"And after that the crumbling of the moon.
The soul remembering its loneliness."
–William Butler Yeats

Robinson Crusoe's journey to and from his Island, his escape and return to society, plays out the erratic shift from assured logical dogmatism to the ambiguous complexities of social life. In the watershed moment between these two extremes, Daniel Defoe confronts his stranded protagonist with a paradox that ultimately ushers his return to society. The shock that Crusoe experiences, as I intend to show, is in fact the paradox inherent in Crusoe's preliminary attempt to create a speechless representation of a solitary ethical exemplar. As a result, Crusoe reaches an impasse, one which he resolves by redirecting his efforts back toward everyday life.

Using Wittgenstein's two main works – the *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus* and the *Philosophical Investigations* – I will underscore what I believe to be the theoretical underpinnings of Crusoe's change while, at the same time, explore the similarities between Crusoe's literary disillusionment and Wittgenstein's shift from earlier to later philosophy. After examining the points in which Crusoe and Wittgenstein seem to have in common we will be able, as Wittgenstein remarks in his
later philosophy, to view their meaning in light of their similarities and perhaps gain a fresh understanding of the two works.

In the *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus* Wittgenstein separates two types of statements: "sense," and "nonsense." According to this divide Wittgenstein determines that sentences concerning verifiable facts are what he calls sense sentences. For example, Crusoe's statement "Rain all day"\(^1\) has sense, since it can be verified to be either true or false: "For the totality of facts determines both what is the case, and also all that is not the case."\(^2\) It's either raining, or it isn't. On the other hand, Wittgenstein considers sentences that do not correspond to a real-life object or event as nonsense: "God has forsaken me." Building on this demarcation, Wittgenstein proceeds to claim that science is that field of human knowledge that deals with sense sentences, factual sentences, and that all the other fields of human knowledge – namely ethics, philosophy, metaphysics, religion – are all nonsense. As he states toward the end of the *Tractatus*, "The right method of philosophy would be this: To say nothing except what can be said, *i.e.* the propositions of natural science, *i.e.* something that has nothing to do with philosophy" (*T*, 6.53).

The logically structured *Tractatus*, built like a sturdy ladder of logical propositions, culminates by stating that the propositions presented in it "are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.) He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly" (*T*, 6.54). This statement is followed by the final proposition of the *Tractatus*, which decisively concludes that "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" (*T*, 7).
The *Tractatus* in general, and its enigmatic ending in particular, have invited a deluge of philosophical commentary, dubbing Wittgenstein's work anywhere from "anti-metaphysical,\(^3\) to "mystical."\(^4\) Since my work will deal primarily with Defoe's text, this is one argument I wish to avoid, and present one of the possible interpretations of propositions 6.54 and 7 in my reading of the text. This reading suggests seeing Wittgenstein final move not intent, as Godron Bearn puts it, on "destroying metaphysical answers to all our problems,"\(^5\) but on the complete sublimation of metaphysics into practical affairs. Thus, Wittgenstein's goal in constructing such a strict logical structure is not to banish metaphysics from human life but to stir the two together. Thus, Wittgenstein suggests a different kind of ethical statement: whatever ought to be said about ethics should not be said via the nonsensical statements of philosophy but through the workings of everyday life, as Stanley Cavell comments, "moral work is not separate from … philosophical work."\(^6\) Wittgenstein's silence is not an attack on metaphysics; its goal is, in the words of Martin Stokhof, "the safekeeping of the most important aspect of human affairs, ethics, from rationalizing thought."\(^7\)

Throughout his stay on his deserted island, Robinson Crusoe assails the reader with sense sentences. Crusoe is active, ever analyzing and breaking down his surroundings in order to find ways to sustain himself. As Virginia Woolf comments, Crusoe "is forever counting his barrels, and making sensible provisions for his water supply: nor do we ever find him tripping even in a matter of detail."\(^8\) Crusoe's obsession, however, will not be satisfied with just doing, but also with documenting his frantic activity; creating a narrative that could "testify … that I was not idle" (*RC*, p. 117). As striking evidence of this preoccupation, Crusoe supplies an additional description of his life on the island – a journal – thus creating an embedded catalogue
of benign technical information, which even goes as far as to re-describe events already made known to the reader: "April 28, 29–These two whole days I took up in grinding my tools, my machine for turning my grindstone performing very well," and "May 10,11,12,13,14–Went every day to the wreck, and got a great deal of pieces of timber, and boards, or plank, and two or three hundredweight of iron"(RC, p. 64–65). It seems that the very act of describing a life of incessant action appears too verbose for the "sensical" Crusoe, prompting him to display the type of text he would have created if had chosen to omit the causal and emotional framework of his life.

Crusoe's life on the island, the journal being its most "pristine" depiction, is a near-perfect example of a Tractatus-influenced approach to philosophical and ethical writing. As Cora Diamond states, echoing the bleak practicality of Crusoe's journal, Wittgenstein's idea of a "good" ethical text "has nothing of the ethical in it, but one can come to understand something about the ethical from it, precisely from what is not in it."9

However, Outside the practicality of Crusoe's journal, the narrative itself includes depictions of many nonsensical "flashes in the pan" uttered by Crusoe's sensible lips. One example of such an occasion is Crusoe's reaction to the Bible: "From this moment on I concluded in my mind that it was impossible for me to be more happy in this forsaken solitary condition, then it was probable I should ever have been in any other particular state in the world, and with this thought I was going to give thanks to God for bringing me to this place" (RC, p. 87). Religious texts and the studying of them – a kind of breach in the sense/nonsense divide – do not prompt Crusoe to question his dogmatic worldview, but serve him in maintaining his isolation. Wittgenstein gives the solution for this apparent contradiction in his "Lecture on Ethics."
In the "Lecture on Ethics," Wittgenstein addresses the issue of nonsensical statements, attempting, at first, to provide an overarching definition of ethics: "Instead of saying 'Ethics is the inquiry into what is Good' I could have said 'Ethics is the inquiry into what is valuable,' or, 'into what is really important,' or I could have said that 'Ethics is the inquiry into the meaning of life,' or 'into the right way of living.'"\(^{10}\) Wittgenstein, by not creating a clear definition, demonstrates his own ethical choice – one ought not to insist on analytical definitions of ethical sentences: "I believe if you look at all these phrases you will get a rough idea as to what it is that Ethics is concerned with."

In the "LE," Wittgenstein relinquishes that people are naturally inclined to utter nonsensical statements when experiencing an ethical event – a loophole in the "silence" of the Tractatus: "My whole tendency and I believe the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless…. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply" ("LE," pp. 11–12). This nonsensical, but understandable, failure of language is a result of the attempt to transcend the structure of pure sense and fact in the face of wonder. For Wittgenstein an ethical utterance – for example, "I feel wonder at the existence of the world" – is an integral part of the ethical experience. Thus, Crusoe is able to incorporate nonsensical events – such as "the experience of feeling absolutely safe" ("LE," p. 8) – into the augmented sense/nonsense divide depicted in the "LE," without deposing his own silent regime. Although these statements would never find their way into Crusoe’s Tractatus-esque journal, they are, nevertheless, excusable. The first real sign of strain in Crusoe's dogma comes with his first attempt to rattle his own cage.
Crusoe's attempt to escape his island fails, leaving him helplessly drifting along the treacherous currents in his makeshift boat off the shores of the Island: "I looked upon my desolate solitary island as the most pleasant place in the world, and all the happiness my heart could wish for was to but be there again. I stretched out my hands to it, with eager wishes. 'O happy desert!' said I, 'I shall never see thee more. O miserable creature,' said I, 'whither I am going" (RC, p. 107; my italics). Crusoe's failure is a direct result of his unwillingness to discard his solitary world of sense, as evident from his instinctual yearning to return to the "happy desert" of dogmatism. The only way in which Crusoe may "escape" his island, I will argue, is by finally succumbing to social ethics and relinquishing his solipsism – by involving other people in ethics. Crusoe indeed ran "against the walls of his cage," by not giving up on the notion of a sensical cage separating between the factual world and an inaccessible outer realm of nonsense.

Thus, in the aftermath of his failed escape, and as a direct response to his "rash and ignorant piloting" (RC, p. 106), Crusoe puts it upon himself to prevent such a mishap from occurring again: "I fell on my knees, and gave God thanks for my deliverance, resolving to lay aside all thoughts of my deliverance by my boat." Crusoe is adamant to maintain silence. Moreover, he resumes his life on the island, in grand Crusoe fashion, with a set of guidelines concerning the rearing of his herd of goats: "It presently occurred to me that I must keep the tame from the wild, or else they would always run wild when they grow up" (RC, p. 112). Crusoe not only refuses to relinquish the barriers preventing him from achieving an ethical worldview, he adds to them, setting the walls he built for himself around his animal stock, "apprehensive of being hurried out of my knowledge again by the currents or the winds, or any other
accidents" (RC, p. 117). However, as strong as his defenses were in the prevention of a "breaking out," something, inevitably, is about to find its way "in."

While walking on the shore of his island, Crusoe stumbled upon a revelation: "the print of a man's naked foot on the shore" (RC, p. 117). While the evidence of human life on an island otherwise thought as deserted is cause for alarm, the effect the footprint has on Crusoe goes beyond that of a man facing unexpected company: "After innumerable fluttering thoughts, like a man perfectly confused and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree, looking behind me every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man; nor is it possible to describe how many various shapes affrightened imagination presented to me, how many wild unaccountable whimsies came into my thoughts by the way" (RC, p. 117).

Crusoe reacts, and in the face of mounting fear and confusion, the ladder, the assured means of achieving transcendence in Wittgenstein's solitary mode of thought, ultimately collapses. Furthermore, it completely reverses its function, efficiently facilitating Crusoe's hurried retreat back into his skeptical self: "When I came to my castle, for so I think I called it ever after this, I fled into it like one pursued. Whether I went over by the ladder … or went in at the hole in the rock, which I called a door, I cannot remember; no, nor could I remember the next morning, for never frightened hare fled to cover … with more terror of mind then I to this retreat" (RC, p. 188; my italics). With Crusoe's failure to connect the signified "hole in the rock" with the signifier "door," comes the collapse of signifier-signified, an indispensable component to his worldview. By losing the ability to connect word to object, to verify, Crusoe loses the ability to determine sense, or nonsense.
The pivotal role the "footprint in the sand" episode plays in *Robinson Crusoe* has been far from ignored by the critical tradition. Of the many works dealing with this subject Gary Hentzi's essay, dealing with "sublime" moments in the novel, is most suitable to my purposes. As is with Crusoe's shocking encounter with the paradoxical single footprint, the "sublime," and particularly the "sublime of the signified," is, according to Hentzi's reworking of Thomas Weiskel, "an instance in which the sublime object is not in itself vast but rather seems to echo with a multitude of resonances or implications that the mind cannot immediately take in."\(^{11}\) For Crusoe it is as if he has been "thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition" (RC, p. 118). The nonsensical has made a fiery return to Crusoe's sanitary sense laboratory, as Crusoe is left to ponder whether it was a devil that landed on the shore. "For it is, in a sense," as Hentzi writes, "this angelic figure whose footprint Crusoe discovers in the sand: the footprint is the natural trace of a supernatural presence that has been dispersed and banished from the realm of *practical affairs.*"\(^{12}\)

The implications of the physical impossibility of having one naked footprint on the sand rattle Crusoe's practical consciousness. He is faced with the first real doubt as to the validity of his worldview, and pushed to the brink of paranoia, as he looks behind his shoulder "every two or three steps" (RC, p. 118). If indeed both Wittgenstein and Crusoe have found the final quiet to their "former discomfort," why is it that Crusoe "slept none that night" (RC, p. 118)?

My claim is that the paradox which thwarts Crusoe serves as catalyst to radically alter him philosophical means of representation: the impossibility of a single footprint appearing in the world – as Wittgenstein states in his "LE": "the paradox that an experience, a fact, should seem to have supernatural value" ("LE," p. 14). The sentence "a print of a man's naked foot on the shore" could be verified, and so,
categorized as sense. However, the footprint is nonsense as well, since it is a single footprint – utterly impossible in the physical world. The realization that Crusoe is facing an event that encompasses both sides of his sense/nonsense divide brings with it the collapse of the divide itself: "What ridiculous resolution men take when possessed with fear! It deprives them of the use of those means which reason offers for their relief. The first thing I proposed myself was to throw down my enclosure, and turn all my tame cattle wild into the woods" (RC, p. 122). The "vast" implications of the sense/nonsense collapse destroy Crusoe's confidence in being able to "demonstrate" solitary ethics: the fall from certainty to paralysis.

The emotional and intellectual upheaval which Crusoe seems to be experiencing at the sight of the single footprint in the sand may shed some light on the undocumented upheaval the young Wittgenstein experienced. Both Crusoe and Wittgenstein seem forced to relinquish the thought of an absolute end to man's unrest, and make do in the uncertain currents of sociable discourse. Both failed to reach a "final solution to the logical and existential problems [Wittgenstein's] book addressed," the easing of our "discomfort" (WW, pp. 82–84). This sense of utter conceptual loss, a sort of philosophical heartbreak, is described by Gordon C. F. Bearn:

It seemed to the author of the Tractatus that the truth of the thoughts there communicated was "unassailable and definitive." He was of the opinion that "on all essential points" he had found the "final solution" to the logical and existential problems his book addressed. This philosophical confidence is completely absent from the preface to the [Philosophical] Investigations: "I make [my remarks] public with doubtful feelings. It is not impossible that it should fall to the lot of this work, in its poverty and in the darkness of its time, to bring light into one brain or another – but, of course, it is not likely" (WW, p. 84).
Remarkably upon the motivation to attempt another work in the wake of such a disappointment, Wittgenstein cites "the grave mistakes in what I wrote in that first book." To find out where both Wittgenstein and Defoe find the seed for their early blunder, I shall jump ahead to the end of the novel, intersecting with the opening of Wittgenstein's later work.

As the novel progresses toward its end, it seems that Defoe's hero finally targets, what he sees as, the source of the identity nullifying and paradoxical theory he discarded as a direct result of disillusionment. A clue as to what Crusoe sees as the source of his discomfort is provided when Crusoe admits to have "entertained some doubts about the Roman religion even … abroad" (RC, p. 233). The changed Crusoe is now able to directly question Catholic Dogma, as his Protestantism has fully realized by the final stages of the novel. His new way of thinking, and its opposition to the old, was, as Brett McInelly puts it, “refined through his island experience, as can be observed from “a number of anti-Catholic references scattered throughout the novel.” Similarly, when Wittgenstein, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, attempts his own break from the homogenizing and "quieting" conclusion of the *Tractatus*, he reaches similar conclusions to those of Defoe.

Wittgenstein's criticism of the Catholic concept of language opens the *Philosophical Investigations*, via a quote from St. Augustine's *Confessions*. In it, St. Augustine discusses a theory of language strikingly similar to that of the *Tractatus*. As Bearne observes: "the first mouthful of the *Investigations* already exhibits a version of the grave mistake that [Wittgenstein] attributed to the author of the *Tractatus*" (WW, p. 97). St. Augustine's "Tractatian" concept of language – one which correlates sense with verification – is swept aside for a language that is not to be understood "in terms of a theory of semantic content, but simply as a part of the
countless things that people do: the way they act" (WW, p. 100). However, there is a
difference in the conclusions that Defoe and Wittgenstein derive. Whereas Defoe
attempts to create a new kind of personal writing, a new kind of protestant
"confession" – the novel being what is novel – Wittgenstein rebels against the
certainty any book could deliver: "Wittgenstein's difficulty in presenting his work as a
'good book' may be the result of his work representing a break with the tradition of the
permit being cast in the form of a traditional philosophy book: a book with a theory or
thesis to defend, objections to be answered, further research to be sketched…. So it
begins to look as though these investigations are essentially unbookable" (87). Now, a
new, and "ordinary," mode of representation rises from the ashes of its dogmatic
predecessor.

Wittgenstein's task in the Philosophical Investigations remains the same it has
ever been: to represent a kind of ethical practical philosophizing. Now, all that is left
is to find a new way of “showing.” Starting from paragraph §198 in the PI,
Wittgenstein sets off to trace the “grave” mistakes that led him to a break in the way
he represents his philosophy. Wittgenstein, through a dialogue with an anonymous
partner – Wittgenstein’s Friday – attempts to resolve the major issue evoked in the
wake of the footprint incident: "how can we know if someone is following a rule?"
Using the example of a mathematical series Wittgenstein proposes that there is not a
way to verify whether another person is following an intended rule. If, for example,
we would start a mathematical series so: 2, 4, 6… and ask someone, assuming he
knows what we intend him to do next, to follow it up we would find ourselves in a
bind. That person could easily continue the series: 2, 4, 6 , 4, 2 ,4 ,6, and so on, in any
one of an infinite set of possibilities. If we were to protest, and insist that we meant
him to continue: 2, 4, 6, 8 it would bear no consequence. There is no rule, argues Wittgenstein, which is foolproof to an extent that it could contain all the possible uses, and misuses, implications, and misinterpretations of it. Thus, with that understanding, comes the collapse of our notion of rule following, or of every system, such as ethics, divided to “right” and “wrong” behavior: "If everything could be made out to accord with a rule, then it can also be made to conflict with it. And so, there would be neither accord nor conflict here" (PI, §241).

If there is no way to ensure a person is consistently following the "proper" usage of a rule, as opposed to an arbitrary following, or a "pretending to follow," how could one be expected to determine, from observing the actions of another, what one ought to do? If every sentence is a sense sentence, and ethics is something demonstrated, and not discussed, there is no way one could understand from which action to derive an ethical lesson. If Crusoe constructs a boat, there is no way we can trace any ethical intention from that action and not, conversely, to learn how to build boats. Furthermore, a reader could hypothetically so poorly read the protagonist's "intentions" as to totally separate the action from its ethical intentions – perhaps, read of a man building a boat, snap the book shut, and instigate some horrid unethical act in his community. Finally, in the lack of anyone else in this ideally solipsistic ethical world, toward whom exactly are Crusoe, or Wittgenstein, acting in an ethical fashion?

In what has been called the "private language argument," which follows Wittgenstein "rule following" section, Wittgenstein sets to prove that a solitary person cannot generate a private set of symbols, ethical or otherwise.

Language, as are ethics, is a public endeavor to the newly awakened Wittgenstein; and to assume otherwise – i.e., to attempt to speak nothing but what "can" be spoken – is to commit a moral wrong. Famously standing at the heart of this
section of the *Investigations* is Wittgenstein's exemplar of a possible private language speaker – none other than Robinson Crusoe. The Crusoe of the *Investigations* is, of course, different from that of the novel, in that he has been born and raised on the island, thus totally disconnected from any other human being. Because of this, seemingly crucial, difference Wittgenstein's Crusoe has been, by and large, treated by critics and philosophers as merely Wittgenstein's use of a literary figure in his argument. That is, no doubt, an unfortunate oversight, especially since the theoretical appearance of a single man on a desert island, as exemplified with Wittgenstein's Crusoe, is as nonsensical as the appearance of a single footprint on a sandy beach. Not only does an extraordinary event have to take place in order for such an abnormality to occur, the very considering of its reality reflects a deformed view of human existence. Human ethics, as both Crusoe and Wittgenstein show, are self-defeating when attempted alone.

When the literary Crusoe attempts to achieve such a dogmatic form of life, as in the attempt to converse with Poll the parrot, he, as he *ought*, fails: "I diverted my self with talking to my Parrot, and teaching him to Speak, and I quickly learn'd him to know his own Name, and at last to speak it out pretty loud P O L, which was the first Word I ever heard spoken in the Island by any Mouth but my own" (*RC*, p. 91). While Crusoe succeeds in generating a language-like utterance, his "private" language is not a language at all: "I was waked out of my sleep by a voice calling me by my Name several times, Robin, Robin, Robin Crusoe, poor Robin Crusoe, where are you Robin Crusoe? Where are you? Where have you been?…. [Poll] had learn'd it so perfectly, that he would sit upon my Finger, and lay his Bill close to my Face, and cry, Poor Robin Crusoe, *Where are you? Where have you been? How came you here?*" Crusoe's attempt to lead a private community receives mixed results: he is talking, but
unfortunately only to himself, and saying nothing. Nonetheless, that result is enough of a success, as far as dogmatic Crusoe is concerned, to admire his impersonating parrot as a "sociable Creature" (RC, p. 109). Wittgenstein, in a statement directed toward Crusoe's type of failure, admits that indeed “a human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it…. But could we also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences … for his private use?” (PI, §243) I find a further example of the failure to create a private ethic in Crusoe's inability to reside within the inner sections of the island.

Crusoe first sets camp on one of the island's shores, that section of the island retaining the possibility of reconnecting to the social ethics. However, as he travels inland – the section most removed from public speech – Crusoe finds a land more beneficial than the barren and dry beach; a land with "different fruits, and particularly I found melons upon the ground in great abundance, and grapes upon the trees," finally concluding that "the country appeared so fresh, so green, so flourishing, everything being in constant verdure or flourish of spring, that it looked like a planted garden" (RC, p. 76).

However, as fertile as the inner parts of the Island are, it is impossible for Crusoe to remain within them, or to import their goods to his coastal home: "I came home … but before I got thither the grapes were spoiled; the richness of the fruits, and the weight of the juice, having broken them and bruised them, they were good for little or nothing" (RC, p. 77). By not being able to transfer "inner" riches to the public domain Crusoe, in effect, demonstrates the failure of a hermetically private human existence and language. Thus, affected by the similar conclusions to those reached by
Wittgenstein in his "rule following" and "private language" arguments, Crusoe sets himself to altering his concept of ethics.

Post-footprint Crusoe, as we quickly find, is not as happy about his "happy" desert" as before: "My only affliction was that I seemed banished from human society, that I was alone, circumscribed by the boundless ocean, cut off from mankind, and condemned to what I called silent life" (my italics). In addition, Crusoe realizes that not only has severed himself from societal ethics he, ultimately, conditioned himself to reject it: "I should now tremble at the very apprehensions of seeing a man, and was ready to sink to the ground at but the shadow or silent appearance of a man's having set foot in the island!" (RC, p. 120)

From this skeptical impasse it is real-life concerns which finally force Crusoe to break his wall of skepticism and begin to move toward regaining confidence. Noticing that in his perplexity he has neither fed himself or his animals, Crusoe halts the skeptical process, concluding that it was "nothing but the print of one of my own foot." Knowing well that this solution may only serve to stopgap his hemorrhaging psyche, Crusoe goes "abroad again" to "milk [his] flock," while still not quite on as solid a ground as before: "how often I looked behind me, how I was ready, every now and then, to lay down my basket, and run for my life" (RC, p. 121). Eventually, everyday life prevails with the arrival of his long-awaited companion – Friday.

The arrival of Friday signifies the triumph of everyday language and ethics. Hereon in, it will not be a transcendent essence substantiating Crusoe's actions, but the necessities of his own "ordinary" world. An example of Crusoe's changed attitude is his rescuing of Friday. In what may seem an "omen," Crusoe dreams of a slave breaking free from his savage capturers and running straight into his arms. However, when an identical scene actually takes place, one in which the slave does not run
straight toward him, Crusoe chooses to autonomously act: "I could not depend, by any means, upon my dream for the rest of it…. It came now very warmly upon my thoughts … that now was my time to get me a servant, and perhaps a companion or assistant … [thus] I beckoned with my hand to him to come back" (RC, p. 155).

Crusoe has realized that in order to truly partake in ethical behavior it is not enough to act as a solitarily ethical ideal – one which holds an outer, and unspeakable essence responsible for the happenings of his life – but what becomes necessary is actual action with actual people.

Thus, Crusoe emerges out of his incessant existential questioning with the advent of society on his island. Appropriately for someone who no longer looks for meaning outside social use, Crusoe dubs the slave "Friday," denoting he too intends to create a man on the sixth day: "I made him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life….I likewise taught him to say master … [and] to say Yes and No" (RC, p. 158). Crusoe goes through an abbreviated act of creation – he named Friday, provided a power structure, and taught him to distinguish right from wrong.

Thus, Friday is given a position in society, and provided with the basic tools needed in order to participate in its ethics.

Wittgenstein's eventual release from the confines of the skeptical conclusion brought upon by the loss of certainty led him to into "ordinary language" – a language which receives its meaning not from transcendence but from everyday use. Thus "transcendence" is replaced with "language games" and "forms of life," representing the various structures and scenarios of everyday life. In a similar fashion, Wittgenstein populates his solitary island with life itself. Once established, this tiny community multiplies incessantly until the island ceases to exist and becomes a country of its own.
It is not that Wittgenstein has changed his intentions, but, like Crusoe, realized the opportunity for misinterpretation in his older method. Showing ethics while living with others might be less certain, but it could potentially reduce the danger that their text, by not addressing ethics, might teach to ignore ethics. An example of such a reading is A. J Ayer, who was so "inspired" by "the work of Wittgenstein,"\textsuperscript{16} he concluded: "Wait until someone one says something metaphysical and then show him that he has used certain symbols to which no meaning can be attached." He adds: "Fortunately we can assert all that we need without entering the realm of the unsayable."\textsuperscript{17} Spoken like a true Crusoe. However, that Crusoe is rapidly changing.

When Friday wonders why "doesn't God kill the devil," Crusoe, instinctively reacting out of his dogmatic worldview, pretends "not to hear him." Yet he cannot, in his new state, ignore the "too earnest" (\textit{RC}, p. 167) Friday. Friday is taught that he is part of God's greater design, and that there is a meaning to this paradox which both of them cannot access. Crusoe encounters a question he feels he cannot answer, yet instead of shunning the paradox, as he had attempted before, he adapts an attitude similar to that of \textit{PI} Wittgenstein: "If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do" (\textit{PI}, §217). The \textit{PI}, unlike the \textit{Tractatus}, "is neither a book of proverbs nor a systematic argument,"\textsuperscript{18} as Marjorie Perloff comments. Instead, the once robust ladder to certainty morphs to a "'criss-cross' (cross-country) trip through the network of fragments that is the \textit{Investigations}, a trip that will gradually make it impossible for us to trust, ever again, the full authority of a given word or group of words to name a particular thing."\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the emotionally scant and informative journal, transforms into philosophical between Crusoe and Friday.
There best emblem of the newfound critical uncertainty, which characterizes Wittgenstein's and Crusoe's new outlook, is the ambiguous ending of *Robinson Crusoe*. The older, wiser, and significantly richer Crusoe, reaching England is quite similar, at first glance, to the one who left England a young man. The younger Crusoe, "satisfied by nothing but going to sea" (*RC*, p. 1), again sets sail to a new adventure, hinted at in the final lines of the novel: "all these things, with some very surprising incidents in some new adventures of my own, for ten years more, I may perhaps give a farther account of hereafter" (*RC*, p. 235). However, as I have attempted to establish, it is the means through which Crusoe chooses to practice his ethics that have dramatically changed. While the young Crusoe, wishing to completely shed society, sold his slave, Xury, to the highest bidder, the older Crusoe wishes not to discard but to add people to his newfound society, his new site for ethical behavior.

Thus, losing ones way is now an integral element of philosophical thought, as newly envisioned by both Wittgenstein and Defoe. Lost with Friday in the dark woods of the mountain pass, on their final way home, Crusoe is again assaulted by recurring existential doubt in the shape of "ravenous" (*RC*, p. 231) wolves. Devoid of certainty, Crusoe, by the end of the novel, stands abreast Dante at the entrance to Hell, facing a "Wolf, gaunt with the famished craving/Lodged ever in her horrible lean flank."20 This philosophical disorientation – "I cannot find myself (*Ich kenne mich nicht aus)*," as Stanley Cavell states – is similar to "the loss Dante suffers (loss of way) faced with the dark wood in the middle of life's journey."21 Crusoe is to set sail on another philosophical investigation, this time better equipped, or so he may hope, than the last. His life has become an embodiment of Wittgenstein's later conception of philosophy: not as a self-assured "tidier" of unease, but as a never ending endeavor,
one which yields few moments of momentary peace: "Philosophy and housework is never finished, but sometimes we stop, survey the site of our previous discomfort, and are content. These passing moments of peace are the ambition of Wittgenstein's philosophical and existential investigations" (WW, p. 84).

Finally, Crusoe and Wittgenstein cannot achieve a criterion which would go beyond simple behaviorist appearances, beyond the “appearance of fiction” (RC, preface; my italics). However, even though a definite criterion has not been found, a system which does not require it was. Along the way, we have found a better understanding of what that dynamic system of philosophy is. By viewing Wittgenstein's Tractatus and PI as a narrative brought together by a single footprint on the shores of Robinson Crusoe's island, we may see the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, and the philosophical journey of Ludwig Wittgenstein as two philosophical fragments by themselves that only preach the "criss cross" journey of everyday philosophy, but also act themselves as stops on that winding road.

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2. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963), 1.12; hereafter abbreviated T.


11. Gary Hentzi, "Sublime Moments and Social Authority in *Robinson Crusoe* and *A Journal of the Plague Year*," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 26 (Spring 1993): 423. In this work Hentzi relies in many of his references to the sublime to the seminal work

12. "Sublime Moments and Social Authority in *Robinson Crusoe* and *A Journal of the Plague Year,*" 425; my italics.


