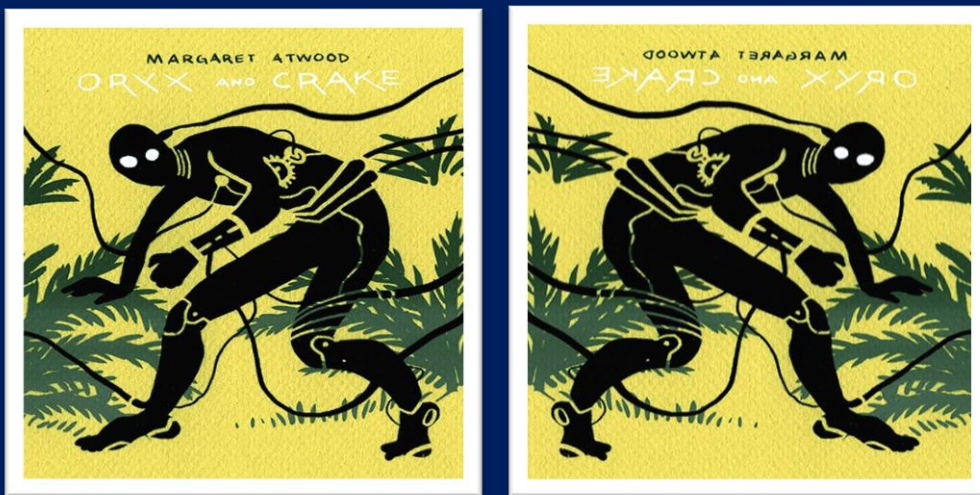


DEPARTMENT OF HISPANIC STUDIES
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

STORYTELLING AND POST-HUMAN RESILIENCE IN
MARGARET ATWOOD'S *ORYX & CRAKE*

JAVIER ÁLVAREZ CABALLERO

Wednesday 22 February – 5 p.m.
Arts Building, Room 3027



In Margaret Atwood's novel *Oryx & Crake* (2003) resilience is understood as the capacity of transformation that enables adaptation to conditions of adversity and crisis. Observing the current evolution of society, Atwood claims that her novel draws a dystopic plausible future within the parameters of the genre of Speculative Fiction. She combines the representation of two different realities: the first is a world in which the Sciences are more important than the Humanities, and in which violence, pornography and repression are common elements of daily life; the second is a parallel reality which portrays a post-apocalyptic world where human beings living in a hostile environment eschew the law in favour of their own survival while at the same time trying to find an explanation for the apocalypse. It will be argued that story telling becomes an indispensable element of resilience in Atwood's novel, aimed at guaranteeing human and post-human survival in a hostile and uncertain dystopic world. Moreover, it will be shown how the author establishes a chilling link between the way modern society is developing and the inevitability of its evolving into a post-apocalyptic world where utopia and dystopia are indissolubly connected in that 'Ustopia' she envisions in *Oryx & Crake*.

JAVIER ÁLVAREZ CABALLERO completed his BA at the University of Murcia (Spain) and an MA on "Advanced English Studies: Languages and Cultures in Contact" at the University of Salamanca where he is undertaking a Ph.D. on Posthumanism in the Works of Margaret Atwood. He currently teaches Spanish in the Department of Hispanic Studies, Trinity College Dublin. He has given talks on this subject at the University of Salamanca and in Trinity College Dublin for the English Staff Postgraduate Seminar Series organized by the Postgraduate Student Union.