

That's Why We Travel: Why Write

WRITING THE TRAVEL ESSAY

by Dinty W. Moore

"Travel and change of place impart new vigor to the mind." —Seneca

One of the finest and most-satisfying adventures of my life so far was the time I canoed through whitewater rapids down the lower canyons of the Rio Grande River, just east of Big Bend National Park in southern Texas. Each day of that trip brought new sights and new adventures—as might be expected of such a grand landscape and precarious mode of travel—and it was in my attempt to put this river journey into words that I discovered what every other travel writer has probably discovered as well:

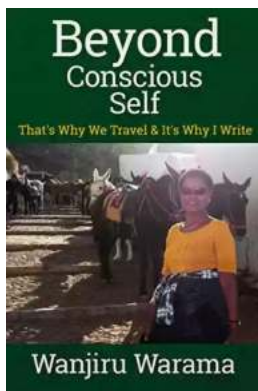
- Travel writing is easy, because travel has a natural story arc. We enter the canyon, we are surrounded by high canyon walls for days and days, facing fresh obstacles with each passing mile, and eventually we come out the other side. Think how many novels, short stories, and memoirs mimic that very structure. Have you heard of Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*, for instance? Even if you are not on an "adventure" trip, you still have a natural beginning in your arrival, a natural middle with your stay, and a natural ending around your departure. Time and again, the journey structure seems to work.
- Travel writing is very, very hard. As writers, we usually come to understand our topics and our feelings toward them over the course of years, not days. We understand the culture we live in by growing up within that culture. We understand family love and family woes by being members of a family for decades. We write about our spiritual journeys after years of searching and seeking. By definition, however, a travel writer is often just passing through. The result is that a travel writer runs the risk of noticing only the slick, shallow surface of things, not the truth that lies beneath.

Traveling and writing are two profound and intertwined experiences that have been cherished by wanderlust souls throughout history. Whether you are a seasoned globetrotter or an aspiring wordsmith, there is an undeniable connection between the journeys we embark on and the words we craft. Join us

in this exploration of why we travel and why we write, as we uncover the power and beauty of these intertwined passions.

The Wanderlust Within: The Urge to Explore

There is an innate desire within us to explore the unknown, discover new cultures, and immerse ourselves in unfamiliar landscapes. Traveling grants us the opportunity to escape the routines of daily life and venture into the depths of the world. As we wander through bustling cities, hike majestic mountains, or relax on tropical beaches, our senses awaken, and our souls come alive.



Beyond Conscious Self: That's Why We Travel & It's Why I Write by Wanjiru Warama (Kindle Edition)

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Through travel, we experience diverse cultures, taste exotic cuisines, and witness breathtaking natural wonders. Every destination offers a unique tapestry of colors, scents, tastes, and sounds that leave an indelible mark on our hearts and minds. This wealth of experiences becomes the foundation for the stories we later weave onto paper.

The act of traveling fuels our curiosity and broadens our perspectives. It breaks down stereotypes and challenges preconceived notions, opening our minds to new possibilities. Writing becomes the natural outlet for capturing these transformative experiences and sharing them with others.

Every Journey Tells a Story: The Importance of Travel Writing

As we embark on thrilling escapades across continents, we find ourselves eager to document our adventures, encapsulating the essence of each destination. Travel writing allows us to not only relive our own experiences but also connect with fellow wanderers who share the same passion for exploration and adventure.

Through the art of travel writing, we can transport our readers to far-off lands, inviting them to experience the wonders we encountered. With vivid descriptions, captivating narratives, and personal anecdotes, we create a bridge between our own memories and the imaginations of others. The very act of sharing our travel stories allows us to inspire, educate, and entertain, fostering a sense of wanderlust in our readers.

But travel writing is more than mere storytelling. It is a way of immortalizing the beauty of our world and the diversity of its people. It serves as a testament to the incredible places we have visited and the connections we have made along the way. In many ways, travel writing becomes a legacy, allowing future generations to explore the world as we did.

Writing as a Reflection: Traveling Within Ourselves

While travel writing may transport readers to different corners of the world, it is also an opportunity for self-reflection. The act of writing allows us to delve into the depths of our own emotions, thoughts, and reactions to the various stimuli we

encounter during our travels. Through introspection, we gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and our place in the world.

Writing about our travel experiences forces us to relive the cherished moments, confront the challenges, and process the lessons learned. It becomes a form of therapy, enabling us to make sense of the world and find our own unique voice. In this way, writing becomes a journey within ourselves, as we unravel the complexities of our own desires, fears, and aspirations.

The Harmonious Dance: Traveling and Writing in Perfect Synchrony

Traveling and writing are not exclusive from each other but rather complement one another in a harmonious dance. While travel provides the fuel and inspiration for our writing, writing allows us to distill, analyze, and celebrate the essence of our travels.

When we travel, we collect moments like precious treasures, storing them in the depths of our memories. However, it is through writing that we can polish these gems and allow their radiance to shine for the world to see. Writing gives life to our travel experiences, breathing existence into the places, people, and emotions we encountered.

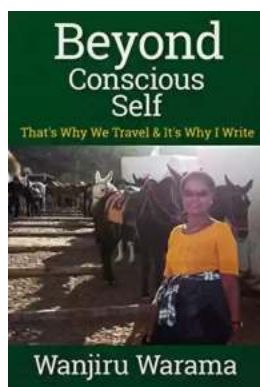
Moreover, the act of writing about our travels propels us to continue exploring and seeking new adventures. It cultivates a hunger for discovery and a deeper appreciation for the beauty that surrounds us. As we translate our ever-evolving perspectives onto paper, we find ourselves yearning for more, eager to embark on the next journey and unravel new stories waiting to be told.

Let Your Journey Begin: Embrace the Connection

So, why do we travel, and why do we write? The answer lies within the very fabric of our beings, deeply entwined and inseparable. We travel because our souls long for exploration, and we write because we need to immortalize these experiences and share them with others.

Let us embark on this journey together, to explore the connection between traveling and writing. Let's traverse the globe and allow our words to carry us to places both near and far. For within the pages of our travel narratives, we find the essence of our humanity and the interconnectedness of our shared desires to explore, understand, and celebrate the wonders of this world.

<https://www.pexels.com/photo/adventure-camping-desktop-wallpaper-digital-wallpaper-262367/>



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Wanjirũ works too hard on her real estate career, attends meetings and seminars, and travels, but, after that, she lacks a sense of connection or personal belonging besides striving to make a living.

But one day, she goes to her local library to cool her sun-bitten body. While she flips pages in a book, she overhears two women talking about The Friends of the Library. An avid library fan, she gets intrigued by what she hears. At the checkout counter, she asks about the group. Before long, she joins and attends sporadic meetings before a sense of belonging sprouts within her.

In time, she gets immersed in the group's activities and stakes rise when members elect her as the president of the chapter. They plan a fundraiser that pushes Wanjirũ out of her comfort zone as she struggles to live up to the position. Unknown to her, preparation for that fundraiser turns out to be a pivotal point in her writing journey.

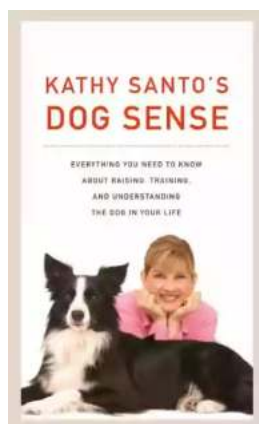
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By the next story, too much work and activities and no play have stressed Wanjirũ to her limit. To take a break from her oppressive lifestyle, and with no preparation whatsoever, she flies to Venice to board a cruise ship to the Greek aisles.

Everything works well until Wanjirũ reaches a stage where one of her choices turns out quite reckless. But there is no going back; she has to press on. After all, in this part of the world, she's the only one she's got.

Soon she gives up on fight or flight and waits for a miracle.

When you are all alone, there is nothing scarier than a state of total helplessness.



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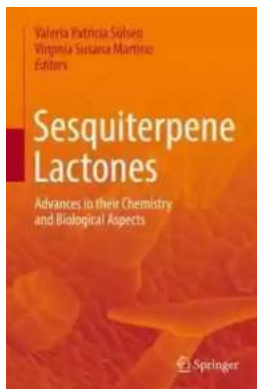
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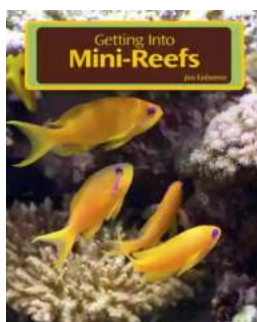
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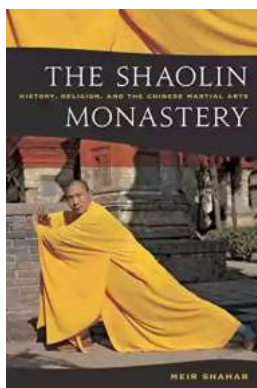
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