure a consequent of intentional philosophic enterprises, is not whole. Robinson is neither "Man" simply nor citizen. Schrock showed that it makes no theoretical sense for Defoe to have augmented Robinson's soul by overlaying it with a veneer of religiosity. Because his soul is so augmented, though, Schrock is right to question Robinson's sincerity. But Robinson's religion turns out to be strangely sincere. That is the heart of the problem.

Rousseau saw that earlier contract theorists had not perceived man in his wholeness, and so had been unable to prescribe for his wholeness. Centrally, they did not understand the role of religion in integrating the human being *per se* with its proper political incarnation, the citizen. Their theoretical failure resulted practically in the kind of haphazard grasping for completion that we witness in Robinson.

Emile, on the other hand, is educated to be an integrated whole. Religion will necessarily be part of his education eventually, and Emile's religion too will be sincere; in fact its presentation through the Savoyard Vicar's profession of faith would spark a revolution in which sincerity was to become a sufficient criterion of religious authenticity. But Emile's sincerity, in contrast to Robinson's, is to be of a piece with the rest of him.

To remake the human being as a whole is a task of Rousseau's political thought. Defoe's most famous work reveals something of the requirements and the extent of such a task among modern men. Rousseau's engagement of *Robinson Crusoe* shows his awareness of these realities, and his dauntlessness in the face of them. It thereby also reveals something of the scale of his ambitions.

NOTES

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 9. Essay reprinted as "Emile," in Allan Bloom, *Giants and Dwarfs* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp. 177–207.
2. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, ed. Michael Shinagel, a Norton Critical Edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975), pp. 75, 77. All Robinson Crusoe citations are from this authoritative edition.
3. A 1979 count found 1,198 editions in English alone. There have been several more since then. See Philip Zaleski, "The Strange Shipwreck of Robinson Crusoe," *First Things*, May 1995, p. 38.
4. Martin Green, *The Robinson Crusoe Story* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), p. 40.
5. *Op. cit.*, p. 39. Zaleski's article, concerning the absence of Defoe's religious themes from many editions of *Crusoe*, first alerted me to investigate the possibility of a Rousseau connection.
6. See Maximillian E. Novak, "The Economic Meaning of *Robinson Crusoe*," in Frank H. Ellis, ed., *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Robinson Crusoe* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 97–102.
7. The Mayflower Compact emphasizes that the disgruntled Pilgrims remain loyal subjects of their sovereign lord King James.
8. Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), vol. 1, pp. 169–70. The Marxist fascination with *Robinson Crusoe* gained peculiar expression in the Soviet Union of 1933. That year, the Soviet Writers Circle put Defoe, along with Verne (who wrote the Robinsonesque *L'Île mystérieuse*) and Swift, at the head of a list of authors most deserving of translation (Green, p. 140).
9. Essays from the centuries of *Crusoe* criticism can be found in the Norton Critical Edition; in Frank H. Ellis, ed., *op. cit.*; and most recently in Harold Bloom, ed., *Robinson Crusoe* (New York: Chelsea House, 1995).
10. See, for example, Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), pp. 60–92.
11. *Interpretation* 1 (1970): 76–106, 169–232.
12. Daniel Defoe, *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*, in Harold Bloom, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 5.
13. Novak is, Schrock remarks with measured approval, "the one prominent truant from the prevailing school of Crusoe interpretation" (p. 77 n. 5). See Maximillian E. Novak, *Defoe and the Nature of Man* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).
14. Michael P. Zuckert, *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 290–91.
15. Schrock, pp. 82–83. In his search for marks of dubious piety in the *Crusoe* corpus, Schrock overlooks a candidate here. Robinson reports of his vision that "I saw a Man descend from a great black cloud" who was prepared "to kill me." Robinson's language is at least vaguely reminiscent of a passage in the Hebrew Bible taken by Christians to be a key instance of messianic prophecy: "I saw . . . one like a son of man [who] came with the clouds of heaven . . ." (Daniel 7:13).
16. *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 123. William H. Halewood accurately views this passage as an indication that Robinson's "religious reflections . . . are unceasing, and we are reminded that they go on even when the narrative is concerned with other matters" ("Religion and Invention in *Robinson Crusoe*," in Ellis, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 81.)
17. One other such difficulty has to do with chance. Schrock states that Robinson denies the existence of chance in a universe governed by Providence. He also develops an interesting argument that Crusoe in fact subtly and almost imperceptibly supplants Providence with chance and thereby again reveals his atheism. Yet Schrock cannot but acknowledge that Robinson's customary denials of the existence of chance "place him in perfect agreement with his author, as the latter is generally and *perhaps correctly* understood" (*italics supplied*, p. 101).

What then are we to conclude about Robinson's position on chance? About Defoe's? About Defoe's relation to Robinson on this issue?

Larger questions remain, too, about chance and the doctrine of Providence. Schrock views Robinson as more Machiavellian than Calvinistic here, but Machiavelli and Calvin are hardly the only significant thinkers who have grappled with the notoriously perplexing relations of Providence and contingency. Nor should the making of conflicting statements about this complicated matter be taken to mark as duplicitous any but the most theoretically perspicacious—particularly not a character drawn by a dilettantish thinker who was himself variously prone to both religious enthusiasm and enthusiasm for the new philosophy. Simply put, that Robinson occasionally accords a role to chance, or sees the hand of Providence in events that otherwise appear "natural," does not render him a Machiavellian.

Schrock, though, identifies a passage in *Serious Reflections* which he deems the *coup de grâce* in establishing the priority of *fortuna*. There Robinson approvingly quotes a clergyman as saying that while Providence may have "some share" in the direction of certain events, "Providence might perhaps be limited by some superior direction, the same that guides all the solemn dispositions of Nature, and was a wind blowing where it listeth." Schrock grants that this statement is "enigmatic," but ventures that by the "superior direction" is meant "either the 'mock-goddess' Chance, or something like the immutable laws of natural motion" (pp. 103–4). He may reach this conclusion, though, only by discounting the words lifted from John 3:8, where Jesus, in speaking of a "wind blowing where it listeth," clearly means the Holy Spirit. Schrock is right that the clergyman's use of the biblical phrase is in a context wholly alien to that of Jesus' utterance. And we are surely right to wonder what it could mean for God's Providence to be directed by God's Holy Spirit. But the enigma cannot well be explained by being explained away.

18. While adverting repeatedly to Calvin's authority, Schrock turns to the authority of the Anglican divine, Hooker, in a note. In so doing, he allows that "Quotation from Hooker may make the reader wonder just what orthodoxy I think Crusoe should be judged by. But on the subject of this note there is little if any difference between Hooker and Calvin, and that goes for many other points on which the great Anglican and the Genevan would be united in opposition to the attitudes and ideas with which Crusoe indulges himself." (pp. 88 n. 24). Calvinism remains Schrock's standard of orthodoxy. But why? Why, for that matter, should "Anglican orthodoxy" (almost always a somewhat troubled concept) be consulted in the matter of Robinson's religion?

Robinson's faith, observes J. Paul Hunter, "is intended to be unobjectionable to both Anglican and Dissenter. Defoe's preface to the 1715 volume of *The Family Instructor* applies equally well to *Robinson Crusoe*: 'In the pursuit of this Book care is taken to avoid Distinctions of Opinion, as to Church of England or Dissenter, and no offense can be taken here on the one Side or the other; as I hope *both* are Christians so *both* are treated here as such, and the Advice is impartially directed to *both* without the least distinction'" ("Robinson Crusoe's Deliverance," in Harold Bloom, ed., op. cit., p. 118 n. 8.)

An "unobjectionable" faith will not be an orthodox faith of any stripe, since orthodoxies literally define themselves against objections.

S. T. Coleridge, an avowed Christian who was spokesman for nobody's orthodoxy, is one particularly astute observer among many who found Robinson's religion both real and unobjectionable: "Crusoe rises only where all men may be made to feel that they might and that they ought to rise—in religion, in resignation, in dependence on, and thankful acknowledgement of the divine mercy and goodness" (In Shinagel, ed., *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 289).

19. Schrock wisely sidesteps the issue of Defoe's religion. "[S]upposing Defoe's religious persuasion can be and in fact is known from sources other than *Robinson Crusoe*, we are not justified in assuming his persuasion is expressed in *Crusoe*, or by Crusoe. For all we know, Defoe consciously decided to . . . portray a person and/or a doctrine uncongenial to his own religious, if not to his artistic, sensibilities" (p. 78 n. 6).

20. Schrock's interpretive approach requires him to assume a high level of coherence in Defoe's enterprise. He reads this coherence back into the narratives from the book of essays: ". . . seeing how troublesome those books [the narratives] prove to be, it was considerate of Crusoe to comment thematically . . . in the *Serious Reflections*" (p. 194). But he also acknowledges that there

are instances of "simple mistake[s] on Defoe's part" (p. 206). To take but two examples: (1) Robinson says in the *Farther Reflections* that he raised a nephew upon his first return to England; but according to the family accounts in the first volume, any nephew would by then have been at least thirty-three years old. And (2) in *Robinson Crusoe* Robinson says that he "pull'd off" his clothes before swimming back to his ship for supplies, later informing the reader that while aboard he stuffed his pockets with biscuits.

Critics have long observed such instances of what appears to be hasty and careless editing. The germane issue here is, was Defoe careful enough in his composition of these books to have developed philosophical and religious themes of studied coherence, and with an even esoteric subtlety? It should be noted in a similar vein that "Defoe, who made his living as a journalist, churned out seven other books the same year he fathered Robinson" (Zaleski, op. cit., p. 38).

A contemporary critic of Defoe (the two knew and disliked each other), Charles Gildon, saw the more substantive inconsistencies in the narratives as representative of inconsistencies in Defoe himself. In a parody, Gildon has Defoe answering charges brought by Robinson and Friday. Defoe asks, "what are your complaints of me?" Robinson responds, "Why, that you have made me a strange whimsical, inconsistent Being, in three Weeks losing all the Religion of a Pious Education; and when you bring me again to a Sense of the Want of Religion, you make me quit that upon every Whimsy; you make me extravagantly Zealous, and as extravagantly Remiss. . . ." Defoe later defends himself by saying that "I have been all my Life that Rambling, Inconsistent Creature, which I have made thee. . . . I would not have you therefore complain any more of the Contradiction of your character, since that is of a Piece with the whole Design of my Book." Critics have usually read Gildon's parody as a rant, as sour grapes from a writer of lesser success than Defoe. It could as easily be read as contemporaneous evidence—from an acquaintance of Defoe moreover—that Defoe and his creation were alike paragons of inconsistency.

21. The plausibility of this contention is enhanced when we note what Rousseau surely knew, that Defoe's novel had been placed on the Church's Index in 1756.

22. Cf. Rousseau's criticism of Moliere in the Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre. Although Rousseau engages Moliere directly whereas he suppresses Defoe, in both cases we must assume that Rousseau's selection of an opponent is deliberate.

23. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, in Roger D. Masters, ed., *The First and Second Discourses* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), p. 102.

It is significant that in *Emile* Jean-Jacques wants for his charge a "felicity" on Robinson's island such that Friday will hardly be a concern (p. 185).

Consider also Novak, in *Twentieth Century Interpretations*, p. 99: "In spite of his environment, Crusoe's life is that of Rousseau's civilized man: 'Always moving, sweating, toiling, and racking his brains to find still more laborious occupations: he goes on in drudgery to his last moment, and even seeks death to put himself in a position to live.'"

24. The religiosity intrinsic to socialized man is to be distinguished from the nonreligious simplicity of "man" in Rousseau's state of nature. Cf. *Second Discourse* and the Savoyard Vicar's profession of faith in *Emile*, Book 4.

25. Although some critics identify *Don Quixote* as the first true novel, others give *Robinson Crusoe* that distinction. If Defoe was truly the originator of a new art form, Rousseau may be simultaneously identifying dangerous potentialities of the new art and, with *Emile*, correcting them through his own practice.

26. See *Social Contract* on the *vrai chrétien*, Book 4, chapter 8.