

**Carleton University  
Winter 2014  
Department of English**

**ENGL 4115A / WGST 4812C / WGST 5902A: Culture and the Text I**

**Mondays / 4:35 pm – 7:25 pm**

**Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

**Instructor:** Dr. Roseann O'Reilly Runte

Travel writing, across genres, has yet to receive the consideration it deserves. Texts by women writers are particularly striking and powerful in their depiction of self and society.

Travel narratives are tales of escape and discovery. Women writers have recounted their adventures as they sought freedom and acceptance in new worlds they imagined or created, reacting against some social constructs and replicating others. Women have been at times colonized and colonizer, free agents and prisoners of a present tainted by past biases. Some have attempted to adopt male strategies and garb while others have insisted on playing up female stereotypes of the day. Travelers discover themselves as much as new places. Travel literature is thus autobiographical and autobiographies are life's journey. Travel is recorded in many forms and genres: diaries, logs, journals, novels, poems. They may be naïve or contrived. They are always both personal and political. Freud equated travel with death yet it is truly a search for self and life.

In this class we will travel through time and distant geographies as we compare the styles and intents of these women of courage and imagination.