



MAS 210

Non Fiction Writing: Travel Writing

S1 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp

Corequisites

CUL240

Co-badged status

Unit description

Travel writers are observers, commentators and translators. Their work contributes to the creation of identity – their own, as well as the cultural identities of both their homes and the places they visit. This unit introduces students to the practicalities of travel writing, while exploring the ways in which the genre has been influenced by colonialism, post-colonialism, environmentalism, gender and technology.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.

Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.

Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.

Critically analyse and synthesise knowledge in the field in the creation of travel literature.

Understand the complexity of ethical issues that abound in the field of travel literature

and its creative production.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Class Participation</u>	20%	Throughout semester
<u>Research Portfolio</u>	25%	Week 7, Friday 2 May, 5pm
<u>SWF Article</u>	20%	Week 12, Friday 5 June, 5pm
<u>Travel Story</u>	35%	Week 13, Friday 13 June, 2014

Class Participation

Due: **Throughout semester**

Weighting: **20%**

Students must attend lectures and tutorials. As part of your participation in the course, you will be asked to complete three writing exercises and submit three sections of draft material from your Final Travel Story. *Note: You will not be marked on this work; rather, failure to submit any or all of the exercises or draft material will result in you losing the total of your participation mark.*

The participation mark is also based on your contribution to discussion in class, and your contribution to the editing of other students' work.

The following 3 Writing Exercises have been designed to:

- sharpen students' writing skills appropriate to the aims of the unit
- provide students with feedback early in the unit on their progress
- identify early in the unit areas where students may need extra help or encouragement with their creative work

Writing Exercise 1: (Due Tutorial Week 2)

Write 200 words about a character you have met in your travels. You don't need to have travelled far. It could be someone you remember from family holidays in a caravan park, or a crazy aunt you used to visit in Melbourne, or a teacher who took you on a school excursion. Feel free to use observation and description, quotes or dialogue or any other literary technique to make your character as real as possible for your reader.

Writing Exercise 2: (Due Tutorial Week 3)

Think of somewhere you have been in the past fortnight and write 200 words about your visit. Make it as lively and interesting as you can but **DO NOT USE** any adjectives or adverbs. Instead, use interesting verbs.

Writing Exercise 3: (Due Tutorial Week 4)

Visualise a place. Be there, see the details. Now write about it as if you love this place, but

without telling the reader directly that you really like being there (150 words). It could be a corner of your bedroom, an old tree you sit under on Saturday afternoons, a table at McDonalds, a place near the ocean. What colours are there? Sounds? Smells? When someone else reads it, she should know what it is like to be there and understand how you feel about it. Now, do the same thing but write about the SAME place as if you really hate it. Again, don't tell the reader directly how you feel but use your description of the place, and the tone of your writing, to convey your feelings (150 words).

(Exercise 3 has been adapted from Natalie Goldberg's book *Writing Down the Bones*, Shambhala, Boston and London, 1986).

Travel Story Drafts:

Bring 8 copies of 1 x 200-word draft section of your final travel story to your tutorials in weeks 8, 9 and 11. Each week, bring along a different draft section.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise knowledge in the field in the creation of travel literature.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues that abound in the field of travel literature and its creative production.

Research Portfolio

Due: **Week 7, Friday 2 May, 5pm**

Weighting: **25%**

Students will submit a research portfolio and report based on original research they have conducted towards their final travel story. Research will take the form of fieldwork, interviews and/or archival research.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
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SWF Article

Due: **Week 12, Friday 5 June, 5pm**

Weighting: **20%**

Students are required to attend the Sydney Writers' Festival and write an article about one seminar that they attended. The article should be 600 words long. It should give the reader enough information to get a solid impression of the content of the seminar. It should be written with an interesting lead and the article should answer all the reader's questions regarding the who, what, when, where and why of the seminar.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
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Travel Story

Due: **Week 13, Friday 13 June, 2014**

Weighting: **35%**

Task: Submit a 2,000-word original travel article based on research conducted for your research portfolio (as well as subsequent research).

Append to the story a 500-word reflection on the process of writing the story. Consider:

- *Why you chose this particular story/topic. Why is it important to you?*
- *Whether you found it confronting to write - and if so, how you moved through that stage to complete the piece;*
- *Whether you faced ethical issues in the writing (what were these? how did they affect your approach? how did you ultimately resolve them?).*
- *Whether the types of literary techniques you used were well chosen and worked the way you wanted them to (e.g. dialogue, a seductive opening/lead; observation and description, anecdotes, structure, etc).*
- *What you learned from using those techniques.*
- *What you learned from writing this piece. Why do you think it helped you to learn this/*

these thing/s?

- *Other comments you would like to make.*

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Delivery and Resources

Delivery: Day

This unit will use:

ILecture

Times and Locations for Lectures and Tutorials

For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>.

Resources:

A Reader of compiled articles and resources will be available for purchase from the Co-op Bookshop.

Technology:

Lectures will be available on iLearn, where announcements, assignment tasks and other materials to be used in tutorials will be posted as needed.

Changes to the Unit since 2013.

The production content of the lectures has been increased. The following changes have been made to the course assessments.

- The quizzes have been dropped from the course.
- The final travel article is now only handed in once.
- Sections of the draft travel article are now formally workshopped in the tutorials.

Unit Schedule

Week 1 - 6 March - What is Travel Writing?

Week 2 - 13 March - Introduction to the Craft of Travel Writing

Week 3 - 20 March - Belonging

Week 4 - 27 March - Guest Lecture - To be confirmed

Week 5 - 3 April - Leaving home

Week 6- 10 April - Postcolonialism and Travel Writing

Mid-Semester Break - 12-27 April

Week 7 - 1 May - Pilgrimage

Week 8 - 8 May - Craft of Travel Writing - 2

Week 9 - 15 May - Place 1 - Cities on foot - Guest Lecture - Dr Ian Collinson

Week 10 - 22 May - Sydney Writers' Festival Week

Week 11 - 29 May - Place 2 - Nature

Week 12 - 5 June - Place 3 - Non-places

Week 13 - 12 June - Review Week.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise knowledge in the field in the creation of travel literature.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues that abound in the field of travel literature and its creative production.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Portfolio
- SWF Article
- Travel Story

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise knowledge in the field in the creation of travel literature.
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Assessment tasks

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- Research Portfolio
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Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
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Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
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Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
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Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms

effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
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Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically analyse and reflect on key issues - including the various theoretical positions - raised in the production of writings that concern travel.
- Reflect on and communicate the way in which issues raised in debates in this field apply to the students' own writing.
- Utilise and apply professional techniques of a high standard in the context of a travel writing project.
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