

“Lying by Authority: Travelers and Travel Writing”
English 120 College Composition II
Section 59030 Summer 2004

M. G. Aune
320H Minard Hall
231-7176
m.aune@ndsu.nodak.edu

MTWTF 1.00-3.15
Minard 135 & IACC 150D
Office Hours: 12-12.30 PM T & Th
and by appointment

website: <http://www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/maune>
<http://blackboard.ndsu.nodak.edu/>

Objectives

This course is designed to expose you to a variety of writing styles and strategies to help enhance your own reading and writing skills in a variety of contexts and formats. In particular we will explore the means by which writers establish and reinforce their own authority. We will approach this through a study of a variety of types of modern and historical travel writing, as well as other travel media.

The primary task of a travel writer is to convince his or her audience that the journey did indeed happen and that the traveler returned safely. On the surface this may seem simple, but to write clear, convincing travel narratives requires that one be able to organize one's writing clearly and forcefully. One must also understand the audience for the writing and adapt one's writing style as the audience changes.

Requirements

We will work toward the above outcomes through a variety of interrelated tasks, including small and large group discussion, informal in-class writing, and formal papers written outside of class. Specifically, you will write three formal, (library) researched papers that will gradually shift in emphasis from critical analyses of others' writing to a critical expression of your own ideas. This process will be further enhanced through a series of four summaries of readings from the course texts and a website review. Details of these assignments are found below.

Grading		Scale	
4 Summaries	100 points	A	100-90 %
3 Papers	300 points	B	89-80 %
Editing Journal	100 points	C	79-70 %
Participation	100 points	D	69-60 %
Total	600 points		

Texts

- The Call to Write*, Trimbur
- The Pocket Handbook* Kirszner & Mandell
- A dictionary (bring to every class)
- A floppy disk specifically for this class

Students with Special Needs

Any students with disabilities or other special needs who need special accommodations in this course are asked to share these concerns with me as soon as possible.

Academic Honesty

I assume that all work you turn in for this course is yours, and any material that you have acquired from an outside source is documented properly. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism and will result in possible failure of the course. See NDSU University Senate Policy, Section 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct <http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/policy/335.htm>.

Late Papers

Late papers will not be accepted and receive a score of zero. Papers must be physically turned in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. No emailed or faxed papers.

Attendance

Important parts of the work for this course will be done in small and large groups. This means that your consistent presence is important to the success of the class as a whole. If you are unable to attend class, you must contact me via phone or email within twenty-four hours. You are still responsible for any work done or due in class that day. Similarly, you are responsible for contacting your group members if you miss a class.

Because this course is so brief, one absence will result in the loss of a full grade from your final grade. Two absences will result in a loss of two grades. Three will result in failure. In order to be considered present, you must be in class for the entire course meeting time.

Participation

Your participation score will take into consideration your preparation for class, contribution to class discussion, and bring books and materials to every class meeting. It will also include any non-scored in-class writing exercises.

Paper Format

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be type-written, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, in twelve-point Times font. Your name, the date, the class, my name and the assignment are to be at the top of the first page. Don't forget to title your work. Any papers longer than one page must have page numbers and be stapled.

Editing Journal

This is to be kept in a blue book. After you receive a paper back from myself or a peer, make an entry for that paper in the blue book. The entry should describe any mechanical errors and their corrections. Second, it should note any content-based comments. Third, it should contain any problems with MLA citations or the bibliography page. The goal of the editing journal is to create a critical record of your own writing so that you can better address your strengths and weaknesses. Your score will be determined by the comprehensiveness and organization of your journal. I will collect and check the journals periodically.

Summaries

You will write four summaries in this course. The summary will be announced in class for a travel narrative you were to have read for that day. These are to follow the paper format guidelines above and be exactly 250 words long and on one page. (Use your word processor to count the words and note the number of words at the top of the page). The summary should give the reader a brief, objective description of the story or excerpt you have read. Basic information such as title, author, setting, main characters, point of view should be included in the summary, as well as any other literary characteristics you deem important.

The first sentence of your summary should give the reader all the basic information he or she will need to understand your summary. For example: "Set in modern India, 'Scholar and Gypsy' by Anita Desai traces the difficulties an American married couple encounter while the husband researches his thesis." The rest of the summary will fill in the details, the characters' names, the nature of the conflict and its resolution, details about the setting (if necessary).

Points will be deducted if your summary fails to meet all of the above criteria.

Calendar

- 18 May Introductions
 "Siegfried on the Rhine" *Oxford*, pp. 312-13 (BB)
 "The Deep Fried Potato Bug" *TP* pp. 36-42 (library)
- 19 May *Call to Write* Chapter 2
 "Seeing Red" *Gift* pp. 59-70 (library)
- 20 May "Local Colour" *Oxford* pp. 143-51 (BB)
 "Letting Life Happen" *Gift* pp. 27-35 (library)
- 21 May "Scholar and Gypsy" *Oxford* pp. 251-73 (BB)
 "The Art of Riding a Third World Bus" *TP* pp. 177-81 (BB)
- 24 May Paper 1 due, hard copy and on floppy disk
 Peer Review
- 25 May "Why We Travel" 142-51 (BB)
- 26 May "Cuckoo Clock" *Oxford* pp. 397-410 (BB)
 "Death in Jerusalem" *Oxford* pp. 297-311 (BB)
- 27 May "Dragging the Family to the Magic Kingdom" *TP* pp. 58-64 (BB)
 "A Holy Holiday in Hell" *TP* pp. 108-114 (BB)
- 28 May *Call to Write* Chapter 11
- 31 May Memorial Day No Class
- 1 June Paper 2 due hard copy and on floppy disk
 Peer Review
- 2 June "Travelogue" *Oxford* pp. 119-29 (library)
 "Cruise" *Oxford* pp. 113-18 (library)
- 3 June "Crossing the Linguistic Frontera" *Gift* pp. 20-6 (library)
 "The Gift" *Gift* pp. 40-6 (library)
- 4 June Michael Palin *Full Circle* (film)
- 7 June Conferences (in my office 320H Minard)
- 8 June Conferences (in my office 320H Minard)
- 9 June "The Man Who Blew Away" *Oxford* pp. 373-83 (BB)
 "The Great Invisible Pheasant Hunt" *Gift* pp. 90-3 (library)
- 10 June
- 11 June Last Day of Class, Paper 3 due
- Oxford*: Craig, Patricia ed. *The Oxford Book of Travel Stories*. ed. Patricia Craig, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
Gift: Habegger, Larry, James O'Reilly and Sean O'Reilly. *The Gift of Travel: The Best of Travelers' Tales*. New York: Travelers' Tales Inc., 1998.
TP: Lansky, Doug. *There's No Toilet Paper on the Road Less Traveled: The Best of Travel Humor and Misadventure*. New York: Travelers' Tales Inc., 2000.
- Readings marked (library) can be found through the Docutek link on the Library homepage.
 Readings marked (BB) can be found through the Blackboard site.

General Education Outcomes Applicable for English 120

- Outcome #1: Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats.
- Outcome #2: Locate and use information for making appropriate personal and professional decisions.
- Outcome #4: Comprehend intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics.
- Outcome #6: Integrate knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner.

Course Description: Concentrates on the process of writing analysis and persuasion essays requiring library research and emphasizes the appropriate use of information from sources, sound reasoning, and strategies for persuading readers.

Course Objectives

1. Students will learn to write clearly for a variety of specific purposes and audiences, specifically to write convincing, researched arguments.
2. Students will practice effective and efficient writing strategies. The writing process (inventing; developing; focusing; drafting; revising to improve focus, organization, development, and clarity; and editing) is emphasized in a series of researched essays. Instruction is given in writing unified paragraphs, effective beginnings and endings, and appropriate transitions as well as the importance of standard English spelling, grammar, usage, and punctuation when writing for an academic audience.
3. Students will practice active reading strategies: to discover and acknowledge opposing views, to analyze and summarize claims and grounds from alternative perspectives, and to evaluate the arguments of other writers.
4. Students will begin to learn to construct arguments: to present a clear and significant thesis; to defend that thesis with claims that are supported with appropriate evidence; to persuade their readers through the use of appropriate rhetorical strategies; and to recognize common pitfalls in reasoning.
5. Students will learn to conduct library research. In addition to the basic resources used in English 110, they will learn to use specialized references, professional journals, databases, and, perhaps, fieldwork to gather specific, relevant, reliable information, to analyze alternative perspectives, and to use that information to write arguments. Correct and responsible use of MLA documentation is emphasized.