

that we might trace back to the topography of the place and the physical conditions it imposes on the body, to ways of seeing it imposes on the eye, and at some less conscious level, to embodiments of mind and psyche that belong to the first experience and first mapping, of a house. These are open questions, I know; but I think I know some of the answers from my own experience—and it is, of course, from my own experience that I have been speaking. In outlining the contours of a sensibility, and tracing them back to place, I have largely been speaking of myself, though I have not wanted here to put everything in merely personal terms—I believe they are not merely personal—or to indulge too closely in autobiography. The question I raise is a general one. It may be the right time to ask it.

(1984)

William Dampier
from A NEW VOYAGE ROUND
THE WORLD: 1688

New Holland is a very large Tract of Land. It is not yet determined whether it is an Island or a main Continent; but I am certain that it joins neither to Asia, Africa, nor America. This part of it that we saw is all low even Land, with Sandy Banks against the Sea, only the Points are rocky, and so are some of the Islands in this Bay. The Land is of a dry sandy Soil, destitute of Water, except you make Wells; yet producing divers sorts of Trees; but the Woods are not thick, nor the Trees very big. Most of the Trees that we saw are Dragon-trees [*Draecena Draco*], as we supposed; and these too are the largest Trees of any there. They are about the bigness of our large Appletrees, and about the same height; and the Rind is blackish, and somewhat rough. The Leaves are of a dark colour; the Gum distils out of the Knots or Cracks that are in the Bodies of the Trees. We compared it with some Gum Dragon, or Dragon's Blood, that was aboard, and it was of the same colour and taste. The other sorts of Trees were not known by any of us. There was pretty long Grass growing under the Trees; but it was very thin. We saw no Trees that bore Fruit or Berries.

We saw no sort of Animal, nor any Track of Beast; but once; and that seemed to be the Tread of a Beast as big as a great Mastiff-Dog. Here are a few small Landbirds, but none bigger than a Blackbird; and but few Seafowls. Neither is the Sea very plentifully stored with Fish, unless you reckon the Manatee and Turtle as such. Of these Creatures there is plenty; but they are extraordinary shy; though the Inhabitants cannot trouble them much, having neither Boats nor Iron. The Inhabitants of this Country are the miserablest People in the world. The Hodmadods of Monomatapa, though a nasty People, yet for Wealth are Gentlemen to these; who have no Houses and skin Garments, Sheep, Poultry, and Fruits of the Earth, Ostrich Eggs, &c. as the Hodmadods have: And setting aside their Humane Shape, they differ but little from Brutes. They are tall, strait-bodied, and thin, with small long Limbs. They

by climbing up, usually on a
—exploring the dimensions of
fear—or by exploring, in the
people's bodies. There can be
under-the-house, guiltily or as
first touch or taste of sex.
life; but more deeply, a way of
e of our intellectual habits, it
awn from the life about us, of
to see. One such entity is what
Trend's description of how the
natures are, trapdoors, cellars,
far growing up in the kind of
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ne very shape of the psyche as
that is, how they visualize and
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nd local actualizations may be
inner lives of people. What I
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ned by the particular social
e, to come back to the present
ngs that we could isolate in
not spent their writing life in
od, John Blight, for example,
triguez, Rodney Hall (though
Queen, Gerard Lee, Rhyll
style of mind of these writers,
delight in variety and colour
'drama' and 'shifting views'

have great Heads, round Foreheads, and great Brows. Their Eye-lids are always half closed, to keep the Flies out of their Eyes; they being so troublesome here, that no Fanning will keep them from coming to ones Face; and without the assistance of both Hands to keep them off, they will creep into ones Nostrils, and Mouth too, if the Lips are not shut very close: so that from their Infancy being thus annoyed with these Insects, they do never open their Eyes as other People: And therefore they cannot see far, unless they hold up their Heads, as if they were looking at somewhat over them.

They have great Bottle Noses, pretty full Lips, and wide Mouths. The two Fore-teeth of their Upper Jaw are wanting in all of them, Men and Women, Old and Young; whether they draw them out, I know not: Neither have they any Beards. They are long visaged, and of a very unpleasing Aspect, having no one graceful Feature in their Faces. Their Hair is black, short and curl'd, like that of the Negroes; and not long and lank like the common Indians. The colour of their Skins, both of their Faces and the rest of their Body, is coal black, like that of the Negroes of Guinea.

They have no sort of Cloaths, but a piece of the Rind of a Tree ty'd like a Girdle about their Waists, and a handful of long Grass, or 3 or 4 small green Boughs full of Leaves, thrust under their Girdle, to cover their Nakedness.

They have no Houses, but lie in the open Air, without any covering; the Earth being their Bed, and the Heaven their Canopy. Whether they cohabit one Man to one Woman, or promiscuously, I know not: but they do live in Companies, 20 or 30 Men, Women, and Children together. Their only Food is a small sort of Fish, which they get by making Wars [weirs] of Stone across little Coves or Branches of the Sea; every Tide bringing in the small Fish, and there leaving them for a Prey to these People, who constantly attend there to search for them at Low-water. This small Fry I take to be the top of their Fishery: They have no Instruments to catch great Fish, should they come; and such seldom stay to be left behind at Low-water: Nor could we catch any Fish with our Hooks and Lines all the while we lay there. In other Places at Low-water they seek for Cockles, Muscles, and Periwinkles: Of these Shell-fish there are fewer in their Waters; which, be it much or little they gather up, and march to the Places of their abode. There the old People that are not able to stir abroad by reason of their Age, and the tender Infants, wait their return; and what Providence has bestowed on them, they presently broil on the Coals, and eat it in common. Sometimes they get as many Fish as makes them a plentiful Banquet; and at other times they scarce get every one a taste: But be it little or much that they get, every one has his part, as well the young and tender, the old and feeble, who are not able to go abroad, as the strong and lusty. When they have eaten they lie down till the next Low-water, and then all that are able march out, be it Night or Day, rain or shine, tis all one; they must attend the Waves, or else they must fast: For the Earth affords them no Food at all. There is neither Herb, Root, Pulse nor any sort of Grain for them to eat, that we saw; nor any sort of Bird or Beast that they can catch, having no Instruments wherewithal to do so.

I did not perceive that they did worship any thing. These poor Creatures

You big ugly. You too empty. You desert with your nothing nothing nothing. You scorched suntanned. Old too quickly. Acres of suburbs watching the telly. You bore me. Freckle silly children. You nothing much. With your big sea. Beach beach beach. I've seen enough already. You dumb dirty city with bar stools. You're ugly. You silly shoppingtown. You copy. You too far everywhere. You laugh at me. When I came this woman gave me a box of biscuits. You try to be friendly but you're not very friendly. You never ask me to your house. You insult me. You don't know how to be with me. Road road road tree tree. I came from crowded and many. I came from rich. You have nothing to offer. You're poor and spread thin. You big. So what. I'm small. It's what's in. You silent on Sunday. Nobody on your streets. You dead at night. You go to sleep too early. You don't excite me. You scare me with your hopeless. Asleep when you walk. Too hot to think. You big awful. You don't match me. You burnt out. You too

ANIA WALWICZ
AUSTRALIA

(1697)

Water, but old Wells on the sandy Bays. where we thought that they would come. In all our search we found no searched no farther; but left a great many Toys ashore, in such places had made Fires. At last, being out of hopes to find their Habitations, we find their Houses; but found none: yet we saw many places where they run away and hid themselves. We searched afterwards 3 Days in hopes to some Provision among them. But the Inhabitants, seeing our Boat coming, Canoa to get some Acquaintance with them: for we were in hopes to get January the 5th, and seeing Men walking on the Shore, we presently sent a understand one word that they said. We anchored, as I said before, These People speak somewhat thro' the Throat; but we could not their Hands, they drill the soft piece till it smoaks, and at last takes fire. piece, and then rubbing or twirling the hard piece between the Palms of like a Pencil, they put that sharp end in the hole or dent of the flat soft Stick, about the bigness of ones little Finger, and sharpening it at one end make a small dent in one side of it, then they take another hard round the Experiment: They take a flat piece of Wood that is pretty soft, and Wood. I have seen the Indians of Bon-Airy do it, and have my self tried How they get their Fire I know not; but, probably, as Indians do, out of America do, described in Chap. IV. Metal; therefore it is probable they use Stone-Hatchets, as some Indians in and hardened afterwards by heat. I saw no Iron, nor any other sort of somewhat like a Cutlass. The Lance is a long strat Pole sharp at one end, others had a sort of Lances. The Sword is a piece of Wood shaped them from one of their Fishing-places. Some of them had wooden Swords, endeavour with their Weapons to frighten us, who lying ashore deterr'd they have any that will interfere with their poor Fishery. They did at first have a sort of Weapon to defend their Ware, or fight with their Enemies, if

Brows. Their Eye-lids are their Eyes; they being so them from coming to ones to keep them off, they will the Lips are not shut very annoyed with these Insects, And therefore they cannot if they were looking at us, and wide Mouths. The in all of them, Men and v them out, I know not: g visaged, and of a very ture in their Faces. Their Negroes; and not long and their Skins, both of their like that of the Negroes of the Kind of a Tree ty'd like the Grass, or 3 or 4 small er Girdle, to cover their without any covering; the ppy. Whether they cohabit now not; but they do live lden together. Their only making Ware [weirs] of every Tide bringing in the ar. This small Fry I take instruments to catch great to be left behind at Low-Hooks and Lines all the ter they seek for Cockles, ere are fewer still: so that ea leaves in their Ware; arch to the Places of their o stir abroad by reason of urn; and what Providence the Coals, and eat it in s makes them a plentiful ery one a taste: But be it art, as well the young and go abroad, as the strong till the next Low-water, or Day, rain or shine, tis must fast: For the Earth erb, Root, Pulse nor any any sort of Bird or Beast rewithal to do so. ing. These poor Creatures