

English 238—Literature of Place
Tues./Thurs. 2:30-3:45
Dr. John Lamb

Reading—Writing—Walking



“We should go forth on the shortest walk, perchance in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return; prepared to send back our embalmed hearts only, as relics to our desolate kingdoms.”
Henry David Thoreau, “Walking”

As anthropologists Tim Ingold and Jo Vergunst note, “the journeys people make also make their places.” Walking or wayfaring can be thought of as “dwelling-in-motion”; and dwelling—“the rich intimate ongoing togetherness of beings and things which make up landscapes and places”—is one the central concepts in contemporary place studies. Walking, then, is a particular and particularly attentive way of experiencing the lifeworld.

Using an interdisciplinary approach, in English 238 you will read and write about walking. But you will not only study the literature of walking; you will also engage in a more experiential investigation of place by walking and by writing about your travels on foot. To quote Ingold again, you will learn to “know as you go.”

Possible Texts:

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| Teju Cole | <i>Open City</i> |
| Cormac McCarthy | <i>The Road</i> |
| Robert Macfarlane | <i>The Old Ways</i> |
| W.G. Sebald, | <i>The Rings of Saturn</i> |
| Rebecca Solnit | <i>Wanderlust</i> |
| Cheryl Strayed | <i>Wild</i> |

*Selected essays on walking by Thoreau, R. L. Stevenson, Virginia Woolf, and others

*Selected essays from geography, anthropology, and cultural studies