



Get ready for the ASA Conference at WVU - March 17-20!

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**Spring 2022**

**Volume 45, Number 2**



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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we mourn the loss of bell hooks and celebrate her life and legacy, I think about the ways that one voice can matter. When I first read bell hooks, I felt renewed. I felt drawn to my work in new ways and began to see a path that had not been there before. I know that I am not alone in being impacted by her words and her perspective; I've read powerful remembrances of her since her passing.

In my work as President of the Appalachian Studies Association (ASA), one of hooks' ideas has guided my thinking. In *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, she writes, "To be truly visionary we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality while simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality" (hooks 2014, 110). The concrete realities that we experience are unique. Our geographical locations, our political environments, our familial structures, our bodily access—all of these factors shape our concrete realities. At times, we might assume one's own concrete reality is the reality of others. My work in this role with ASA has been to pay close attention to a range of concrete realities before imagining possibilities. I have learned, through listening, that we have work to do in order to allow ASA to be an inspiring and affirming space for a wider range of us.

This has been quiet work. This has been humbling work. This has been energizing work.

When we see our concrete realities fully, we are able to imagine beyond. That seeing beyond with an understanding of the current moment—the concrete realities—gives me a solid sort of hope in the future of this organization. To look hard at structures and practices with our eyes open is to trust that what we will find is worthwhile—even if flawed.

In *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, bell hooks writes: “True resistance begins with people confronting pain...and wanting to do something to change it” (hooks 1990, 215). The Appalachian Studies Association was founded in true resistance, and resistance must remain at the heart of our work. The link between love and resistance has never been clearer to me than it is now, as I make my way back through the work of bell hooks and as I reflect on the time I’ve spent working in this leadership role. Let us continue to love, to resist, to “root our imagination in our concrete reality...” in order to imagine an Appalachia and an ASA “beyond that reality” (hooks 2014, 110).

I look forward to gathering together at West Virginia University to share with one another, to learn from one another, to bear witness, to lift up, and to build and extend a community of resistance and love that is at the heart of Appalachian studies.

#### References

hooks, bell. 1990. *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.  
\_\_\_\_\_. 2014. *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate Politics*. New York: Routledge

**Meredith McCarroll**  
**President, Appalachian Studies Association**

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## OUR MISSION



The mission of the Appalachian Studies Association is to promote and engage dialogue, research, scholarship, education, creative expression, and action among a diverse and inclusive group of scholars, educators, practitioners, grassroots activists, students, individuals, groups and institutions. Our mission is driven by our commitment to foster quality of life, democratic participation and appreciation of Appalachian experiences regionally, nationally, and internationally.

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## 45th ANNUAL ASA CONFERENCE

**Making, Creating, and Encoding: Crafting Possibilities in Appalachia**

**West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia**

**March 17-20, 2022**

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Make plans now to join us on the campus of West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV, March 17-20, 2022 for the 45th annual meeting of the Appalachian Studies Association!

We are proud and excited to welcome you back to the first face-to-face Appalachian Studies Association conference since 2019. Last year's first all virtual conference allowed members to continue to share scholarship and stay connected; so much credit goes to the team that pulled that off. I assure you, it was not easy. This year, we're ready to—cautiously—be together again.

The 2022 theme is "Making, Creating, and Encoding: Crafting Possibilities in Appalachia," and will feature writers, artists, quilters, photographers, activists, and scholars. In addition to over 250 proposals for individual papers, posters, panels, roundtables, and performances, we have organized a keynote address by Deesha Philyaw, author of *The Secret Lives of Church Ladies* (2020), winner of the 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction and currently being adapted for television by HBO Max.

There will be two exciting plenary sessions, the first being "Craftivism: How the Arts Give Voice to Causes and Communities." Advocates representing social, political, and environmental issues will share common art projects which involved community co-creation, such as quilts and other fiber arts. The second plenary will be "New Media in Appalachia: Empowering Our Communities through Storytelling" and will feature panelists currently making big moves in the world of media representation of Appalachia, including Ashton Marra (*100 Days of Appalachia*), Crystal Good (*Black by God The West Virginian*), Chuck Corra (*Appodlachia*), and Enkeshi El-Amin (*Black in Appalachia* Podcast).

New this year will be a Maker Space, sponsored by the Visit Mountaineer Country Convention and Visitors Bureau. Operating on Friday and Saturday of the conference, the Maker Space will feature artist showcases, as well as a DIY printing station, where participants can print a free tote bag and bandana. Appalachian hip-hop artists Shelem and geonovah, and West Virginia poets Crystal Good and Torli Bush will present pop-up performances between sessions on both Friday and Saturday.

We will also feature an Appalachian food demonstration by students from Pierpont Community & Technical College's culinary program; a photography exhibit: "Appalachian Ghost" by Raymond Thompson; a film screening of "Homegrown Foodways in West Virginia: Documentaries from the Dinner Table" hosted by Mike Costello and Amy Dawson of Lost Creek Farm; and a trip to historic Arthurdale, West Virginia led by Ann Pancake ([must register by February 22](#)). You can take a ghost tour of Morgantown on Thursday night. You can even get some kettle corn.

We have so many wonderful things planned for you. In addition to favorites such as the awards presentation, the silent auction, and the drag show, we have tried to think of ways to make the conference fresh. This should feel both like coming home and like visiting some

place new and exciting. This event is a celebration, a reunion, an optimistic look beyond these heavy days. We can't wait to see you all.

**Natalie Sybolt,  
2022 Conference Chair**

*Logo designed by Liz Pavlovic, a WVU graduate and Morgantown-based artist*

## Preliminary Program

## Virtual Contingency Plan

Please note this virtual contingency plan will occur only if the in-person event must be cancelled. We are **not offering a virtual option in addition to the in-person conference**. The virtual option is a back-up in case we need to cancel the in-person conference.

At this time, our plan is to present in person at West Virginia University. In the event that we cannot meet in person due to COVID circumstances that include restrictions at WVU, feedback from speakers and attendees, and/or local public health guidance, the conference will move to a virtual format and be rescheduled for **April 22 – 24, 2022**. This will hopefully allow everyone time to make the shift. Virtual participation instructions will be shared at that time.

Please check social media and the website frequently for updates at [www.appalachianstudies.org](http://www.appalachianstudies.org). Registering for the conference means you understand that it **may** be a virtual meeting.

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## Sustain ASA by Renewing Your Membership

Dear ASA Community Members,

For nearly 45 years, the Appalachian Studies Association has served as a convener. We bring together artists, activists, performers, scholars, and community members under one umbrella. We are united by a common desire to understand, improve, and document our Appalachian region. We are a community formed by need, and at this moment, we are a community in need.

**We come to you today to ask for your support to help sustain our Appalachian Studies Association.**

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have exhausted ASA resources and reserves. Already operating on a minimal budget, the Association faces financial shortfalls that threaten the organization's continuation like never before. We will soon be faced with decisions to eliminate our two staff members, which will likely lead to the end of the Association as we know it.

The simplest way for you to support ASA is to [renew your membership](#) for one or multiple years. Your membership enables:

- The continued publication of the *Journal of Appalachian Studies*;
- Support for the BIPOC Appalachian Studies Scholarship;
- Support for the ASA Endowment fund for Sustainability;
- Organization of the Appalachian Studies Association Annual Conference;
- Annual Awards highlighting achievements;
- Hosting virtual topical meet-ups throughout the year;
- The publication of *Appalink*;

- The evolving community that makes up ASA.

As we consider a possible end of ASA, even with its imperfections and mistakes, I find myself eager to move forward into a new phase for the Association. What can we become? Beyond an annual conference, what might connect us? How can we change with the challenges surrounding us?

**If you have already renewed your membership and would like to support the sustainability of the Appalachian Studies Association,** you might consider gifting an ASA membership to someone you know, renewing for an additional year early, registering for the upcoming conference at WVU, asking your library to subscribe to the *Journal of Appalachian Studies (JAS)*, reading *JAS* online, and assigning *JAS* articles in your courses. Downloads increase the organization's revenue, and they help to promote the critical work we are doing.

Appalachian Studies Association is its members. ASA is the people of Appalachia, who ask difficult questions, resist easy answers, create art, strive toward solutions, and refuse to settle for less than we deserve. As we work to grow and evolve, seeking to better reflect our diverse communities, we depend upon our members to help us exist into a new chapter. I hope that you will help us on that journey, so that we can decide—together—where we are headed.

Sincerely,  
Meredith McCarroll  
President, Appalachian Studies Association

[Renew your membership](#) or [register for the conference online](#). You may also submit your request by completing the [Registration Form](#) or [Membership Form](#). Make checks payable to ASA, and mail to:

Journals Division  
University of Illinois Press  
1325 South Oak Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



### Show your PRIDE at this year's ASA drag show!

\$10 cover with all proceeds from the door going towards [Morgantown Pride](#).

Show up early as seats will be limited!

**When:** March 19, 2022, 7:00-9:00pm

**Where:** Morgantown Art Bar, 268 High Street

See you there!

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## An Intern's Perspective

Being born and raised in the heart of Appalachia provided me a very skewed view of the region. When I was younger, it was my belief that any stranger would stop on the side of the road to help someone in need, every state had their own mythical legend comparable to Mothman, and every



family had a perfectly seasoned cast-iron skillet. However, with age and trips out of the heavenly hills, I quickly realized these are just unique qualities of Appalachia and its people, and the region is rich with a complex culture and traditions just like these.

The region seemed so special that even something as simple as a pepperoni roll has an intricate history, so the more I learned about Appalachia—the more I felt proud to call it home. Although, on countless occasions my pride would turn to feelings of confusion and anger when I would say, "I'm from West Virginia," and would be met with responses like, "I would have never guessed that because you have all of your teeth and can read." Why wouldn't I have all of my teeth? Why wouldn't I be able to read? Why would this person even think that? I knew of the typical Appalachian stereotypes, but what I did not know was that people elsewhere in the country not only believed them but thought them to be true for every single Appalachian.

I quickly realized the reason for these wild assumptions is the grossly inaccurate misrepresentation of Appalachia in the media. People who live outside of the region truly have no idea what it's like because the only interaction they have with it is through negative portrayals that perpetuate the stereotypes.

That is precisely why the kind of positive representation for Appalachia and its people that the Appalachian Studies Association creates is so crucial. ASA provides a platform for Appalachians to tell their stories themselves and in turn also shows people outside the region that we're more than the stereotypes—in fact, nothing like them at all.

I was ecstatic at the opportunity to intern for ASA and help with the amazing work they do with the *Journal of Appalachian Studies*, *Appalink*, and the annual conference. I love writing and editing in general but knowing that the work I'm doing is helping off-set all of the negative misrepresentations of my home makes it more meaningful. Interning for the Appalachian Studies Association has already been an informative educational experience for me as a student and Appalachian, and I am eager to continue learning new skills for my career as well as more about the wonderful people of Appalachia.

**Emily Paugh, ASA Intern  
West Virginia University**

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## Officer & Steering Committee Election

The election for ASA Steering Committee members is now open and **closes Sunday, March 20, 2022 at 9:00 AM EST.**

# VOTE

There is an option on the ballot to write-in candidates for every position.

Contact Ricardo Nazario y Colón at [rnazariocolon@email.wcu.edu](mailto:rnazariocolon@email.wcu.edu) with questions.

[Click here to VOTE!](#)

## Nominees

### Vice President



**Travis A. Rountree** is an assistant professor in the English Department at Western Carolina University. He earned his PhD from the University of Louisville, his MA in English from Appalachian State University with a certificate in Appalachian Studies, and his BA in English from James Madison University with a minor in American Studies. He teaches first year composition courses as well as graduate courses in composition and rhetoric. His research interests include queer archival research and pedagogy, Country Music, Appalachian rhetorics, place-based pedagogy, and public memory studies. He has been published in *The North Carolina Folklore Journal*, *Journal of Southern History*, and the *Appalachian Journal*.

University of Kentucky Press will publish his book *"Hard to See Through the Smoke" Rememberings of 1912 Courthouse Shootout in Hillsville, Virginia* in March 2023. He has been active with the Appalachian Studies Association since his first conference in 2008. Since then, he has served as treasurer as well as the Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Since his term as treasurer, he has been a member of the steering committee. Additionally, he has served on the Weatherford Award and Wilma Dykeman Fellowship Award committees. Impressed with the progressive, inclusive action of ASA he is excited to contribute more to this vision as it empowers BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized voices.

Hailing from Richmond, Virginia, Travis has lived in Appalachia for most of his life and feels most at home there. He enjoys running, weightlifting, and gardening. He is an avid fan of old time, bluegrass, and country music and lives in Sylva, North Carolina with his two kitties.

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## Secretary



**Sylvia Bailey Shurbutt** is Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Communities at Shepherd University and Coordinator for APST Graduate Studies. She has been a member of the Appalachian Studies Association for twenty years, serving in 2015 as ASA President, as 2016 Conference Chair, and on the ASA Education Committee since its founding. She is Managing Editor of the 14-volume *Anthology of Appalachian Writers* (ISSN 1946-3103), an annual anthology of Appalachian poets, fiction writers, essayists, and photographic artists; and she is director of four NEH Summer Institutes: *Voices from the Misty Mountains* and the *Power of Telling One's Story* (2013, 2016, 2017, 2018), the WV BRIDGE Institute (2020), and upcoming West Virginia Humanities Teacher Institute (July 2022).

She was a member of the West Virginia Advisory Council of Faculty, serving as its president for four years and successfully representing West Virginia faculty on a number of issues before the West Virginia Legislature, including securing tuition waivers for faculty dependents and securing WV incremental pay for faculty commensurate with higher education administrators and state employees. Her writing has appeared in the *Journal of Appalachian Studies*, *The Journal of Kentucky Studies*, *North Carolina Review*, *Women's Studies*, *Women and Language*, *Essays in Literature*, *The Southern Literary Journal*, *Encyclopedia of American Literature*, and Scribner's *American Writers* and *World Writers* series, among others. She has chapters in *Feminism in Literature*, *Untying the Gender Knot* (Greenwood Press), *Destinations and Discoveries: A Short Collection of Literary Travel Essays* (2014), and is author of books about travel, writing, and literature, including *Reading Writing Relationships* (Kendall Hunt). Her volume on Silas House (University Press of Kentucky 2021) has been nominated for the South Atlantic Modern Language Association 2022 Book Award, *Silas House: Exploring an Appalachian Writer's Work* (University Press of Kentucky 2021). Shurbutt was 2006 West Virginia Professor of the Year and received the Stephen Fisher Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2020.

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## Y'ALL (Young Appalachian Leaders and Learners) Representative



**Maxwell Cloe** (they/he) is an independent scholar of queer Appalachian art and oral history currently based out of Richmond, Virginia. Their work explores the intersections of queerness, Appalachian identity, the environment, archives, and diverse artmaking techniques. They operate the Wildcrafting Our Queerness Project, a digital archive and exhibition of queer Appalachian art and oral history.

[Click here to VOTE!](#)

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## Committee Reports

## ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN

Two students in the WVU Appalachian Studies minor worked to update the [Appalachian Studies Bibliography website](#) on the WVU Library Appalachian Collection page in an independent study during the 2021 fall semester. The updates retroactively added books, journal articles, websites, and eBooks from 2017 to 2021, adding new content to the site that was last updated in 2016. Over 400 new entries on Appalachian studies were added. Plans are to continue updating the Appalachian Studies Bibliography in fall 2022.

**Stewart Plein**  
**Curator, Rare Books & Printed Resources**  
**West Virginia University**

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## SCHOLARSHIP

**The deadline for scholarship applications was February 15.** Award notifications were sent February 21.

Including the carry-over of \$789.84 plus \$100 from the Howard Dorgan Memorial Fund and royalties from the Billings book of \$177.15, we currently have \$1,066.99 on hand for 2022 general scholarships. We are below previous funding levels and were limited on the number of scholarships we awarded for the 2022 conference.

We hope to discuss the possibility of a future fundraising campaign to help support scholarship funding. This will be a topic of discussion brought up at the next Steering Committee meeting.

We are also in need of voting members to serve on the Scholarship Committee—if interested, please contact Stephen Turner at [smttrner5@memphis.edu](mailto:smttrner5@memphis.edu).

**Stephen Turner, Scholarship Chair**  
**Appalachian Studies Association**

## BIPOC SCHOLARSHIP

**The deadline for the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) scholarship applications was February 15.** Award notifications were sent February 21. The BIPOC scholarship has been extended to cover both membership and conference registration.

Please contact Mary Thomas with questions at [mthomas@marshall.edu](mailto:mthomas@marshall.edu).

**Mary Thomas, Executive Director**  
**Appalachian Studies Association**

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## SILENT AUCTION

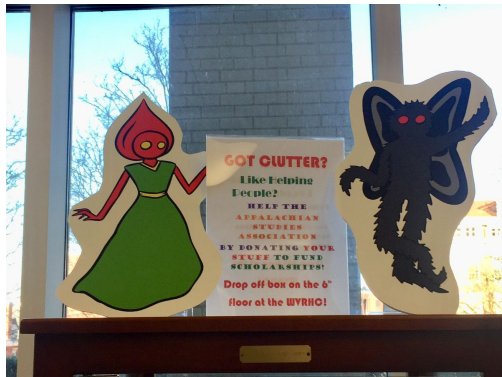
Plans are in effect for collecting donations for the Howard Dorgan Silent Auction. A donation box has been set up in the West Virginia and Regional History Center,



special collections for WVU, to collect items for the Silent Auction.

Donations can include a wide variety of things including crafts, quilts, woodwork, memorabilia, WVU items, pottery, home-canned and baked goods, spirits, event tickets, music, art, getaway opportunities, gently-used and new books, dining certificates, and more! (Personal items such as clothes, shoes, etc., are not accepted.)

Please contact Stewart Plein, [Stewart.Plein@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Stewart.Plein@mail.wvu.edu), 304-293-0345, if you have questions or would like to donate. Donations will be accepted now and through the length of the conference.



## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



The Special Collections Committee submitted a conference proposal for the upcoming ASA conference at West Virginia University. The panel is called "Diversity in Appalachia." This

panel will focus on the voices of diverse populations and the projects and scholarship that bring these voices to light. While public perception often reduces Appalachian identity to a small number of one-dimensional stereotypes, materials held by our archives help to document a different and more diverse regional history. This panel will focus on recent and longstanding initiatives by a number of regional archives who are collectively working to document, preserve, and highlight the range of people and institutions that self-identify as Appalachian. This panel will draw attention to the efforts and projects of regional archives working to ensure that the full range of diverse populations are included in Appalachia's historical record. Please join us for this session.

The Special Collections committee is planning a meeting for February where we will discuss our panel for the conference in March, the business meeting that will also be held at the conference, as well as reaching out to our respective institutions for Silent Auction items.

In addition, seven issues of the newsletter are now available on the web:

## Appalachian Curator

If you want to be part of the Special Collections committee, please contact Stewart Plein at [Stewart.Plein@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Stewart.Plein@mail.wvu.edu).

**Stewart Plein**  
**Curator, Rare Books & Printed Resources**  
**West Virginia University**

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## Mark Your Calendars

### **45th Annual Appalachian Studies Conference**

March 17 - 20, 2022 at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia  
**or** Virtually, April 22 - 24, 2022 if it cannot be held in person

### **Making, Creating, and Encoding: Crafting Possibilities in Appalachia**

Natalie Sypolt, Conference Chair, [natalie.sypolt@pierpont.edu](mailto:natalie.sypolt@pierpont.edu)  
Travis Stimeling, Program Chair, [Travis.Stimeling@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Travis.Stimeling@mail.wvu.edu)  
Melanie Page, Local Arrangements Chair, [melanie.page@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:melanie.page@mail.wvu.edu)

### **2022 Program Committee:**

Natalie Sypolt, Travis Stimeling, Rosemary Hathaway, Beth Nardella, and Audra Slocum

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### **46th Annual Appalachian Studies Conference**

March 16 - 19, 2023 at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio

### **AppalachiaFest: From Surviving to Thriving**

For further information contact:

Michele Morrone, Conference Chair, [morrone@ohio.edu](mailto:morrone@ohio.edu)  
Tiffany Arnold, Program Chair, [arnoldt2@ohio.edu](mailto:arnoldt2@ohio.edu)  
Patty Malloy, Local Arrangements Chair, [malloyp@ohio.edu](mailto:malloyp@ohio.edu)

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**FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**  
to stay up-to-date on ASA news and events



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*Appalink* is published twice a year.

We welcome submissions, announcements, and/or news.

Email submissions to Anne Chesky Smith at [anne.chesky.smith@gmail.com](mailto:anne.chesky.smith@gmail.com).

Submissions for the fall issue are due August 1. Submissions for the spring issue are due December 1.

**Editors:** Anne Chesky Smith, Mary Kay Thomas, and Ann Bryant

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**Contact Us:**

One John Marshall Drive

Huntington, WV 25755

Telephone: (304) 696-2904

[www.appalachianstudies.org](http://www.appalachianstudies.org)