



Course name:	Hillbilly Highway: Appalachia and America
Department, course #, level:	American Studies 63, undergraduate
Semester(s) and year(s) taught (without significant variation):	Fall 1997
Institution:	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Instructor(s):	David Whisnant

AMST 63

Junior seminar

Fall 1997

Hillbilly Highway: Appalachia and America

Dr. Whisnant

Purposes of the Course:

- To introduce you to the history, politics, and culture of the Appalachian region
- To interrogate the pervasive cultural and other stereotypes associated with the region
- To explore the relationships between Appalachia and dominant discourses and institutions

Course materials list:

Durwood Dunn, *Cade's Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937*

Ronald D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*

Steven Fisher, *Fighting Back in Appalachia*

Lon Savage, *Thunder in the Mountains: The West Virginia Mine War 1920-21*

David E. Whisnant, *Modernizing the Mountaineer: People, Power, and Planning in Appalachia*

David E. Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*

Selected materials on reserve

Selected films [all titles mentioned are in Non-Print section of UNC undergraduate library]

Some General Online Resources:

[Appalachian Center at the University of Kentucky](#)

[Appalachian Film Workshop \(Whitesburg KY\) Homepage](#)

East Tennessee State University's [Archives of Appalachia](#)

[Southern Folklife Collection at UNC-CH](#) (Wilson Library)

Library of Congress [American Memory Collection](#)

[Virtual Reference Desk](#) at UNC Libraries

[American Studies Web](#) (great place to start to find links on history, culture, race, class, region, labor, economics, politics, etc.)

Course Requirements:

You will be responsible for completing the following components of work in the course. Percentages of your final grade for each component are indicated in parentheses.

1. **You will make yourself an expert on one Appalachian county or city** during the semester (see [Instructions](#)) [33%]. You will present the results of what you are learning in a series of mini-reports at indicated points during the semester.

Examples of final versions of some student projects Fall 1997:

[Joy Salyers on Carter County TN](#)

[Michael Murray on Wise County VA](#)

[Tracy Sloop on Roanoke VA](#)

[Paul Edwards on Letcher County KY](#)

2. You will take a **mid-term examination** that will cover all required readings and class discussions [20%].

3. You will complete one **small research project**, using primarily World Wide Web materials [7%].

4. You will prepare carefully for **class discussions**, and participate actively in them [15%].

5. The **final examination** will count 25%/

Class Sessions

The following class sessions are grouped around five broad topics:

Defining the Region (5 classes)

Population (6 classes)

Economy (9 classes)

Cultural Politics (3 classes)

Music (5 classes)

1. Introduction

2. Defining the Region I: How do you know when you are there?:

[A map of 1696 showing "Apalatian" mountains](#)

[National Geographic physical map of US showing Appalachian mountain chain](#)

[Color Landform Atlas of the United States](#) [click on separate states for excellent topo maps, satellite maps, county maps]

[Map of the Southern states of America \[Russell 1795\]](#)

[Topographical map of Appalachia](#) (Ford, *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey* [1960])
A set of maps showing boundaries of "Appalachia" by counties, as established at various times, for various purposes, 1921-1967 (prepared by Lynne Degitz, UNC Ctr. for Teaching and Learning):

[John C. Campbell](#) (1921)

[U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (1935)

[President's Appalachian Regional Commission \[PARC\]](#) (1964)

[Appalachian Regional Commission definition \(1965\)](#)

[Appalachian Regional Commission \[ARC\]](#) (1967)

[COMPOSITE MAP OF THESE FOUR](#)

[Alabama](#)

[Georgia](#)

[Kentucky](#)

[Maryland](#)

[Mississippi](#)

[New York](#)

[North Carolina](#)

[Ohio](#)

[Pennsylvania](#)

[South Carolina](#)

[Tennessee](#)

[Virginia](#)

[West Virginia](#)

3. Defining the Region II: Questions That Are Useful, and Some That Are Not

4. Population I: The First Appalachian People: the Cherokees and others

[Map of pre-contact cultural areas](#)

[Map of federally owned lands in US](#), including Indian reservations

[Tribes by states map index](#) [clickable]

[Map of state populations of native Americans](#)

[Maps of Cherokee lands at different historical periods](#)

[A map of that part of Georgia occupied by the Cherokee Indians \[n.a. 1831\]](#)

[Geographic Information Systems \(GIS\) Windows on Native Lands, Current Places, and History](#)

[Index of Native American Sources on the Internet](#) [a huge links page]

A good brief [Cherokee history](#) [two parts]

[The official homepage of the Cherokee Nation Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Western North Carolina.](#)

[Cherokee Messenger](#) newspaper

A very nice [Cherokee Links Page](#) [lots of good, interesting links]

[Cherokee John G. Burnett's Story of the Removal \(1890\)](#)

[Prehistoric people of the Kanawha Valley in West Virginia](#)

5. Population II: White Mountaineers: Who came, from where, and when?

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 1: Settlement and Early History, pp. 1-22

Chap. 2: The Impact of the Wilderness, pp. 23-62

[Early immigration routes](#) (map)

[Great Philadelphia Wagon Road map](#)

[Map of location of Cade's Cove in Great Smoky Mountains National Park](#)

[Contemporary photo of Cade's Cove](#)

[The Hensley Settlement in Bell County KY](#)

Draft #1 of City/County report due [[See Instructions](#)]**6. Economy I: The Preindustrial Economy and the Buying/Selling of the Mountains**

Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*:

Chap. 2 : A Magnificent Field for Capitalists, pp. 39-85

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 3: The Market Economy, pp. 63-98

Maps that are useful:

[Railroad map of the United States \[DeBow 1851\]](#)

[Appleton's railway map of the southern states \[Appleton 1865\]](#)

[Railway & county map of the Southern states \[Mendenhall 1863\]](#)

[Appleton's railway map of the Southern states \[Appleton 1874\]](#)

7. Music I: Ballads

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 5: The Civil War, pp. 123-42 [check this web site also: [Cade's Cove in the Civil War](#)]

Chap. 6: The Folk Culture, pp. 143-78

Suggested film: Appalachian Film Workshop, [Fixin' to Tell About Jack](#)

8. Economy II: Turnpikes, Hot Springs, and Railroad Hotels: [Early Tourism](#)

[The Conservation Movement, 1847-1920](#)

9. Defining the Region III: Mountaineers in Genteel Magazines: Local Color

Mary N. Murfree, "The Dancin' Party at Harrison's Cove" [reserve]

Copy [work sheet](#) on the story. Use to aid your reading, and [bring to class discussion](#).

Mary Murfree, [In the Tennessee Mountains](#) (1884) (full-text web version)

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 7: Family Life and Social Customs, pp. 179-200

[Warren Steel's Sacred Harp Page](#)

[Historical introduction to shape-note singing](#)

[About the Sacred Harp book](#) (continuously in print since 1844)

[What are the shapes and why?](#) (explains the shape-note system)

10. Economy III: Tumult on the Mountains: [Lumbering](#)

Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*:

Chap. 3: The Last Great Trees, pp. 86-127

[Early logging with horses \(1903\)](#)

[Very large log from early logging operations](#)

[Huge chestnut tree \(before 1937\)](#)

[Forest workers with huge tree cut in eastern Kentucky in the 1920s](#)

[Logging camp in West Virginia](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

[Diagram of steam skidder used to drag logs to loading area](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

[Loading logs on train in West Virginia](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

[Log rafts assembled to go downstream in West Virginia](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

[West Virginia Lumber Company yard](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

[Moving houses from lumber camp after stand has been cut](#) (from Clarkson, *Tumult on the Mountains*)

11. Music II: Fiddle tunes

Some web pages to check out:

[Old-time fiddler Clyde Davenport](#)(south central Kentucky)

[Nineteenth century minstrel show advertisements](#)

[Example of a minstrel show tune in the fiddle repertoire \("Liza Jane"\)](#).

["Every Time I Turn Around Rite, Reversal, and the end of blackface minstrelsy"](#) (Jim Comer).
(material on elements of minstrelsy)

[Vassar Clements homepage](#)

Films at UNC:

The Old Time Music Maker, Melvin Wine (V4134; 27 min.): a West Virginia fiddler
Sprout Wings and Fly (V1804; 28 min.; 1983): traditional fiddler from Round Peak area of NC, with revival players

Texas Style (V4149; 28 min.; 1987): to help you compare Texas style and repertoire with southeastern style

Draft #2 of City/County report due [See [Instructions](#)]

12. Economy IV: Birth and Growth of the Coal Industry

[Pictorial essay on coal mining in the 19th-century United States](#) (Anthracite fields of PA; Ohio State University Department of History)

[Directors and friends inspect property of Elkhorn Mining Corp., Fleming, KY, May 15, 1914.](#)

Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*:

Chap. 4: The Ascendancy of Coal, pp. 128-60

Chap. 5: Life in the Company Towns, pp. 161-98

Chap. 6: Profits and Power: The Coal Barons, pp. 199-224

[Coal Fields of the Conterminous United States](#) [clickable map]

[Time line on development of the coal industry](#).

[Pictorial Essay on Coal Mining in the Nineteenth Century](#) (prepared by History Department, Ohio State University).

[Coal Mining in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era](#) (prepared by the History Department, Ohio State University).

Library of Congress [American Memory Collection](#) [search on "coal miners" (photos and prints only)]

[Map of Kentucky coal-producing areas](#)

[Kentucky Geological Survey](#).

Paper assignment: From data available on the MSHA sites below, write a **3-5 pp. paper** on what you conclude to be some of the most important facts about, trends, and changes in coal mining health and safety since 1931. **Paper is due at class #15**

[Brief history \(by MSHA\) of mine safety and health legislation](#)

[Legislative history \(by MSHA\)](#)

[Federal Mine Health and Safety Act \[PL 91-173\]](#), was passed in 1977)

[Historical data on mine disasters](#)

[Historical coal mining statistics](#) (production, injuries and deaths, etc.)

13. Defining the Region IV: Yellow Journalism and the Feuds

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 8: Government, Law and Politics, pp. 201-19

The Hatfield-McCoy Feud: "[Devil Anse" Hatfield and family, 1897](#)

Contemporary survivals of the feud iconography and myth:

[Reference in contemporary press](#) (Associated Press article in *Salt Lake Tribune*)

[The Feud \("punkabilly band"\)](#)

[Hatfields & McCoy's Home Brew Supplies](#) Lincoln, Nebraska

14. Population III: Churches

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:

Chap. 4: Religion and the Churches, pp. 99-122

Whisnant, *Modernizing the Mountaineer*:

Chap. 1: The Council of the Southern Mountains, pp. 3-39

Recommended film: Appalachian Film Workshop, *In the Good Old Fashioned Way* (1973)

Links to some denominations that figure prominently in the region (sites I could find; absence of a denomination from this list does NOT mean it does not operate or is not important):

[Assemblies of God \(Pentecostal\)](#)

[Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints \(Mormons\)](#)

[Jehovah's Witnesses](#)

[Southern Baptists](#)

[Primitive Baptists](#)

[United Methodist Church](#)

15. Cultural Politics I: All That Is Native and Fine: Settlement Schools and Festivals

Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine*:

Introduction, pp. 5-16

Chap. 1: Culture and Social Change at Hindman Settlement School, pp. 17-101

Paper due on historical coal mining statistics (class 12 material above)

16. Economy V: Bloody Harlan and Blair Mountain: The UMWA and the Mine Wars

Lon Savage, *Thunder in the Mountains: The West Virginia Mine War, 1920-21*

Recommended film: Appalachian Film Workshop, *Dreadful Memories: The Life of Sarah Ogan Gunning* (1988)

[Labor history time line](#)

[Matewan Historic District \(with links to Battle of Matewan and the mine wars\)](#)

[Lon Savage's Battle of Matewan home page](#)

[Battle of Matewan](#)

[Matewan War Links](#)

[United Mine Workers of America home page](#)

[Labornet](#)(large site; general labor resources)

[Democratic Socialists of America Labor Activists Home Page](#) (a rich site with many links to alternative/left views, labor organizations, publications, films, racial and gender issues)

[Labor and workplace issues on the American Studies Web](#) (searchable)

17. Mid-term examination (Tuesday, October 14)

[Adam Winkel mid-term exam](#)

FALL BREAK**18. Music III: String Bands**

[String bands](#) [Site in Southern Historical Collection, UNC-CH. Many interesting links.]
[Commercial hillbilly string band of the 1920s](#)
[Thumbnail history of the banjo](#)
[Banjo timeline](#)
[Banjo bibliography](#)
[Introduction to bluegrass music](#)
[BR5-49 "Living Legends of Hillbilly Music"](#)(contemporary "hillbilly beatnik" band)

19. Population IV: Non-whites

View before class: Appalachian Film Workshop, [Evelyn Williams](#) (1995)

20. Cultural Politics II: L'il Abner and Other Hillbillies: Print and material culture stereotypes

Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine*:

Chap. 2: The Cultural Work of Olive Dame Campbell, 1908-1948, pp. 103-80

Recommended film: Appalachian Film Workshop, [Strangers and Kin](#) (1984)

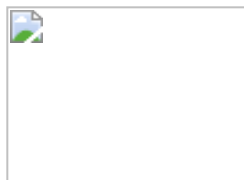
[Hickland on the Web](#) (WARNING: some parts are offensive)

A must see hillbilly site: <http://www.hillbillypair.com> (located by Joy Salyers)

[L'il Abner and other cartoons](#)

[Hillbilly Hercules](#)

[Hillbilly's Redneck Rampage Homepage](#)

21. Economy VI: Strip Away, Big D-9 Dozer: Technological Change and Decline in the Coal Industry

Fisher, *Fighting Back in Appalachia*:

Bingman, "Stopping the Bulldozers," pp. 17-30

[Peabody Coal Company stripmining shovel](#)

["Reseeding" operation on stripmined hillside](#)

[Photograph of auger mining operation](#)

Allen, "Save Our Cumberland Mountains," pp. 85-100

Recommended films:

Appalachian Film Workshop, [On Our Own Land](#) [stripmining]

Appalachian Film Workshop, [Coal Mining Women](#) [women coal mining workers]

Appalachian Film Workshop, [Mine War on Blackberry Creek](#) [1980s strike against A. T. Massey Co.]

Appalachian Film Workshop, [Justice in the Coalfields](#) [current labor law cripples collective bargaining]

[Buffalo Creek WV flood \(1972\)](#) caused by negligent stripmining practices (West Virginia Library Commission site)

Draft #3 of City/County report due [See [Instructions](#)]

22. Population V: Hillbilly Highway: Outmigration

View before class: Appalachian Film Workshop, [Long Journey Home](#) (1987)
[Alford, "A New Appalachian Migration?"](#) *Columbus Dispatch*
[Appalachian metropolitan areas](#)
[Degree of urbanization, by county](#)
[Map of Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine area \(Appalachian receiving area 1950ff.; now gentrifying\)](#)
[Newspaper story on NC Appalachian outmigrant's play performed for Appalachian boys in a youth correctional home in OH](#)
 Columnist [Karen Samples](#), who covers Appalachian affairs for the Cincinnati Enquirer

23. Music IV: Commercial Country Music and Appalachia

Whisnant, *All That Is Native and Fine*:
 Chap. 3: The White Top Folk Festival, 1931-1939, pp. 181-252
 Recommended films:
 Appalachian Film Workshop, [Lily May Ledford](#) (1988)
 Appalachian Film Workshop, [Morgan Sexton: Banjo Player from Bull Creek](#) (1991)

[Brief, very selective history of country music](#)
[Good links to established artists](#)
[Country Music](#) [a good place to start for the current scene]
[A huge site of contemporary country performers' home pages](#)
[Country Music in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and Western Europe](#)
[Music City News](#)

24: Economy VII: Federal Development Programs (1)

Whisnant, *Modernizing the Mountaineer*:
 Chap. 2: The Tennessee Valley Authority, pp. 43-69
 Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:
 Chap. 9: Progressivism and Prohibition, pp. 221-40
[Tennessee Valley Authority \(1933-\)](#) [click "About Us" button]
[The Blue Ridge Parkway](#) virtual visitor's center

25. Economy VIII: Federal Development Programs (2)

Whisnant, *Modernizing the Mountaineer*:
 Chap. 4: Appalachia and the War on Poverty, pp. 92-125
 Chaps. 5-6: The Appalachian Regional Commission, pp. 126-82
 Recommended film: *Appalachia: Rich Land, Poor People* (1968; 59 min.; V1383)

[County profiles for NC counties \(last 5 years\)](#)
[Appalachian Regional Commission poverty areas by census tract](#)
[Poverty in Appalachia in 1990 \(map\)](#)
[Unemployment in Appalachia in 1992 \(map\)](#)
[Distressed/Strong Counties in Appalachian Economy 1995](#)
[Facts and Statistics on Poverty in America \(1993\)](#)
Draft #4 of Report on City/County due [See [Instructions](#)]

26. Economy IX: Later Tourism

Dunn, *Cade's Cove*:
 Chap. 10: Death by Eminent Domain, pp. 241-54

Epilogue, pp. 255-57

Brief writing assignment:

Go to the National Park Service "[Enhanced Cade's Cove Pages](#)":

Click on "Cultural History." Read this page carefully and compare the NPS interpretation of Cade's Cove and its history with what you have learned from Durwood Dunn's book and from this course. **Write a 4-6 pp. paper** presenting your observations and analysis.

27. Defining the Region V: [Revisionist Paradigms](#)

Fisher, *Fighting Back in Appalachia*:

Glen, "Like a Flower Slowly Blooming: Highlander and the Nurturing of an Appalachian Movement," pp. 31-56

Banks, Billings, and Tice, "Appalachian Studies, Resistance, and Postmodernism," pp. 283-301

Fisher, "Conclusion: New Populist Theory and the Study of Dissent in Appalachia," pp. 317-38

[National Committee for the New River](#) (*New River News*)

[Western North Carolina Alliance](#) [activist environmental group: nuclear waste and other issues]

28. Population VI: "From Fussin' to Organizing": Individual vs. Organized Opposition

Fisher, *Fighting Back in Appalachia*:

Cable, "From Fussin' to Organizing: Individual and Collective Resistance on Yellow Creek," pp. 69-84

Sessions and Ansley, "Singing Across Dark Spaces: The . . . Takeover of [Pittston's Moss 3](#)," pp. 195-224

Anglin, "Engendering the Struggle: Women's Labor and Traditions of Resistance," pp. 263-282
Recommended film: Appalachian Film Workshop, [Chemical Valley](#) (1991)

This film draws a comparison between the disaster at Union Carbide's Bhopal, India plant and their plant at Institute, WV, which manufactures the same chemical. Extensive interviews with Institute residents.

29. Music V: Music of Opposition and Revitalization

Fisher, *Fighting Back in Appalachia*:

Carawan, "Sowing on the Mountain: Nurturing Cultural Roots . . .," pp. 245-62

Foster, "Politics, Expressive Form, and Historical Knowledge," pp. 303-16

30. Cultural Politics III: [Appalachia in Hollywood Films](#)

Williamson, [Southern Mountaineers Filmography](#)

[The Internet Movie Database](#) [searchable]

Some sample titles of hillbilly films:

The Scarlet Drop [a.k.a. *Hill Billy*] (1918)

The Hill Billy (1924)

Hillbilly Blitzkrieg (1942)

Hillbilly Hare (1950)

Hillbillies in a Haunted House (1967)

The Las Vegas Hillbillies (1966)

The Legend of Hillbilly John (1973)

Note on final examination

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