

*Daniel Defoe*

*(1661-1731)*

*Father of English Novel*

# Outline of the lecture

1. Defoe's life and his literary career
2. **Close reading:** Selected chapter
3. On characterization of Robinson Crusoe
4. On point of view
5. On theme
6. Term: realism
7. Element of novel

- Memorial to "Daniel Defoe", [Bunhill Fields](#), [City Road](#), [London](#).



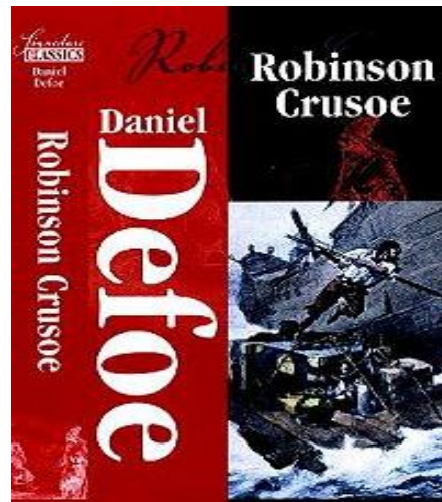
# I Defoe's Life and literary Career

- Born in London as a son of a butcher
- He became a hosier after schooling and traveled a lot in the Continent.
- Being a merchant, he experienced ups and downs in his business.
- The pamphlet *Hymn to the Pillory* made him a hero in 1703 and marked a turning point in his literary career.



- He started *The Review*, a political and literary magazine in prison.
- As his release, he worked as a journalist and pamphleteer.
- Valuable experience to cultivate his abilities:
  - 1) loved short, crisp, plain sentences;
  - 2) Capacity for observing, grouping and memorizing details
  - 3) Skills in use of circumstantial detail
  - 4) Faculty of creative imagination

- His place in British literature was made for him by his novel “Robinson Crusoe”
- In 1719, he published his masterpiece *Robinson Crusoe* at the age of 59.
- The novel is based on real life of a Scottish sailor. Defoe embellished the sailor’s story with many incidents of his own imagination.





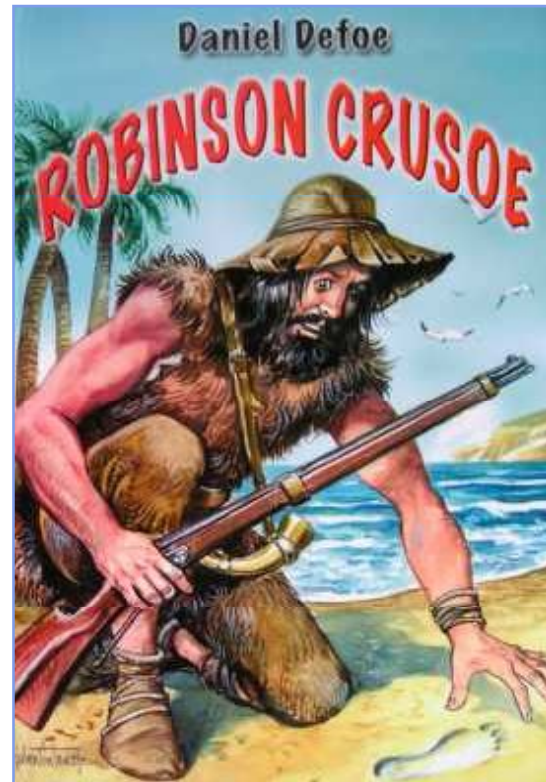
The Life and Strange  
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of  
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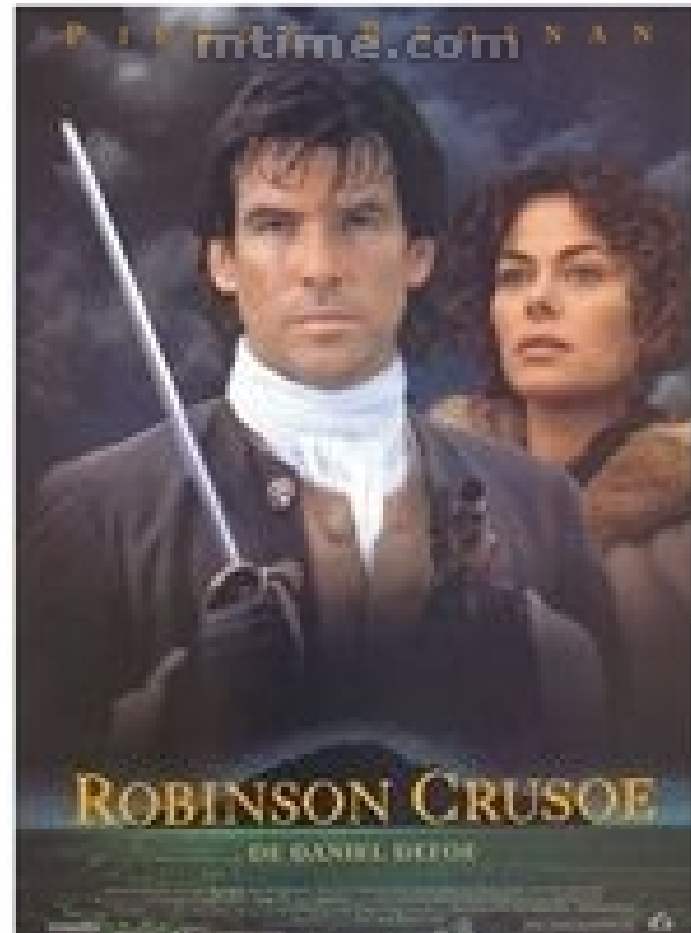
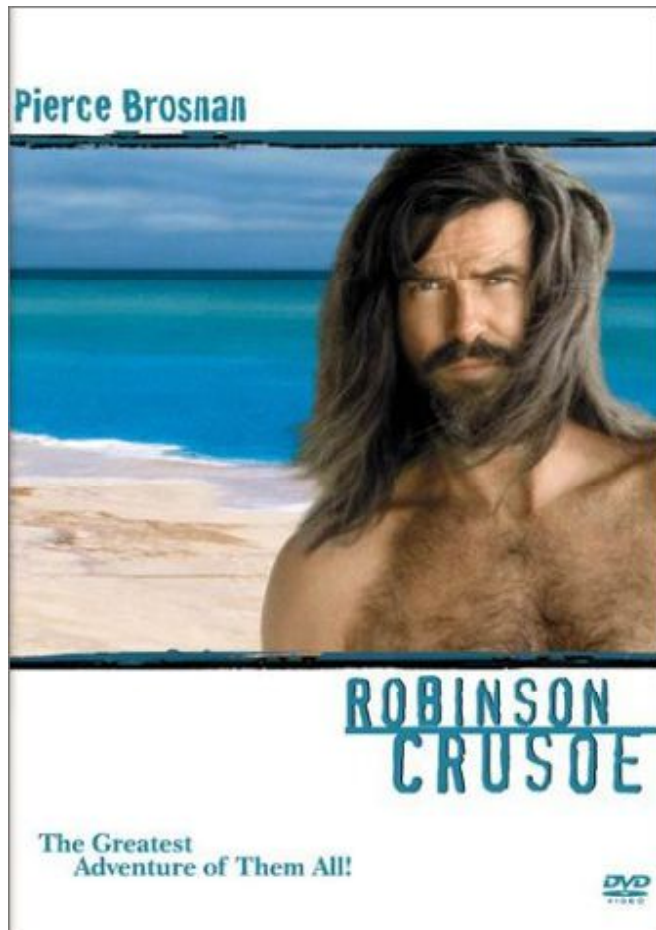
of York,  
Mariner

by Daniel Defoe

a podcast reading of the novel  
from [CandlelightStories.com](http://CandlelightStories.com)



# Robinson Crusoe on the Screen





# II Main plot of the novel

- **When does the story take place?**  
In the middle of the 17th century
- **Why does Crusoe leave England?**  
He dreams to be a sailor
- **When does Crusoe first settle?**  
in Brazil
- **On what condition does Crusoe go to a no-man island? Give some details of his life on the island.**
- **What's the end of the Story?**



### III Close reading of the selected chapter

- Why does Crusoe want to make a new dwelling? How about his original one?  
**against savages and wild beast;  
to have a more healthy and more convenient  
spot of ground**
- What are the key considerations in making a new dwelling?
  - 1) health, with fresh water
  - 2) from the heat of the sun
  - 3) from ravenous creatures
  - 4) have a view to the sea



- **How does Crusoe build his tent? Is it an easy job?**

**1) drew a half circle before the hollow place**

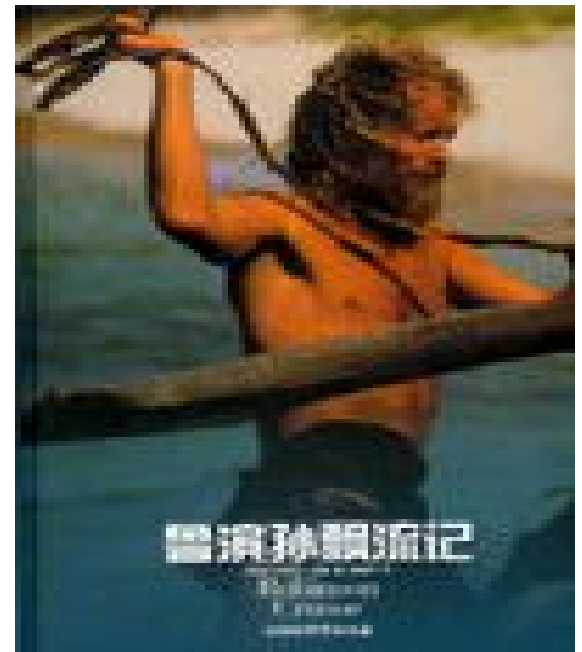
**2) pitched two rows of strong stakes**

**3) used cables to fasten the stakes**

**4) about the entrance**

**5) double tent with a smaller within**

**“it cost me much labor and many days”**



- **What has stimulated Crusoe to put aside his work to deal with his powder? How does Crusoe deal with his powder?**

**“I was nothing near so anxious about my own danger, though had the powder took fire, I had never known who had hurt me.”**

to divide the powder in no less than 100 parcels to store them into his cave and holes of his tent

- **What else does Crusoe do when dealing with his powder? And what does he find?**  
**to roam around the island to divert my self, to find food and to acquaint with the island.**

**Crusoe finds goats.**

**vivid description of killing a she-goat and her kid.**

- **How about his cave? Its function?  
serve as a kitchen**



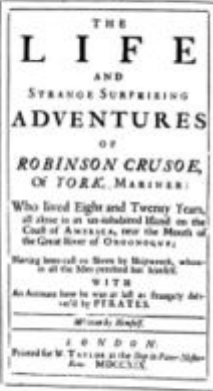
- **What do you find admirable in Robinson Crusoe from this excerpt?**

considerate, thoughtful;  
optimistic and strong-willed;

his marvelous capacity for work

his boundless energy and persistence in  
overcoming obstacles

his hard struggling against nature

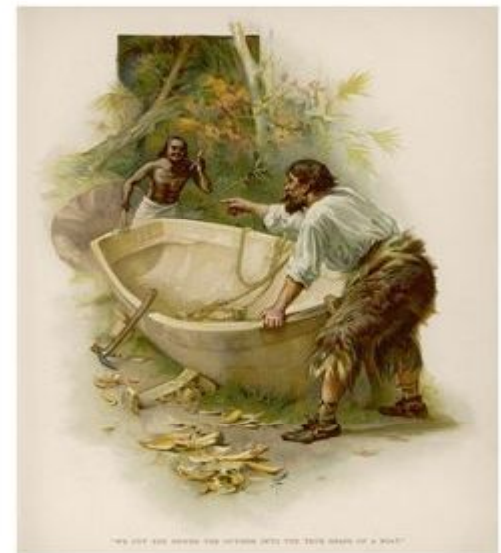


# IV The characterization of Crusoe

- Defoe traces the development of Crusoe from a naïve and artless youth into a clever and hardened man tempered by numerous trials in his eventful life.
- Crusoe is a hero with undaunted will and power.

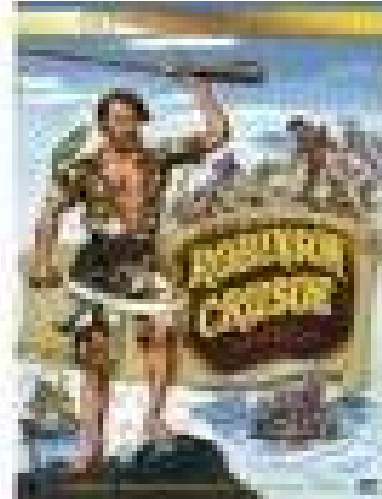


- **Crusoe represents a typical of the English bourgeoisie at the early stages of its development, practical, religious and mindful of his own profits.**
- **Crusoe is condemned as an image of a colonist, for he supports Negro-slavery and teaches the first word “master” to Friday.**

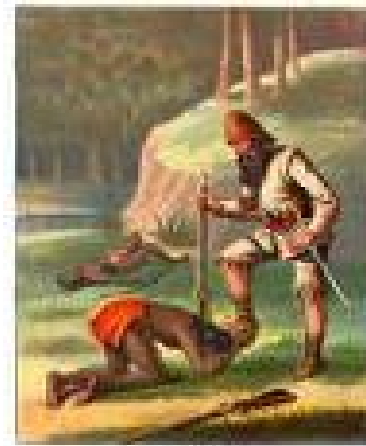


## Robinson Crusoe, image of a colonist

- **He owns a plantation where colored slaves are exploited.**
- **Crusoe assumes the role of a master. “master” is the first word Friday learns from Robinson.**



- Crusoe defines Friday's people as "blinded, ignored pagans, and remarks that by teaching his slave the gospel, he has become a "much better scholar in the scripture knowledge."
- His attempt to Christianity Friday



# Crusoe Saves Friday from the Cannibals

**Q:** What is Crusoe's motivation to save Friday from the cannibals?

**Q:** Being cultivated by Crusoe, Friday lost his own national identity at the same time. Do you agree this statement?

(master/slave; white/ non-white; Christianity/ barbarous eating group)

the center of Europe (欧洲中心论)



- **Definition of Colonialism :**

**Colonialism is the extension of a nation's sovereignty over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler colonies or administrative dependencies in which indigenous populations are directly ruled or displaced.**

- Types of colonialism
  - 1) settler colonialism
  - 2) plantation colonies
  - 3) trading post
- Land occupation is always accompanied with cultural colonialism.
- the significance of the image: "white man's burden": the coloniser's self-perceived "destiny to rule" subordinate peoples

## V Point of view

- **What kind of point of view does the excerpt utilize? What is the advantage of this point of view?**

the first-person point of view

1) to penetrate the inner feelings of Crusoe and demonstrate his character.

2) to enable readers to believe the story

# VI Theme

- Celebrates the 18th – century Western civilization's material triumphs and the strength of human rational will to conquer the natural environment.

## VII Realism

- **It** was a loosely used term meaning truth to the observed facts of life. Realism in literature is an approach that attempts to describe life without idealization or romantic subjectivity.

# Development of Realism in the 18th century

- **Major representatives**

- 1) **Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe***

- 2) **Samuel Richardson's *Pamela***

- 3) **Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling***



# Elements to appreciate a novel

- Plot
- Characterization
- Setting
- Point of view
  - a) the first-person point of view
  - b) the omniscient third person point of view
  - b) the third person limited point of view
- Theme

# Elements of a novel

- Plot

A plot is a plan or groundwork for a **story**, based on **conflicting** human motivations, with the **actions** resulting from believable and realistic human response.

It is the plan of development of the actions.

In a well-plotted story, **nothing is irrelevant**.  
Everything is related.

- **Conflict in plot**

- The existence of difficult choices within one individual's mind may also be presented as conflict, or dilemma. Conflicts may also exist between an individual and larger forces, such as natural objects, ideas, modes of behavior, public opinion, and the like.
- They are types of conflict: **external conflict** and **internal conflict**
- External conflict between man and nature; man and society
- Internal conflict exists within an individual mind.

# Five stages of plot

- **Exposition**: beginning -----middle-----end
- **Complication**: **rising action**, develops and intensifies the conflict
- **Crisis (Climax)**: the moment at which the plot reaches its point of greatest emotional intensity. It is the turning point of the plot.
- **Falling action**:
- **Resolution (denouement)**

# The ordering of plot

- The customary way of ordering the episodes or events in a plot is to present them chronologically, namely, in the order of their occurrence in time.
- **Chronological plotting**
- **Flashback**: device for interrupting the flow of a chronologically ordered plot

# Characters

- **Types of characters**
- **Protagonist:** the major or central, character of the plot. Such as Crusoe, Tom
- **Antagonist:** the opponent of protagonist, such as Blifil in *Tom Jones*
- **Flat character:** one-dimensional character (static characters)
- **Round character:** those embody a number of qualities and traits, and are complex **multidimensional** character. (dynamic characters).
- such as Crusoe **from a naïve and artless youth into a shrewd and hardened man, tempered by numerous trials in his eventful life. Tom is multi-dimensional character.**