

# The influence of scientific advancements on our world in "oryx and crake" by marg...

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



In the new millennium, scientific advancements have increasingly come closer and closer to the reality envisioned in works of science fiction. Margaret Atwood grew up under the influence of the sciences, and her experiences as well as her bleak predictions manifest themselves in her 2003 novel, *Oryx and Crake*. The daughter of an entomologist and a dietician-turned-nutritionist, Atwood grew up as a tomboy in North Quebec, and frequently visited the surrounding woods. While her parents had a strong desire for Atwood to follow their path in science, the author chose a different field to devote her life to: writing. However, she has still managed to weave their legacy into her writing career, not only through the science-based world she creates in *Oryx and Crake*, but also in her works of poetry, such as *Power Politics*.

While other successful novels of hers, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Alias Grace* are built around women's experiences, *Oryx and Crake* stands out with its male protagonist and also conveys a strong tone of warning regarding the costs of unsupervised scientific progress. In this novel, Atwood describes a dystopian world through the eyes of "Snowman", our jaded protagonist, and we become privy to this new Earth which has been ostensibly wiped clean of all humankind by the actions of Snowman's genius best friend, Crake and to an extent, Snowman himself. The protagonist has the responsibility of ensuring the safety and longevity of Crake's replacement species for humans – genetically altered beings who bear similarities to actual humans in physique and speech alone – and we accompany him on his journey to maintain his sanity after the metaphorical "Waterless Flood." Curiously, Atwood prefers to call this novel of hers "

speculative fiction”, as opposed to “ science fiction”, which some critics view as a way for her to separate herself from what she may not consider a legitimate genre of fiction.

Throughout the novel, Margaret Atwood makes extensive use of varied forms of symbolism, but no other symbols come quite as close to capturing her intended message as the color green does. By subtly implementing the use of this color, Atwood depicts a world ravaged by the effects of the conflict between hyper-intelligence and naive innocence; arrogance and humility; and complexity and simplicity. What makes green worthy of study in context of the novel is the varied manner that Atwood endeavors to use it, whether in describing the surroundings or as a reference to the actions of the main characters. Her message is one of caution towards ignoring the implications of scientific progress, and green is one of the effective tools with which she conveys this. Within the novel, green represents man’s brutish attempts at reinventing natural processes and the way the earth is shaped after one man is successful at bending nature’s laws to his whim.