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21L.007 World Literatures: Travel Writing
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I liked the ending. It made me feel like he has learned something, not just healed emotionally. In the beginning I felt like he was just trying to wander around and forget his problems, but towards the end, he seems to have grown as a person. The ending was profound in that sense. It was poetic even if it never happened.

I didn't really like how this book ended -- there was no resolution or really any indication that the book was ending except that the words stopped. However, I can appreciate that he may have done this on purpose, as a kind of further continuation of the character of the book. I think that a lot of this book is like that to me -- I don't necessarily like it, but I can respect it for his view of the world and take on life.

Disappointed. He traveled across the country and met amazing, miraculous people, but he didn't find the answers he was looking for. I guess I was expecting the Hollywood, Eureka, life-changing moment that often escapes reality. However, I feel a still my life would have been changed for the better and was disappointed that he didn't learn from the sages of the blue highways. I would have enjoyed more stories, because I found out more interesting than his travelogue.\

The book, in general, reads like a series of short stories, which makes the end almost anti-climactic. I find in the beginning we read a lot more of Heat-Moon's emotions in the narration than we do further on. Despite editing and personal bias, he tends to keep a neutral opinion. This neutrality and lack of central plot makes the book incomplete even when it ends. The afterword (if I had a copy) would wrap up the book as a whole.

After reading selections from *Blue Highways*, I'm not sure if I was very satisfied with the work as a whole. While at first I found the whole premise of the story interesting, reading through short fragments of Heat-Moon's framed experience didn't leave a lasting impression on me. It seemed as if his healing process of traveling from place to place was a way to avoid his problems, and in the end, nothing conclusive came from it.

By the end of *Blue Highways*, I was exasperated with Heat-Moon's three-month journey to "find himself." Throughout the trip, his experiences with different types of people showed him what kind of person he wanted to be (someone with inner peace), but he remains unmotivated actually to become that person. The road trip changed his perspective, but will it instill long-term change in his life? I enjoy the stories, but I don't know if the book served the purpose Heat-Moon hoped.

I really like how this book explored parts of the US that would otherwise be ignored by mainstream America. It opened my eyes to another side of America. Also I like how the author just wanted to set out to get away from it all, and how the journey changed him.

I really liked the book because personally, I can relate myself to Heat-Moon. I am thinking about how to write a short collection of journals about all the places I went to in China and all the Olympic events I watched. The more I read in the book, the more I like how Heat-Moon not only introduces what's famous in a town, but also reveals the place's culture through his regular-day conversations with the people.

Great book! I was really able to understand the spiritual journey he was making due to his writing style and perspective. The afterword changed my view of the novel when he started to mention how the book came to be and in a sense the healing process it catalyzed within him.

I liked this book a lot because it is compelled me to think about so many inspiring things that I hadn't thought of. One of the parts I found great but we did not discuss in class was his nostalgia at the end. There are parts of the text that I really loved, like when Roemer says (p. 382), "we're trying to hold back the future, but we do believe what has happened in Greenwich is at least as important as what could happen here. The future should grow from the past, not obliterate it." The way he looked at areas and people was different from the typical way, which rendered it unique. There were some parts where the description was too long, but at the end the story grew more interesting and discussed things that are more universal. There were some points where I, as an international, got lost.

My overall impression of the book at its conclusion was overwhelmingly positive. I felt that *Blue Highways* represents a unique and transformative (albeit *selective*) journey for Heat-Moon and I believe that the reader may take away from it a variety of ideas about the American culture, the process of discovering oneself, and the idea of wholeness. I believe that Heat-Moon's process of writing the story allowed me to have an extra insight into his journey and experience, which made the book much more meaningful. One aspect that I did not enjoy it was the way that his biases pervaded the text -- in the context of a narrative, it can be seen as distracting...

Reading *Blue Highways* was the journey all its own. I began reading enchanted by the prospect of a cross-country expedition to America's "other half," and even wished at times to be among the raw role "simpletons" Heat-Moon describes. Through Heat-Moon's biases, however, I realized that doing so would be avoiding modernity. This book, for me, is a lesson in accepting the past, that the only way to preserve it is not by isolation but by integrating it successfully with modern culture.

When I first started the book, I was unsure if I could handle rambling pages of a travelogue but I really appreciated the character selections. Heat-Moon definitely doctored passages when he spoke with people, but the wide range of perspectives tied to a geographical context kept the book flowing well. Towards the end of the book, he starts losing his perspective through other people. He becomes a seemingly unreliable narrator when he doesn't use a first-hand dialogue, and the book becomes less interesting to me. I started liking the book as a character survey rather than how Heat-Moon intended the book to be read.