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Abstract	Hayling—located off the south coast of England in the county of Hampshire—is an island thick with stories. Yet, as with so many low-lying islands, it is also in a position of acute vulnerability in this age of climate emergency. Bringing together creative and critical ways of writing, as well as fragments from a heterogeneous range of textual sources, this collaborative chapter is an experiment in the mapping of Hayling as sandscape. Through a braiding of topographical description and autobiographical reflection, literary criticism and flash fiction, the chapter explores the multiple ways Hayling's sand has been, and continues to be, perceived and experienced. At the same time, the chapter reflects on Hayling's status as a sandscape of ever-increasing diminution.

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Confounding Cartography: The Sandscape Diminution of Hayling Island

David Cooper and Michelle Green

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NOTICE TO ALL KITESURFERS
Private Beach
This is a private beach owned by Hayling Golf Club, and licenced to CBK (Hayling Island) Ltd for kitesurfing by its club members and customers only. If you are not a member of CBK you may not kitesurf at this beach. Please contact the Beachlands Office (opposite the funfair) for details of public kitesurfing sites on the island.[1]

* * *

Hayling is an island in the county of Hampshire, southern England. Separated from the mainland by a narrow channel, this flatscape is sandwiched between the tidal mudflats and salt marshes of Langstone and Chichester Harbours. It is an island thick with stories. Archaeological excavations in the north have revealed an Iron Age temple that was succeeded by a Romano-Celtic place of worship and, later, a Saxon ritual site. Moving further south, it is said that a grave in St Mary's Church marks the entrance to a smugglers' tunnel leading down to the shore. In 1932, Catherine Yurievskaya—the daughter of Alexander II of Russia—retreated to Hayling after a career as a professional singer; and, twelve years later, the island was the site for a

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mock invasion exercise—Fabius 2—in preparation for the D-Day landings. The island has a rich spatial history. Yet it also has a distressingly precarious future. Low-lying Hayling—as with so many islands—is in a position of acute vulnerability in this age of climate emergency.

Hayling, therefore, could conceivably serve as a key reference point for the Anthropocenic imagination. Curiously, however, it doesn't feature on the contemporary literary map. The preoccupation with place in twenty-first-century literary culture has led to an interrogation of Britain's archipelagic geography. This obsession is evident in *Islander: A Journey Around Our Archipelago*: a popular creative non-fictional text in which the nature writer, Patrick Barkham, maps out eleven small islands around the British and Irish coast.[2] It is similarly evident in critical scholarship since, following the publication of John Kerrigan's *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707*, the framing of Britain and Ireland as an archipelago has informed literary geographical analyses of a heterogeneous range of place-specific texts.[3] Yet, Hayling has not featured in any of the major creative and/or critical writings that have appeared as part of this archipelagic turn. When it comes to the literary culture of the present, this island remains surprisingly uncharted territory.

There are several possible, imbricated reasons for this cultural marginalisation. First, the archipelagic project has been informed—explicitly and implicitly—by a twenty-first-century imperative to reconfigure the geopolitical relationships between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In an article examining the "new nature writing", Jos Smith argues that most archipelagic reimaginings have focused on "a decidedly Celtic fringe and a perhaps more-than-partially devolved cultural geography".[4] In thinking archipelagically, the most popular and influential creative non-fiction writers—from Robert Macfarlane to Kathleen Jamie to Tim Robinson—have gravitated to the north and the west. To apply Kerrigan's literary critical thinking, then, Hayling's geographical location within the archipelago means that it is inextricably implicated within the paradigm of Anglocentrism—centred, of course, in the capital—that ought to be questioned and stripped away by twenty-first-century place writers and literary geographers.[5] In this analysis, Hayling—less than 100 miles away from Waterloo train station—is just too close to London.

Given that Barkham enthusiastically explores the Essex islands of Osea and Ray, however, the relative proximity to London can only be part of the story. Hayling's cultural ostracisation is perhaps also attributable to the accessibility of the island. As Stewart Williams points out: "there is a common conception (or rather misconception) with the pictorial representation of islands

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erring towards a perfect, totalizing circumscription of space".[6] In the popular imagination, an island is a landmass—almost invariably circular in nature—absolutely bounded by water. Hayling, though, falls short of this ideal as a bridge to the mainland was built in 1824.[7] Except on the spring tide, the modern visitor's passage onto Hayling is unremarkable as the car smoothly progresses along the A3023 that links the coastal village of Langstone with the northern end of the island. The bridge road carries you over Sweare Deep; but, even at thirty miles per hour, blink and you'll miss it.

Hayling's marginalisation may also be due to the material and social geographies of the island itself. Within its nineteen square miles, Hayling contains a range of landscapes divided into two parishes.[8] The thinly populated North Hayling is characterised by a jumble of arable farmland, barren wasteland and marshes. Both agricultural land and marshy wastes are similarly found in the southern half of the island. South Hayling, however, also holds suburban estates and parades of shops; marinas and beaches; a funfair and sites of special scientific interest. Hayling is a relatively small island in which a wide range of spaces and spatial histories coalesce. Ultimately, this complexity means that Hayling resists the kind of single, monolithic place-narrative that is associated with so many islands of the imagination.

* * *

Havant Borough Council, "Hayling Island Seafront Regeneration Analysis and Feasibility Study"

[…] Eastoke beach is a steep shingle, groyned beach which features the start of a promenade that runs through to the nature reserve and sailing club at Sandy Point. Facilities include car parking, toilets, beach railway, outdoor gym and playground and easy access to shops.[9]

* * *

Back in the 1970s, the whole of Hayling's south shore was sandy: an essential part of the bucket and spade holidays that it supported and the associated seasonal infrastructure that created viable livelihoods for permanent residents. This was pre-package holidays, when Spain was still for the relatively wealthy and holiday camps drew city residents out to the coast. My family ran Merryland Amusements on Creek Road, the east end of the island, penny slots and a rock shop, grandma in the cafe and dad on the bingo. You've seen the rest—now try the best; pulling punters in with their ice creams and wind burns, sunrise till midnight Monday to Sunday, all summer. Saving for the winter and its dearth of work, ebb and flow. But the sand did what sand does and it followed the water out into the deep channels of the Solent. This would have

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kept happening and would have eventually progressed until the seafront was stripped bare, and so in the 1980s, the local council laid over 45,000 tonnes of protective shingle across the whole of the south shore. The sand beneath became a bed to part-memory, a door to the past that would open only at low tide.

The arcades and rock shops have dwindled down to a few now, along with the bucket and spade, but there is still sand to be found on Hayling, primarily on the seafront's west end: East Winner sand bar. East Winner is rippled and pitted and stretches one mile out when the tide is low. The more islanders I talk to, the more I'm advised to visit the sand bar at low tide and walk out onto the only unmarked part of the island. It's the most special place, I am told, on the low and turning tide; this is where time becomes flexible, bending and shifting with the pull of emotional attachment. The sand of both the East Winner bar and the beach as a whole is articulated as the "natural" landscape, lying partially hidden beneath what is therefore implied to be the "unnatural" bank of protective shingle. The fact that the shingle arrived and continues to be moulded by concerted human efforts (wearing hi vis vests, no less) seems to lend it a sense of artificiality, as if by being built by overt human action makes the pebbles themselves denatured; with a few notable exceptions, shingle beaches are not routinely described in the lyrical and wind-swept language that sandy beaches enjoy. Meanwhile, the sand particles that lie beneath Hayling's shingle are imbued with an aura of the "natural" that loaded word that speaks at once of purity, timelessness and authenticity. There are no red letter signs. No "Private Drive, Strictly No Turning", no "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted". East Winner is the twice-a-day commons, free to all feet. We are welcome to walk on what was once sea, to tread the in-between and lean into the beauty of temporary, of constant change. So, of course, we do.

* * *

A hard and gravelly sand
dry at low water
& on it always
runs a
great
Tide[10]

* * *

In "Shifting Sands", an article focusing on an island in North Malé Atoll in the Maldivian archipelago, Uma Kothari and Alex Arnall set out to narrate

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"the multiple temporalities and rhythms of the movement of sand".[11] Their collaboration is rooted in the natural and human-made particularities on and around this unnamed place: a harbour and reclaimed land; the barrier reef and sand pumps; beaches and lagoons. Yet, although the article explores "the speed, pace and cadence of the passage of sand in, around and beyond" this one small island in the Maldives, the geographers simultaneously use that island to open up wider theoretical thinking about the complex relationship between islands and sand. Kothari and Arnall use this specific place to argue that, on islands, "localities where multiple forms of agency encounter and intersect, sand, with its multifarious movements and forms of stillness, haunts and enlivens the environment, the economy and society".[12]

In advocating "a greater sensibility towards, and understanding of, the movement of sand and its role in place-making", the authors make three wider contributions to the study of sand. First, Kothari and Arnall are attentive to the ways that "non-human agents, including sea, air, animals and plants, shape the temporality and spatiality of the movement of sand". Second, they endeavour to braid consideration of "the cultural and the material" by examining the "numerous multisensory and emotional responses" triggered by island sandscapes. Third, they attempt to bring together the radically different "temporal framings and perspectives" adopted by researchers—geomorphologists and ecologists, economists and socio-cultural theorists—for whom the substance of sand represents a shared object of scholarly attention.[13]

The authors, then, endeavour to understand sand through the intertwining of multiple disciplinary positions and conceptual frameworks. Informing much of the discussion, however, is a persistent preoccupation with process. Building upon Isla Forsyth's thinking on performance and the acknowledgement of the non-human, Kothari and Arnall introduce their article by referring to "the choreography of sand as a place-making process that occurs across different, interconnected temporalities".[14] Then, throughout the article, the authors consistently present the island as a sandscape that unfolds through the dynamic interaction of multifarious agents. The resultant effect is to suggest that: "Sand, a granular material, enables a narration of the island as always becoming".[15]

Hovering behind, above and beyond this always becomingness are two significant issues. The movement of sand, on this particular island, partly results from the economic imperative to satisfy the (mostly western) tourist's preconception of "a timeless, unchanging tropical landscape".[16] Sand is pumped and relocated to create the paradisiacal set on which tourism practices can unfold, while—behind the stage—the residents' landscapes are

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subjected to constant and insensitive modification. Alongside this, there is the desperately acute awareness of the Maldives as low-lying islands whose environmental vulnerability has led to an exodus of climate emergency refugees. The threat of catastrophic change adds an apocalyptic inflection to the understanding of the island sandscape as "always emergent, continuously recomposed by human and non-human agents".[17]

* * *

CBK Kitesurfing Website

> *Hayling Island is the birthplace of windsurfing and rightfuly* [sic] *boasts some of the best kitesurfing conditions in the world, the East Winner sand bar which appears 4 hours either side of low tide creates a huge flat shallow lagoon for over a kilometre out to sea producing perfect learning conditions, which can be ridden in any wind direction.*[18]

* * *

Before travelling south, I had a fleeting conversation with a colleague who'd grown up in the area. When I asked her favourite place on Hayling, she said, without hesitation: "East Winner. It belonged to us locals. It's where I learnt to ride". Back in the office, I couldn't find this toponym on any of the paper maps laid out on my desk; nor could I find it on any of the digital maps open on my desktop. Eventually, though, I spotted it on the bottom of a sea-chart of Langstone and Chichester Harbours: a diagonal protrusion, in dusty yellow, off the south-west tip of the island. Clearly, in looking *within* the black-lined borders of Hayling Island itself, I had been searching in the wrong place.

In January 2014, the skeleton of a "100ft, 85-ton schooner"—lost in storms in 1865—was discovered at this site.[19] Marine archaeologists had to work against the clock in order to document the wreck. *The Ocean*'s appearance, though, proved to be short-lived. As Julian Whitewright of the Maritime Archaeological Trust put it:

> The wreck has now been swallowed up by the sands again – there are just a few frame tops sticking up above the sand. In one sense this is excellent as it is now fully protected again, although it means that studying it further is very difficult.[20]

For the archaeologists, East Winner conserves the nineteenth-century schooner; *The Ocean* remains safely buried beneath the sand.

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> *"East Winner Bank Shipwreck: Archaeological Site Visit", Maritime Archaeology Trust.*
>
> *Access to the site is limited to a period of around 1 ½ hours, straddling low water. This results in a reduced window of around 45 minutes when the water is at its lowest and conditions for working on the site are optimal. Even at that point, significant areas of the site continued to be underwater during the normal spring tide conditions of 0.6m (CD) during which the site was visited. Accordingly, successful work on the site required limited objectives that could be effectively completed within the access window.*[21]

* * *

On the floor of Hayling Library, I sift through local maps and quickly find some that draw the eye to the spaces around, rather than within, the inverted T that is Hayling's perimeter. I unfurl a chart of Langstone and Chichester Harbours and blur my focus: yellow emerges as the dominant colour. In refocusing my vision, it becomes clear that white is used, on this particular map, to denote both land and shallow sea waters while yellow signifies the expansive sands off the Hampshire coast. Visually, this chart blurs the distinction between land and water; but, in contrast, a clear demarcation is made between sand and the environments that surround it. In this particular cartographic vision, the named topographies of Hampshire emerge as in-between spaces, and the sands themselves—Pilsey and Sinah, Mallard and Sword—emerge as locations in their own right. This chart of Langstone and Chichester Harbours functions as a mapping of sandscapes.

Sand, though, can confound cartographers. As I search through the charts, I start to notice an irregularity, an attempt to map time by mapping sand: some of the maps use the high tide mark as the definitive border of the island, while others allow the sea to give way to land, marking East Winner entirely in its temporary low tide state. According to the cartographers, it both is and is not. Sand and water, almost-land, and I wonder if that is part of its pull.

I look from map to map and wonder when they were made. I don't mean the year in which they were charted but, rather, what time of day. According to some, the coastline south of Hayling's Funland is clearly and unambiguously fixed. There are land, sea, and a bold black line separating the two. This, though, is a cartographical sleight of hand. The bay fills up and empties; the sand dismantles that illusory border. On many of the historic maps, the East Winner sand bar is submerged beneath the blankly blue space of Hayling Bay. The harbour chart, however, is different. Here, East Winner becomes

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the object of attention as the "always becoming" bar becomes fixed in both time and place.

I ask islanders about the sand bar and without exception their faces shine with the light of stories:

there was that time we walked right to the end, to the furthest tip, eyes on the horizon and the Isle of Wight and when we turned around again the tide had cut us off - we had to swim back, remember?

Auntie Anne smiles when she retells this. Swimming back fully clothed was the tiniest price to pay for a whole afternoon of almost walking on water, and the fact that the bank disappears each day makes it more precious. There's a special kind of love for a place that isn't. A transient land, a nobody owns it land, an unclaimed spit of sand open palm up, lifeline stretching from Langstone Harbour to the sea, heart line, love line, it's all here in the skin of your hands land. Both rough and soft at the same time, like the sand. Seaside fortune. Like those ripples, the steady pulse of the half-place, the sometimes, the twice-a-day liminal lick of land. Mental maps are drawn with emotion, and so they always include the sand.

* * *

Godfrey Baldacchino, "Re-Placing Materiality: A Western Anthropology of Sand"

[…] can one entertain memory and belonging without materiality? Is it not "things" which, become seeped in, and with, social memory in their production and consumption? Is it not materials which perform the past in their existence in the present?[22]

* * *

Havant Borough Council, "Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment"

LCA38 Langstone Harbour mouth.

Relationship to Adjacent Character Areas

LCA39 South Coast Hayling Island: *The East Winner sand bank is a product of the coastal deposition at the harbour mouth, and at low tide this contrasts with the shallow sea of LCA39. Good intervisibility, although further to the east the gap of the harbour mouth becomes obscured as it visually blends in with the adjacent land masses.*[23]

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* * *

Kothari and Arnall write about "the choreography of sand" as the place-making processes that occur across different interconnected temporalities—processes that are closely entwined with emotional and sensory reactions. Sandy place-making plays out on the Hayling seafront as a piece performed by both human and elemental dancers; the sea tugs and rolls the stage into a dynamic topography of shifting particulate while, further up the beach, waves of shingle are collected in dump trucks each autumn and driven along the seafront, returned to the unprotected eastern tip of the island—Greek drama on a Sisyphean shore. And if there is choreography, then there must of course be a choreographer. Lunar, human, gravitational. Close at hand there are the daily and seasonal tides that act on the sand and shingle: their dance partners the drivers, the trucks moving rock. Then the maritime traffic of Portsmouth dock, military vessels and container ships burning bunker fuel, the commerce that demands it, two clicks for a top from China, delivery in seven to twenty-one days. Carbon monoxide collects in the upper atmosphere, seas rise. The tide turns, sand hollows, music shifts. The people I speak to on Hayling build a relationship not only with the East Winner sand bar itself, but with its transience, both now and in a future where water changes everything. As plans emerge for more homes to be built on a sea-level, water-bitten island—bringing with them concrete-mixed sand—East Winner is out of reach of the developer's feet. And so it remains a common, for now.

* * *

"East Winner Bank Shipwreck: Archaeological Site Visit", Maritime Archaeology Trust

The tidal flow in the Langstone Harbour channel is dominated by the ebb tide when tidal rates can reach 1.5 knots (Bruce, 2008: 44-45). This has had the noted effect (SCOPAC: LT7) of flushing sediment seaward from the Langstone harbour channel to be deposited along the western side of the East Winner. The SCOPAC project also notes (O1) that there has been previous suggestion that the East Winner bank itself is partially fed through the westward movement of sand from the Chichester tidal delta. Although the mechanics of this are not proven, the overall sediment transport pathway within Hayling Bay is considered to be from east to west, allowing for deposition of material onto the East Winner (SCOPAC: O1) (p. 4).

* * *

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He'd lived on the eastern side of the island for almost four years. He'd been resistant to the move at first: he was content in his own company and hadn't felt the need to be "sheltered". Eventually, though, he relented when his daughter pointed out that Sandy Point would be at the end of the road. Sand has always been his substance, and, here, he'd have a new beach to explore. Yet he struggled to feel at home. Having spent most of his life on the west of Hayling, he was used to the evening dazzle; but, here, it was all about mornings and the rising of the sun over Chichester Harbour. More than anything, he was used to stepping off land and heading out towards the beyond. He was used to the sandscape of East Winner.

It started not long after he moved. His daughter came down from London and brought a map of Hayling in the 1950s. She'd read an article in the paper about how maps can help with memory loss, so she went online and bought a map which might remind him of his childhood in West Town. It worked. He spent the rest of her visit deep inside himself, re-treading the lanes that he'd once walked to and from school. His fingers scored the memories back into place. Yet the map troubled him too. As his eye roamed to the bottom of the paper, he noticed that East Winner—the playground of his adolescence—was outlined but unnamed. Once his daughter had gone, he cut around the edges of East Winner and Blu-Tacked the remaining map onto the wall above his bed.

The next month he put in his orders. He wanted more maps and he wanted those maps to go beyond the 1950s. He also wanted different types of maps: sea charts and geological surveys; streets plans and cycle routes. He built up a cartographic library of Hayling: each sheet unfurled and attached to the wall; each sheet containing an East Winner-shaped hole. As his bedroom was only small, it didn't take long for the walls to be completely covered. He soon got to work, then, on the living room, the kitchen and the bathroom.

Yet, although Hayling was all around—both inside and outside his flat—he longed to *feel* place. One summer afternoon, he went across to the bureau and removed all of the East Winners that he'd been cutting out. Spreading them on the small kitchen table, he started chopping again. Once he'd cut the East Winner shapes into tiny pieces, he cut further still. He carried on cutting. He was determined to granulate the maps.

The pieces got everywhere. Later on that day, he found fragments in the sandwiches he had for tea. That evening, he discovered that thousands of microscopic pieces had congregated in the bottom of a Sainsbury's carrier bag. Then, when he took off his slippers and socks just before bed, the mapped East Winners began to gather in the spaces between his toes. He continued to

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feel them there as he turned off his reading lamp and listened for the sound of the sea.

* * *

Legend has it that Tennyson's famous poem, "Crossing the Bar", was written after a particularly rough crossing of the Solent as he returned home to the Isle of Wight, which lies south-southwest of East Winner. In the poem, Tennyson wishes:

> *And may there be no moaning of the bar,*
> *When I put out to sea,*
>
> *But such a tide as moving seems asleep,*
> *Too full for sound and foam,*
> *When that which drew from out the boundless deep*
> *Turns again home.*[24]

Tennyson completed "Crossing the Bar" three years before his death, and if his words are the poetry of the Solent waters, then every year on Hayling the sea becomes more poetic, swelling over the sand bar a little sooner, higher, fuller. With the rise of the saltwater comes an end, or at the very least a redrawing of maps—perhaps one in which East Winner is consigned to sandy memory. I ask friends and strangers about the bar and the surf catches sun in their eyes and glitters; I ask about the steady rise of the sea and their faces turn. It is coming. For the low lying, for a long time now, and everyone on the island knows it. There are no climate change deniers on Hayling. The sea continues to swallow the sand and there is disagreement about time: some guess at one hundred years, some two hundred before it takes the land. Some sooner. Nobody knows, really. No one but other islanders, other sea-level neighbours of sand arms that slip beneath the waves twice each day and with every storm: Kiribati, Palau, Fiji, Tuvalu, Micronesia, Cape Verde, Sarichef Island, the Maldives. Places that so often rely on the fickle economy of sand-supported tourism, places where the line between land and sea shifts. East Winner is still marked on most maps, but when will it dip below and become a shoal, something noted only on the nautical charts? When will the sand no longer be land-linked and drawn in pointillist curves, on our records at least? Right now, the bar is the protective barrier between the harbour and the sea, shielding Hayling's western shore from pollution, from simply being swept away. It protects the beach, and so protects tourism, which protects islanders. On one side are the warm shallows and on the other is a channel to Tennyson's boundless deep.

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What is the future for life at sea level? When will the human choreography of sand and shingle prove too little?

Several locals tell me about the bells that are said to ring out in the bay, about how Hayling's sandy shore was once *so* much further out that not only have acres of farmland been lost over the centuries, but an entire church too. Although historic record does seem to show that Hayling was inundated during the fourteenth century, in particular, I can find no evidence of a lost church—only "Church Rocks" submerged in Hayling Bay.[25] But legends have a way of persisting, and the place of worship is collectively imagined to be able to withstand the onslaught of the sea; listen out on a clear still night and you'll hear the bells, I am told. I listen. Look on the old maps in the library and none of it is marked—no churchyard, no bell tower. All water. At some point our worlds pass from memory and fill the bottom of the deepest channels, the silt of before. I write about Hayling's present and future and the encroachment of the sea and I find myself slipping into the plural—"we", "our"—claiming my family inheritance of legends, an emotional connection to the island's sand despite only ever having known it, consciously, as a visitor. Are these stories the maps we must consult for guidance on our future, once-upon-a-times passed on, and down? Or do we look to the calm methodology of bureaucracy: the dry reporting commissioned by local councils and obscure branches of government, briefings read by fifteen people and the impression of control through the order of the official document. If bureaucracy is to be our guide, then we have a long history from which to draw.

* * *

"Coastal Management: Mapping of Littoral Cells", H R Wallingford Report SR328 (January 1993)
SUB-CELL 5a Selsey Bill to Portsmouth Harbour

COASTAL AUTHORITIES
District Councils: Chichester, Havant, Portsmouth
County Councils: West Sussex, Hampshire (England)

GENERAL
The coast is an eroding one and coast protection works have a knock on effect.

BEACHES
Shingle storm ridges over sand lower foreshores.

LITTORAL PROCESSES
A moderate westward drift due to southerly and easterly waves (predominant south-westerly waves diffracted towards north by the Isle of Wight). Rate of drift in recent

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years has been considerably reduced due to coast protection works and the diminution of beach material supply has been causing erosion from Selsey to Hayling. The drift is intercepted by harbour mouths and beach material is transported offshore onto tidal deltas by rapid ebb currents.[26]

* * *

In the remote language of official documentation, we again witness the choreography of sand: the diminution of beach material—diminution meaning not only to decrease but also, in musical terms, to repeat a theme of notes in one half or one quarter the length of those notes in the original theme. The music speeds up, and the choreographers ensure that the sand and shingle dancers keep pace with the accompaniment.

The report continues:

Some evidence of an onshore supply of material along with frontage but supply is very small compared with "demand".[27]

Those quotation marks speak of euphemism. The "demand" of the sea (pull of the boundless deep) against the supply of the shoreline. The demand against which we are individually so ill-equipped to meet; the demand that we collectively stoke by feeding the engines of climate change, melting ice caps and drowning sand. Demand drives lives, it drives motion, migration. My family lived on the end of the island routinely described as most at risk of being overcome by the sea. Before they left to follow work as it departed, they sat in the pub on a spring tide and lifted their feet as the sea swept in through the front door, across the floor and then out again. "Everyone just laughed", Mum tells me, "and then we finished our drinks".

* * *

"Hayling Seafront Masterplan 2012", Havant Borough Council

The Hayling Island coastline is at a significant risk from both flooding and coastal erosion. This risk is likely to increase considerably with projected climate change in subsequent years. The East Solent Management Plan aims to manage this threat by employing appropriate coastal protection techniques in strategic locations along the coast.[28]

* * *

Between 1941 and 1950, the aeronautical engineer and popular novelist, Nevil Shute, lived at Pond Head House: a large property in south-east

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Hayling. Over the years, local rumours have attached themselves to Shute's time on the island: stories of séances, held in Salt House, encouraged by a wartime government keen to establish contact with the Knights Templar who, so it goes, had once brought the Holy Grail onto Hayling.[29] Shute wrote prolifically during those years at Pond Head House. It was after emigrating to Australia, though, that Shute wrote his "most famous" work of fiction: the apocalyptic novel, *On the Beach* (1957), that documents the spread of deadly radiation from the Northern to the Southern Hemispheres following nuclear war. Focusing on four main characters located in and around Melbourne, "*On the Beach* finds its premise", according to Eleanor Smith, "in the spatial positioning" of that city "on the 'edge of the world'".[30] Melbourne, as the world's southernmost major city, is the last conurbation to be "desiccated" as a result of "the relentless, inescapable advance of the zone of radioactivity, removing all trace of human life from latitude after latitude on its way" towards Antarctica.[31]

Much of *On the Beach* focuses on the absurdly quotidian activities of characters who know—with varying degrees of acceptance—that time is short. The phrase, "on the beach", is a naval "slang expression normally, and originally, meaning retired from Service, but […] sometimes used to describe an appointment to a shore establishment".[32] The title of Shute's novel, then, refers to the fact that Dwight Towers—the captain of an American submarine docked in Melbourne—finds himself spending more time on land than out at sea. As Smith points out, though, the beach also plays a significant narrative function, operating "as a persistent setting that […] signifies the characters' denial of their fate".[33] The main actors sunbathe and swim, picnic and drink on the sandscapes of Victoria as catastrophe creeps towards them. As Smith also explains, the beach in the novel is symbolic as well as material in that it comes to represent "the liminal space" that the characters "occupy as they enter the final months of life". This trope of liminality was unambiguously visualised when, on the original cover of the text, the four main characters were depicted "on what Shute explicitly stipulated as the banks of the River Styx".[34] The novel, conforming to apocalyptic type, ends with the characters about to cross that threshold as they take their own lives rather than die from the effects of contamination.

In many ways, *On the Beach* is clearly a cultural product of its geopolitical time: a nightmarish response to the post-Hiroshima posturings of the Cold War era. Read sixty years after its publication, however, Shute's apocalyptic vision carries a different resonance in that it "provides a timely, frightening reflection of the crisis – and responsibility – reverberating through our own everyday lives".[35] This Anthropocenic resonance is deepened by returning to

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the quotation from T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" (1925) that provides the epigraph to the novel:

> *This is the way the world ends*
> *This is the way the world ends*
> *This is the way the world ends*
> *Not with a bang but a whimper.*[36]

In the final weeks of Shute's irradiated world, his naval characters take to the water to peer at deserted cities and towns through a periscope, diligently recording radiation levels in the air above and noting the stillness of the land. They repeat, again and again, that there is nothing they can see—no bombsites, no damage—and fret about the quality of their reports given that they have only absence to log. In a conversation about their inability to comprehend that the end is coming, John, a civilian scientist, cuts in:

> "No imagination whatsoever," remarked the scientist. "It's the same with all you service people. 'That can't possibly happen to *me*'." He paused. "But it can. And it certainly will."[37]

On Hayling, we observe the sea from the land. We use our maps and reports and memories and histories and hearts to mark sand as ours, even if only temporarily, even as we see its diminution and hear the music speed up, and in doing so, we hold onto the sand bar through high tide and storm, and we try to defy the arrival of the deep.

* * *

Julian Hoffman, "Irreplaceable"

> *We live in an age of diminution, thinning, disappearances. We live alongside shadows – ghosts of our own making. There is no easy way to convey the magnitude of loss currently underway in the natural world.*[38]

Endnote

This piece of writing is an experiment in collaboration. To begin, our shared ambition—as a writer of short stories and as an academic—was to put creative non-fiction and critical writing together within the one textual space. Our hope was that the situating of these two forms side by side would lead to a thickening of the portrait of place. As the writing progressed, however, the boundaries between these two seemingly distinct modes began

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to break down: grains of literary critical thinking found their way into the sections designated as "creative"; particles of creativity seeped into the scholarly elements. Our habitual ways of writing about place, then, began to coalesce.

On reflection, therefore, we are no longer to assert with absolute certainty who was originally responsible for authoring which particular sections. More than that, we are no longer certain who was originally responsible for which ideas as, through the iterative processes of conversation and collaboration, the boundaries between our ways of thinking—as well as writing—about place have dissolved. It might seem surprising, then, that the chapter still contains the occasional use of the first person. We could have sought to have clarified such uses of the "I" by attributing authorship through paratextual notes. This, however, would have been an illusion and a denial of the complex aggregate that this work has become. Rather than imposing what would be a false division onto the narrative voice of this piece, we have instead taken not only our subject but our form and our approach from the ever-shifting ground of Hayling's liminal border, where the sand refuses to be neatly mapped.

Notes

1. Text from an information board erected by the Kitesports company, CBK Hayling Island.
2. Patrick Barkham, *Islander: A Journey Around Our Archipelago* (London: Granta, 2017).
3. John Kerrigan, *Archipelagic English: Literature, History, and Politics 1603–1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
4. Jos Smith, "An Archipelagic Literature: Re-framing 'The New Nature Writing'", *Green Letters*, 17, no. 1 (2013): 5–15.
5. Smith, "An Archipelagic Literature", 2.
6. Stewart Williams, "Virtually Impossible: Deleuze and Derrida on the Political Problems of Islands (and Island Studies)", *Island Studies Journal*, 7, no. 2 (2012): 215–234 (215).
7. Sandra Dawson, "The Battle for Beachlands: Hayling Island and the Development of Coastal Leisure in Britain 1820–1960", *The International Journal of Regional and Local Studies*, 3, no. 1 (2007): 56–80.
8. Anon., "Hayling Island", in *A History of the County of Hampshire*, ed. William Page, Vol. 3 (London: Victoria County History, 1908), 129.
9. Havant Borough Council, "Hayling Island Seafront Regeneration Analysis and Feasibility Study" (2019), 91, accessed 9 August 2019, https://www.havant.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Hayling%20Seafront%20Regen%20Study%20Reduced%20size.pdf.

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10. Text taken from hand-drawn map from circa 1759 held in Hayling Library.
11. Uma Kothari and Alex Arnall, "Shifting Sands: The Rhythms and Temporalities of Island Sandscapes", *GeoForum*, 108 (2020): 305–314 (305).
12. Kothari and Arnall, "Shifting Sands", 306.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 305.
15. Ibid., 306.
16. Ibid., 312.
17. Ibid., 309.
18. Anon., "Hayling Island", *CBK Kitesurfing*, accessed 9 August 2019, https://www.cbk-haylingisland.com/location/.
19. Anon., "Storms Reveal 1865 Wreck Off Hayling", *Portsmouth News* (15 July 2014), accessed 9 August 2019, https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/people/storms-reveal-1865-wreck-off-hayling-1-6178927.
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21. Maritime Archaeology Trust, "East Winner Bank Shipwreck: Archaeological Site Visit" (May 2014), 5, accessed 15 January 2020, https://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/uploads/publications/MAT_EastWinnerBankShipwreck_May2014.pdf.
22. Godfrey Baldacchino, "Re-Placing Materiality: A Western Anthropology of Sand", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37, no. 3 (2010): 763–778 (764).
23. Havant Borough Council, "Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment" (February 2007), 26, accessed 9 August 2019, https://www.havant.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Section%201.pdf.
24. Alfred Tennyson, "Crossing the Bar", in *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks, Vol. 3, 2nd edn. (Harlow: Longman, 1987), 254.
25. Charles John Longcroft, *A Topographical Account of the Hundred of Bosmere* (London: John Russell Smith, 1857), 215.
26. J. M. Motyka and A. H. Brampton, "Coastal Management: Mapping of Littoral Cells", H R Wallingford Report SR 328 (January 1993), 41.
27. Ibid.
28. Havant Borough Council, "Hayling Seafront Masterplan 2012", accessed 9 August 2019, https://www.havant.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Master%20Plan%20Update%202012.pdf.
29. See *The Secret Island of the Holy Grail*, dir. Robin Walton (Summerdale Productions, 2006).
30. Eleanor Smith, "The Poetics of Size: Rendering Apocalyptic Scale in Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*", *Colloquy: Text, Theory, Critique*, 35/36 (2018): 82–98 (86).
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34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., 95.
36. T. S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men", in *Collected Poems 1909–1962* (London: Faber & Faber, 2002), 77–82 (82).
37. Nevil Shute, *On the Beach* (London: Pan Books, 1973), 79.
38. Julian Hoffman, *Irreplaceable: The Fight to Save Our Wild Places* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2019), 97.

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Chapter 13

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