Since remote antiquity, for a wide variety of reasons, people have left home and hit the road. Journeys have always been a part of life, and travel writing has a long and varied history as a literary genre. We will read a wide range of travel accounts, including tourism; pilgrimages; exploration and colonization; and journeys of self-discovery (which almost all journeys are, in some way). We’ll also study involuntary or quasi-voluntary travelers, such as migrants or refugees. As we meet a variety of travelers—from a medieval mystic to a Spanish conquistador to a Black Muslim revolutionary—we’ll ask what shared features define travel writing as a genre, how it developed over the centuries, and how it intersects with other literary genres, such as autobiography.

Course objectives / learning outcomes
1. Identify common features or conventions of travel writing as a literary genre.
2. Analyze travel writers’ strategies for reporting the world, representing the other, and revealing the self as the genre develops from the middle ages to the present day.
3. Develop the skill of analytical close reading of literary texts.
4. Develop a clear interpretive thesis for a critical essay on literature and support it, using textual evidence and logical argument.
Required texts
Alain de Botton, *The Art of Travel* (Vintage)
Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters* (Broadview)
Cheryl Strayed, *Wild* (Vintage)

Additional readings posted on Canvas under Files.
You must have the assigned edition of each required text to be able to participate in class!

Course requirements and grade breakdown
1. Syllabus quiz 5%
2. Attendance and participation 10%
3. Reading journal / Commonplace book 15%
4. Mini-travelogue plus Reflection (2-3 pp.) 10%
5. Close readings (2) 10% each
6. Film review 5%
7. Final essay prospectus 5%
8. Final essay (5-6 pp.) 30%

A course grade of C or better is required for English major credit.

Late policy: I accept one late assignment per term; use this option wisely. “On time” means on the due date. A late assignment is due at the next class meeting after the due date; Canvas assignments will stay open until then. For the film review (due last day of class), late papers are due with the final paper on Tuesday of finals week. Assignments handed in after the specified time will be graded down. Final papers cannot be handed in late.

Attendance: I expect regular, punctual class attendance. This course is based on discussion, supplemented by brief lectures. The class is an intellectual community that develops over the course of the term through the process of discussing common texts and ideas. Each student’s attendance and participation is necessary; every person’s voice is important, as is the listening presence of every participant. I will take attendance via a sign-in sheet; it is your responsibility to make sure you sign in at each meeting. I consider attendance in your final grade. Two absences over the term will not affect your grade; further absences (not counting documented emergency) may very well affect your course grade.

Bringing readings to class: you must bring the day’s reading with you to class in hard copy or electronically. This is necessary so that we can closely examine these texts together—the heart of our common endeavor. If you come to class without your reading I may mark you absent.

Use of electronic devices: Laptops and tablets for readings and note-taking are permitted, but cell-phone use during class is forbidden. Texting or surfing the web during class time is distracting and disrespectful to your instructor and classmates. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave class and marked as absent; final grades will be impacted negatively.

Students needing accommodation: UO strives to create inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations, please notify me and the
Accessible Education Center (164 Oregon Hall; http://aec.uoregon.edu), so we can make appropriate arrangements.

**Academic integrity:** Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this course or at this university. All work submitted must be your own and written for this course. The use of sources—ideas, quotations, paraphrases; from papers, articles, books, or websites—must be properly acknowledged and documented. If you have any doubts or questions about plagiarism or the University's policy on it, go to: http://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code. In accordance with English Department policy, cases of clearly established plagiarism or cheating will result in a final course grade of “F,” and all incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. In cases of a second offense, plagiarism or cheating can result in dismissal from the University.

**Discrimination and harassment reporting:** Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at safe.uoregon.edu. From the SAFE website, students may also connect to Callisto, a confidential, third-party reporting site that is not a part of the university. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, more information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment is available at http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/content/discrimination-harassment. For details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees go to: titleix.uoregon.edu. As a Student Directed Employee, I will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration if the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or is a minor). I am required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the administration.

**Formatting essays:** Please use double-spaced, 12-point Times or Times New Roman. Essays which have larger font sizes, gaps, or irregular-sized margins will be penalized. In literary essays, MLA style indicates you need only the **page number in parentheses** followed by a period. You do not need to cite the author as in other disciplines (eg. Montagu 87) if this is obvious from the context. You must have a Works Cited section. **Longer quotes** must be indented, with no quotation marks.

**Examples of MLA style: incorporating and formatting quotations**
In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad describes the company manager as inspiring “neither love nor fear, nor even respect” (87).

Carretta and Gould explain that

the black writing that appeared during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – which included the genres of spiritual autobiography, captivity narrative, travel narrative, public epistle, sea adventure, and economic success story – is a literature of diasporic movement and cultural encounter. Born to enslaved African parents on a ship in the Middle Passage bearing its human cargo from Africa to the Americas and then brought to England, Sancho might serve as an emblem of most of the writers discussed in *Genius in Bondage* (5).
Works Cited:


SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

TOURISM

M (9/24) Introduction
W (9/26) Alain de Botton, 5-26, “On Anticipation”
Decca Aitkenhead, “Lovely Girls, Very Cheap” (Canvas)
M (10/1) **Watch** Rick Steves [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hifYpfW4Nj1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hifYpfW4Nj1) (26:08)
Read Alain de Botton, 101-123, “On Curiosity”
Guidebook selections (Canvas)
Carl Thompson, “Travel Writing Through the Ages” (Canvas)
**Mini-travelogue plus Reflection due 10/1**
W (10/3) Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad*, Table of Contents + 19-46 (Canvas)
M (10/8) Mark Twain, *Innocents*, Morocco (76-89); Italy (255-65); Istanbul (354-80)
Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 47-73
M (10/15) Montagu 74-126
W (10/17) Montagu 127-180
M (10/22) Montagu 180-220
**Close Reading 1 due 10/22**

EXPLORATION/colonialism

W (10/24) Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, *Relacion*, Introduction and 26-69
M (10/29) Cabeza 70-121 and Lalami, *The Moor’s Account* (preface) (Canvas)

PILGRIMAGE

W (10/31) **Watch:** 1)
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-r8QiownYw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-r8QiownYw) (3:20),
and (2)
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FwKpwwgSIw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FwKpwwgSIw) (6:20)
**Read** *The Book of Margery Kempe*, selections (Canvas)
M (11/5) **Watch** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7q_LcqbyKI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7q_LcqbyKI) (14:19)
**Watch** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4PqLKwuwyU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4PqLKwuwyU) (8:48)
Read Malcolm X, *Autobiography*, selection (Canvas)
TRAVELING ON FOOT
W (11/7)  Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 1-18 (Canvas)
Alain de Botton, 213-233, “On Possessing Beauty”
M (11/12)  Fermor 38-88
W (11/14)  Fermor 88-123
**Close Reading 2 due 11/14**
M (11/19)  Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*, 3-44
W (11/21)  Strayed 47-101
**Final essay prospectus due 11/21**

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
M (11/26)  Michael Winterbottom, *In This World* [screening to be arranged]
Mary Louise Pratt, “Thinking Through Mobility, 1980-2007” (Canvas)
Maaza Mengiste, “This Is What the Journey Does” (Canvas)
W (11/28)  Albino Ochero-Okello, “Arrival” (Canvas)
New York Times, “What It Costs to be Smuggled Across the US Border”
**Film review due 11/28**

**Final essay due Tuesday, Dec. 4, 12:15**