

**Carleton University
Fall 2023 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English**

**ENGL 3930: Topics in Decolonization and Migration II
Topic: On Walking**

Prerequisites: third year standing or permission of the department.

Tuesday 11:35-2:25

Format: In-person, not suitable for online students

Instructor: Franny Nudelman

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******This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change. A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.******

Course description:

This course explores the practice of walking as it is represented in story, film, music and art. While we tend to think of walking as a lonely or solitary activity, in this course we will study walking as it pertains to the history of migration and decolonization in North America and consider the many ways that walking is entangled with public life. The trails, roads, and highways on which we walk offer traces of lived histories of displacement; narratives of walking document and recall the conditions of chattel slavery, forced removal, and migrant labor. If walking is a sign of vulnerability, however, it is also vital to the practice of resistance. We will encounter those who walk to escape oppression, those who are forced to walk away from their homes, and those who choose to walk with others as a kind of protest. In each instance, walking is a form of expression that joins the movement of the individual body to the circumstances of a broader community—a physical action with social significance.

Learning Outcomes:

Our class will be shaped and driven by conversation; what we learn we will learn together through shared exploration and dialogue. Writing will be personal and exploratory with the chance to investigate ideas in image, video, and sound as well as in writing. Over the course of the semester, I hope you will develop and hone your ability to interpret and interrelate a variety of texts in different media; think deeply about the relationship between culture and history; develop interesting and original ideas; express those ideas with clarity and purpose.

Texts:

Books

Teju Cole, *Open City* (2011)

Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (2000)

Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad* (2016)

Poems, Essays, Speeches

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "Introduction: This Land," from *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* (2014)

Rahawa Haile, "How Black Books Lit My Way Along the Appalachian Trail" (2017)

Martin Luther King, selected speeches

Richard Sommer and Glenn Forley, "Highway Beautiful: The 1965 Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March" (2011)

Walt Whitman, "Song of the Open Road" (1855)

Kevin Young, "Thataway" from the Migration Series Poetry Suite

Music

Woody Guthrie, "This Land Is Your Land" (1940)

"Ain't Nobody Gonna Turn Me Round" (Traditional, n.d.)

Images

John Gast, "American Progress" (1872)

Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration Series* (1941)

<https://lawrencemigration.phillipscollection.org/the-migration-series>

Robert Lindneux, "Trail of Tears" (1942)

Films

Ava du Verney, "Selma" (2014)

Pam Sporn, "Detroit 48202: Conversations Along a Postal Route" (2018)

Jamilla Wignot, "Ailey" (2021)

Evaluation:

Your grade will be based on your informed participation in class discussion and a mixed-media journal/portfolio that you will work on regularly over the course of the semester.