

Oh well, this is not at all
what I thought it would be...

William Golding 1911-1993



English novelist William Golding received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983. His work is characterized by exploration of 'the darkness of man's heart', deep spiritual and ethical questions.

In 1939 he moved to Salisbury, where he began teaching English and philosophy at Bishop Wordsworth's School.

William Golding



-- During WWII he served in the Royal Navy

His active duty included involvement in

Sinking of *Bismark*

Invasion at Normandy

Liberation of prisoners from Concentration Camps

William Golding

“The theme of *Lord of the Flies* is an attempt to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature. Before the [second world] War, most Europeans believed that man could be perfected by perfecting society. We all saw a hell of a lot in the war that can't be accounted for except on the basis of original evil . . . The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system, however apparently logical or respectable. The whole book is symbolic in nature.”
(In 1954 when asked about his intentions for the theme of the novel)

William Golding

“The novel’s primary purpose is to serve as a warning of man’s potential for brutality to his fellow man. I learned during WWII just how brutal people can be to each other. Not just Germans or Japanese, but everyone. I tried to point that out . . . Some have said that the brutality of the novel is impossible. It’s not. Just look at any newspaper.”

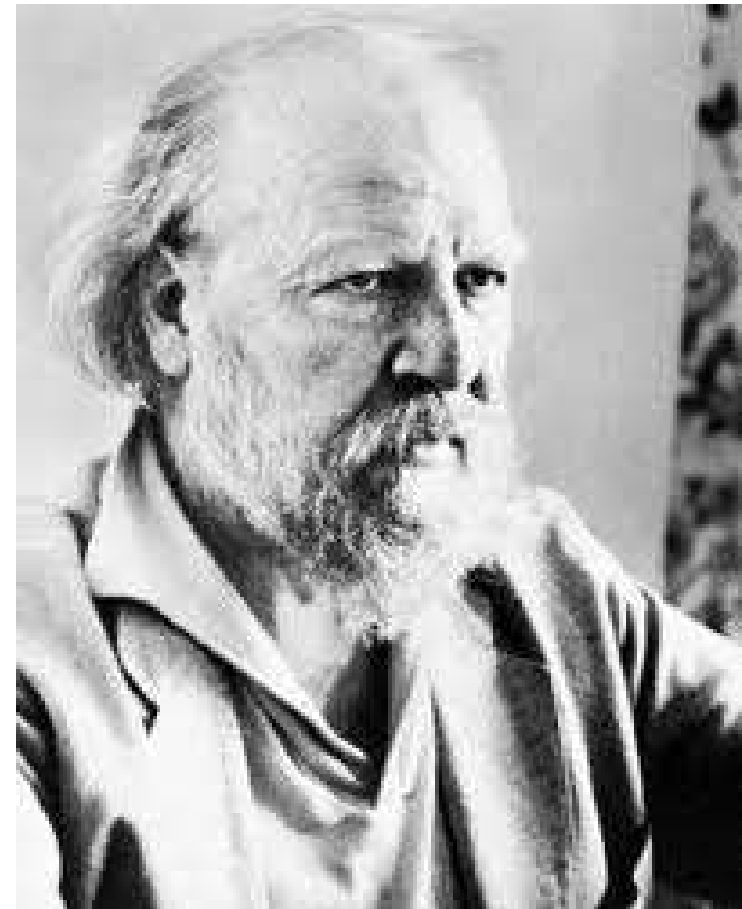
(during an interview in 1963)

Questions to Ponder . . .

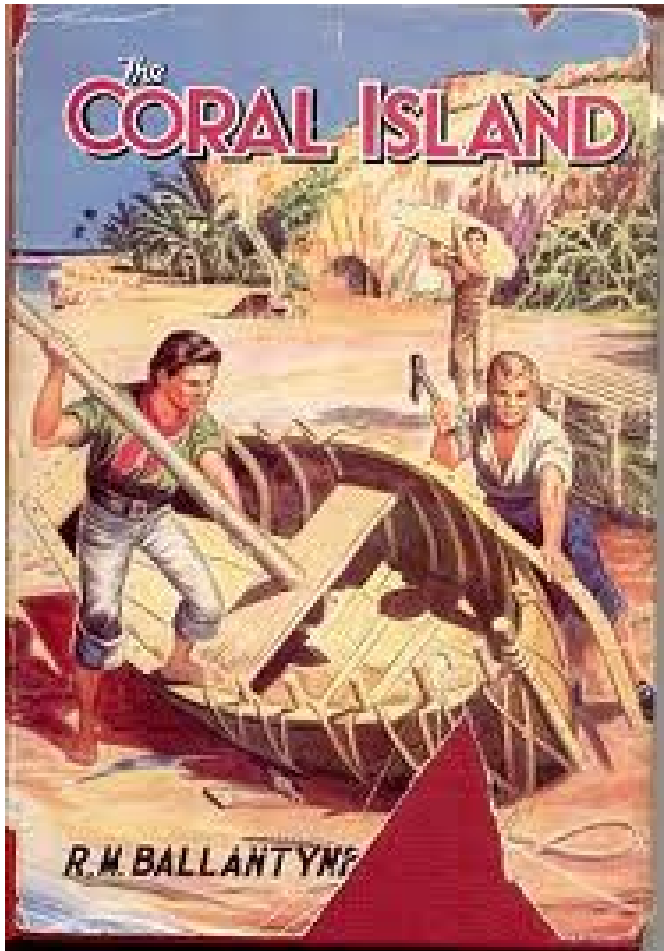
- Are human beings violent by nature?
 - Is the violence of human life – wars, violence in our streets, domestic violence – a reflection of our natures?
 - Is violence *learned* from our society, from our upbringing? (Media's impact, WOW, COD, etc?)
- Are we each born with a set of rights – from God, from nature, from . . . – which define us as human beings?
- Are boys and girls inherently different in their natures?

William Golding's introduction to *Lord of the Flies*

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYnfSV27vLY>



Coral Island by Scottish author R.M. Ballantyne 1857



Three boys, fifteen-year-old **Ralph** Rover (the narrator), eighteen-year-old **Jack** Martin and fourteen-year-old **Peterkin** Gay, are the sole survivors of a shipwreck on the coral reef of a large but uninhabited Polynesian island. At first their life on the island is idyllic; food, in the shape of fruits, fish and wild pigs, is plentiful, and using their only possessions; a broken telescope, an iron-bound oar and a small axe, they fashion a shelter and even construct a small boat.

Throughout their adventure the boys come in contact with many obstacles. They battle pirates and other nasty characters before they are finally rescued. The boys then set sail for home, older and wiser.

Oh, Gee, do you think he did it on purpose?!?

- “Ralph said nothing. Here was *a coral island*. Protected from the sun, ignoring Piggy’s ill-omened talk, he dreamed pleasantly.” (14-15)
- “‘It’s like in a book.’
At once there was a clamor.
‘Treasure Island’ –
‘Swallows and Amazons’ –
‘Coral Island’
Ralph waved the conch.
‘This is our island. It’s a good island. Until the grown-ups come, we’ll have fun.’” (34-35)



Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson 1881

- Robert Louis Stevenson understood better than anyone what children want to read about in an adventure novel. His novels deliver a rip-roaring good time: *Treasure Island* is filled with buried treasure and treasure maps, pirates and mutinies, gunfights and sword fights, narrow escapes, and a young hero who manages to save the day. Stevenson tapped into the stuff that the greatest legends are made of... helping to make his tale as timeless as any adventure tale. The novel offers a rare glimpse at a different time in history, when adventures were romantic and thrilling. It was an age when boys like Jim Hawkins could become heroes of their own adventure stories.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVX5ZfTcG>
[NU](#)

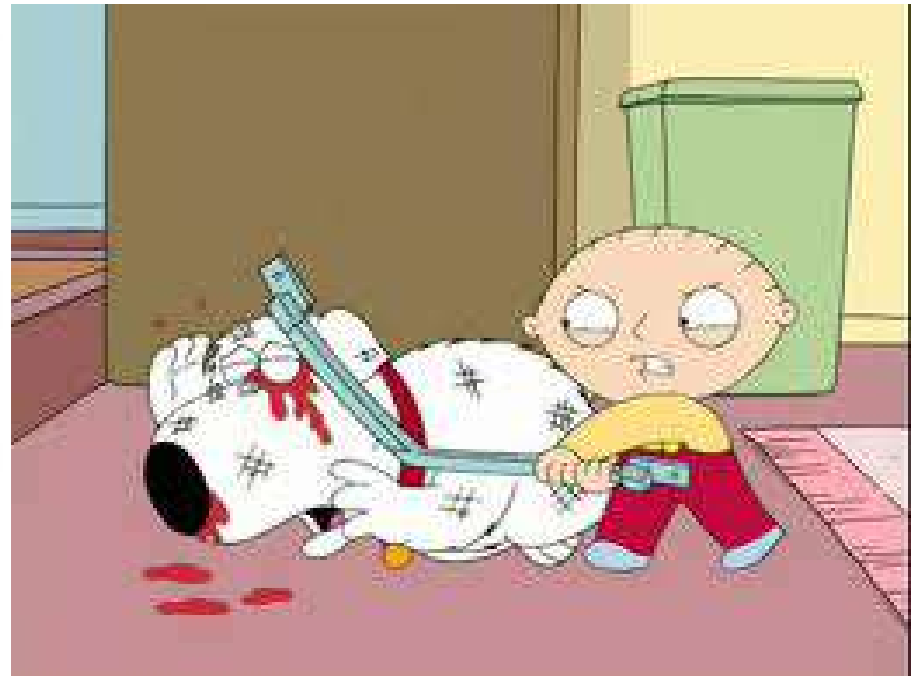
Lord of the Flies

- Title comes from Beelzebub (*Ba'alzevuv*)
 - Satan's right hand man / Satan himself
 - Decay, destruction, demoralization, hysteria, and panic
- Symbols so far:
 - Snake clasp on belt
 - Fruit
 - Edenic island with a scar (now that the 'fallen' humans – from the plane crash – have landed on it)
 - Taking clothes off / putting clothes on
 - Piggy being “fallen” Ralph being “golden”

These stories didn't accurately reflect
young boys or human nature according to
Golding.



Ballantyne and Stevenson



Golding

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8duykHFyXKk>

