

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
AMERICAN TRAVEL WRITING

Travel writing has always been intimately linked with the construction of American identity. Occupying the space between fact and fiction, it exposes cultural fault lines and reveals the changing desires and anxieties of both the traveler and the reading public. These specially commissioned essays trace the journeys taken by writers from the pre-revolutionary period right up to the present. They examine a wide range of responses to the problems posed by landscapes found both at home and abroad, from the Mississippi and the Southwest to Europe and the Holy Land. Throughout, the contributors focus on the role played by travel writing in the definition and formation of national identity, and consider the diverse experiences of canonical and lesser-known writers. This Companion forms an invaluable guide for students approaching this new, important, and exciting subject for the first time.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
AMERICAN TRAVEL
WRITING

EDITED BY
ALFRED BENDIXEN
Texas A&M University

AND

JUDITH HAMERA
Texas A&M University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521678315

© Cambridge University Press 2009

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2009

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

The Cambridge companion to American travel writing / edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p. 279) and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-86109-0 – ISBN 978-0-521-67831-5 (pbk.)

I. Travelers' writings, American – History and criticism. 2. American prose literature – History and criticism. 3. National characteristics in literature. 4. Travel in literature. 5. Americans–Foreign countries – Historiography. 6. Travel writing – History.

I. Bendixen, Alfred. II. Hamera, Judith. III. Title.

PS366.T73C36 2008

810.9'355 – dc22 2008033445

ISBN 978-0-521-86109-0 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-67831-5 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>page vii</i>
Introduction: new worlds and old lands – the travel book and the construction of American identity JUDITH HAMERA AND ALFRED BENDIXEN	I
PART I CONFRONTING THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE	
1. Beginnings: the origins of American travel writing in the pre-revolutionary period PHILIP GOULD	13
2. “Property in the horizon”: landscape and American travel writing WILLIAM W. STOWE	26
3. New York to Niagara by way of the Hudson and the Erie CHRISTOPHER MULVEY	46
4. The Mississippi River as site and symbol THOMAS RUYS SMITH	62
5. The Southwest and travel writing MARTIN PADGET	78
PART II AMERICANS ABROAD	
6. American travel books about Europe before the Civil War ALFRED BENDIXEN	103
7. Americans in Europe from Henry James to the present WILLIAM MERRILL DECKER	127

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

8. Americans in the Holy Land, Israel, and Palestine HILTON OBENZINGER	145
9. Americans in the larger world: beyond the Pacific coast CHRISTOPHER MCBRIDE	165
10. South of the border: American travel writing in Latin America TERRY CAESAR	180
PART III SOCIAL SCENES AND AMERICAN SITES	
11. African American travel literature VIRGINIA WHATLEY SMITH	197
12. American women and travel writing SUSAN L. ROBERSON	214
13. Driving that highway to consciousness: late twentieth-century American travel literature DEBORAH PAES DE BARROS	228
<i>Chronology</i>	244
<i>Further Reading</i>	279
<i>Index</i>	289

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ALFRED BENDIXEN is Professor of English at Texas A&M University and founder of the American Literature Association, which he currently serves as Executive Director. His books include *Haunted Women* (1985), an edition of the composite novel *The Whole Family* (1986), “*The Amber Gods*” and *Other Stories by Harriet Prescott Spofford* (1989), and *Edith Wharton: New Critical Essays* (1992). He is also the associate editor of the *Continuum Encyclopedia of American Literature* (1999).

TERRY CAESAR has taught at Clarion University, Pennsylvania; Mukogawa University (Japan); and San Antonio College, Texas. He is the author of *Forgiving the Boundaries: Home as Abroad in American Travel Writing* (1995). He has also published academic essays on the subject, as well as personal essays of his own travel to such places as Saudi Arabia, China, and Brazil. He has co-edited with Eva Bueno a collection of essays on Latin American popular culture, *Imagination Beyond Nation* (1998). He is currently a columnist for the online journal, *Inside Higher Ed*.

WILLIAM MERRILL DECKER is Professor of English at Oklahoma State University, where he teaches American literature and serves as Director of Graduate Programs in English. He is the author of *The Literary Vocation of Henry Adams* (1990) and *Epistolary Practices: Letter Writing in America before Telecommunications* (1998), and is a co-editor of and contributor to *Henry Adams and the Need to Know* (2005).

PHILIP GOULD is Professor of English at Brown University, Rhode Island. He is the author of *Barbaric Traffic: Commerce and Antislavery in the Eighteenth-Century World* (2003) and former President of the Society of Early Americanists. He is currently working on a study of loyalist writing in Revolutionary America.

JUDITH HAMERA is Professor and Head of the Department of Performance Studies at Texas A&M University. She is the author of *Dancing Communities: Performance, Difference and Connection in the Global City* (2007), the editor

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

of *Opening Acts: Performance in/as Communication and Cultural Studies* (2006) and co-editor of *The Handbook of Performance Studies* (2006). She is also the recipient of the National Communication Association's Lila Heston Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Interpretation and Performance Studies.

CHRISTOPHER MCBRIDE completed his PhD in English at the Claremont Graduate University, California, and is currently a member of the English faculty at Solano College, California. He is the author of *The Colonizer Abroad: American Writers on Foreign Soil, 1846–1912* (2004) as well as articles on American conjure stories, Herman Melville, William Dean Howells, and Mary Austin.

CHRISTOPHER MULVEY is Professor Emeritus of English and American Studies at the University of Winchester. He is the recipient of awards from the Arts and Humanities Council, the British Academy, Cambridge University, and the University of Virginia. His books include *Anglo-American Landscapes* (1983), *Transatlantic Manners* (1990), *New York: City as Text* (1990), *Frank Thomas Morrell: Edwardian Entrepreneur* (1994), *Black Liberation in the Americas* (2001), and *Dominic St. John Mulvey: London Irishman* (2005). He is a General Editor with Henry Louis Gates and Maria Diedrich of The African American Research Library, for which he has created an electronic scholarly edition of the first African American novel, William Wells Brown's *Clotel, or the President's Daughter* (London, 1853) published online by Virginia University Press in March 2006. He is presently working on an electronic scholarly edition of Phillis Wheatley's *Poems* (London, 1773) and a history of American transportation and culture. He has recently established the Winchester University Press and is planning a Museum of the English Language for the City of Winchester.

HILTON OBENZINGER teaches writing and American literature at Stanford University. He is the author of *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*, as well as articles on American Holy Land travel, Mark Twain, Herman Melville, and American cultural interactions with the Middle East. His current project is *Melting Pots and Promised Lands: Early Zionism and the Idea of America*. A recipient of the American Book Award, he has also published books of poetry, fiction, and oral history.

DEBORAH PAES DE BARROS is Associate Professor of English at Palomar College, California. She is the author of *Fast Cars and Bad Girls: Nomadic Subjects and Women's Road Stories* (2004).

MARTIN PADGET lectures in American Studies at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. He is the author of *Indian Country: Travels in the American Southwest, 1840–1935* (2004) and *Photographers of the Western Isles* (2008). His current research examines travel writing and the Southwest from the Spanish colonial era to the present day.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-86109-0 - The Cambridge Companion to American Travel Writing

Edited by Alfred Bendixen and Judith Hamera

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

SUSAN L. ROBERSON is Chair and Associate Professor of English at Texas A&M University–Kingsville. She is the author of *Emerson in His Sermons: A Man-Made Self* (1995) and the editor of *Women, America, and Movement: Narratives of Relocation* (1998) and of *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions* (2001). She is currently at work on a book-length study of travel and mobility in the writings of antebellum American women.

THOMAS RUYSS SMITH is a Lecturer in American Literature at the University of East Anglia. He is the author of *River of Dreams: Imagining the Mississippi Before Mark Twain* (2007), and is currently at work on a social and cultural history of New Orleans.

VIRGINIA WHATLEY SMITH is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, where she teaches African American literature. She has presented papers or been published on Richard Wright, W. E. B. Du Bois, John A. Williams, Ann Petry, Sarah Baartman, and others. She published *Richard Wright's Travel Writings*, an essay collection, in 2001. Currently, she is writing a biography on Richard Wright.

WILLIAM W. STOWE is the Benjamin Waite Professor of English at Wesleyan University, Connecticut. His work on travel writing began with *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (1994). Recent publications include studies of landscape and leisure in Thoreau, Jewett, Fuller, Henry Ward Beecher, and Henry James, and an essay on literary aspects of the rural cemetery movement entitled “Writing Mount Auburn: Language, Landscape, and Place.”