



Resource List

This reading list is by no means exhaustive, but simply offers suggestions for reading about the Appalachian region or about Christian service. If you have suggestions about additions to this list, please email ASP@ASPHome.org

FICTION ABOUT APPALACHIA

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY, James Agee. This novel by James Agee is about a family's reactions to the accidental death of the father. Published in 1957, the novel was praised as one of the best examples of American autobiographical fiction, and it won a Pulitzer Prize in 1958.

APPALACHIA: THE VOICES OF SLEEPING BIRDS, Cynthia Rylant, The Trumpet Club, 1995. Children's book for all ages! Captures scenery, children, dogs, coal mining, religion, etc. Highly recommended!

BLACK MOUNTAIN BREAKDOWN, Lee Smith; Highly recommended author!

BRIGHTEN THE CORNER WHERE YOU ARE, Fred Chappell, St. Martin's Press, 1989, 212 pages. Set in Appalachia, this story could take place anywhere! One day in the life of Joe Robert Kirkman, a North Carolina mountain schoolteacher, sly prankster, country philosopher, and family man...what a day!

CURING THE CROSS-EYED MULE, Loyal Jones & Billy Ed Wheeler, August House, Inc., 1989, 211 pages. A book of Appalachian humor and wit! Fun!

THE DOLLMAKER, Harriette Arnow. This novel portrays a sensitive, imaginative, and self-reliant Kentucky woman, Gertie Nevels. Highly recommended!

HUNTERS HORN, Harriette Arnow. Nunn Ballew, a farmer, is so driven to capture a great red fox that he allows his land to go to waste and his children to be in want.

LITTLEJIM'S GIFT: AN APPALACHIAN CHRISTMAS STORY, Gloria Houston, Philomel Books, 1994. Children's book; growing up during hard times in Appalachia and how a little boy tried to bring joy to his family.

MAMA IS A MINER, Lyon & Catalanotto, Orchard Books, 1994. Children's book, mom is a miner.

ORAL HISTORY, Lee Smith. When Jennifer, a college student, returns to her childhood home of Hoot Owl Holler with a tape recorder, tales bring to life a vibrant story of a doomed family that still refuses to give up.

RIVER OF EARTH, James Still; A 3-year old boy sees his parents pulled between the meager farm with its sense of independence and the mining camp with its uncertain promise of material prosperity.

SAVING GRACE, Lee Smith, Ballantyne Books, 1995, 275 pages. A brilliantly written story of a young girl and her father who is a fundamentalist preacher.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN READER, McNeil & Squibb, Appalachian Consortium Press, 1989, 529 pages. A rare, comprehensive collection of short stories and poems with brief backgrounds on each author.

TALL WOMAN, Wilma Dykeman, Wakestone Books, 1962, 315 pages. This novel is a beautiful portrayal of the strength and endurance of the Appalachian women of an earlier time in the mountains.

NON-FICTION ABOUT APPALACHIA

ALL THAT IS NATIVE AND FINE: The Politics of Culture in an American Region, David E. Whisnant (University of North Carolina Press, 1995). This book opens the way not only to a reexamination of the history of a single region but also to a more sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of cultural continuity and change in other regions and in the nation as a whole.

AN AMERICAN CHALLENGE: A Report On Economic Trends And Social Issues In Appalachia, Richard Couto, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1994, 291 pages. Economic trends and social issues within Appalachia.

APPALACHIA: A SELF-PORTRAIT, ed. Wendy Ewald; Groman Press for Appalshop, Inc., c. 1979. Seven photographers give personal views of the Appalachian people and the landscape through the camera.

APPALACHIA: ITS PEOPLE, HERITAGE, AND PROBLEMS, Frank S. Riddel; Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.; c. 1974, 337 pages. As a textbook for an introductory class on the Appalachian area, history and culture, the book contains an anthology and many articles by Caudill, Weller, Letterman, and others.

APPALACHIAN IMAGES IN FOLK AND POPULAR CULTURE, 2nd edition, ed. W.K. McNeil, University of Tennessee Press, 1995, 348 pages; updated compilation of articles and essays from the last 130 years that illuminate the character and spirit of Appalachian culture and show how attitudes toward the region have evolved.

APPALACHIAN LAND OWNERSHIP STUDY, Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C., 1980. 7 volumes of land ownership/use in Central Appalachia showing controlled by outside interests.

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN RELIGION: A HISTORY, Deborah McCauley, U of IL Press, 1995. True portrait of the diversity of religion in Appalachia.

APPALACHIA'S PATH TO DEPENDENCY: Rethinking A Region's Economic History, 1730-1940, Paul Salstrom, University of Kentucky Press, 1994, 204 pages.

AT HOME IN THE HEART OF APPALACHIA, John O'Brien, Alfred A. Knopf, 2001.

CLOUDS OF SOUTHERN EARTH, Don West. Poetry collection dedicated to justice; sold more copies than any American poetry exception Leaves of Grass.

COLONIALISM IN MODERN AMERICA: THE APPALACHIAN CASE, ed. Lewis, Johnson, Askins; Appalachian Consortium Press, c. 1979. 370 pages, deals with Appalachia as an internal colony of US. The articles depict the history of the region as determined by outside interests and how the people have been affected.

COMMUNITIES IN ECONOMIC CRISIS: APPALACHIA AND THE SOUTH, Steve Fisher

FIGHTING BACK IN APPALACHIA: Traditions of Resistance and Change, ed. Stephen Fisher, Temple University Press, 1993, 365 pages, 16 essays... of citizen resistance/struggle in the Appalachian region since 1960

FOOTSTEPS OF THE MOUNTAIN SPIRITS...APPALACHIA, Kenneth Murray, Overmountain Press, 1992. A collection of myths, legends and folklore of the region along with wonderful photographs!

GRANDFATHER TALES, THE, Richard Chase; Houghton Mifflin Co., c. 1948. Folk tales from the mountains collected in the 1940's. Did you know Jack and the Beanstalk is an Appalachian tale?

HILLBILLY WOMEN, Kathy Kahn; Avon Books, c. 1973, mountain women narratives; excellent source for a sampling of the culture and the social conditions of the area.

I LIFT UP MY EYES TO THE HILLS; Stories of Faith and Joy from Appalachia, Nancy Anne Dawe, Augsburg, 1992, 120 pages. Great pictures!

IT COMES FROM THE PEOPLE, Hinsdale, Lewis & Waller, Temple University Press, 1995, 400 pages. Story of long-lasting community organization to revitalize Ivanhoe, Virginia where mines and factories had closed.

JACK TALES, THE, Richard Chase; Houghton Mifflin Co., c. 1943, 201 pages. folk tales collected in the 1940's

LONG HAUL, Myles Horton, Doubleday, 1990, 231 pages. Horton's life affected the civil rights movement, labor movement, education movement and the lives of, many in Appalachia and beyond. Highly recommended!

MELUNGEONS: THE RESURRECTION OF A PROUD PEOPLE, N. Brent Kennedy, Mercer University Press, 1994, 156 pages. Kennedy provides a history of his own family and the struggles they saw in the region.

MINERS, MILLHANDS, AND MOUNTAINEERS: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930, Ronald Eller, University of Tennessee Press, 1982, 272 pages. Accurate, detailed, comprehensive.

MODERNIZING THE MOUNTAINEER, David E. Whisnant; Appalachia Consortium Press, c. 1981; 296 pages. An extensively researched and comprehensive analysis of the planned development of the Appalachian region.

MOUNTAIN PEOPLE, MOUNTAIN CRAFTS, Elinor Lander Horwitz; J.B. Lippincott Co., c. 1974, 142 pages. Introduction to the handicrafts of the Appalachian region. The description of the people and their methods of creating is well supported with photographs of the artists at work.

MOUNTAIN PEOPLE, PLACES, AND WAYS, Michael and Ruth Joslin; Overmountain Press, 1991, 282 pages. A nice sampler of the people, places and customs of the Appalachian region.

MORE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE, PLACES, AND WAYS, Michael and Ruth Joslin; Overmountain Press, 1992, 280 pages. A sequel to the original sampler of the people, places and customs of the Appalachian region.

MY APPALACHIA, Rebecca Caudill; Holt, Rinehart & Winston, c. 1966. Pictorial description of the region.

MY LAND IS DYING, Harry M. Caudill; E.P. Dutton & Co.; c. 1971, 144 pages. Caudill deals with strip mining, including pictures of the equipment used and the devastation to the land.

NIGHT COMES TO THE CUMBERLANDS, Harry M. Caudill; Little, Brown & Co., c. 1962-63. Good in-depth reading. Reprinted by Jesse Stuart Foundation in Ashland KY, 2001.)

NO MORE SHACKS, Millard Fuller; Habitat for Humanity and Christian responsibility regarding housing.

OUR APPALACHIA, ed. Laurel & Shackelford, c. 1970. Oral history told by people of the region.

POWER AND POWERLESSNESS, John Gaventa; Univ. of IL Press, c. 1981, 267 pages. Study of development in Appalachia, traces the history of the Clear Fork Valley along the KY and the TN border.

ROCKET BOYS; A MEMOIR, Homer H. Hickam, Jr. Growing up in Coalwood, WV (McDowell County) in the late 1940s and '50s, a young man and his buddies bring hope to a town about to expire from the coal business.

STORMING HEAVEN, Denise Giardina. A depiction of the events of thirty years leading up to the 1921 coal miners' revolt; a portrait of Appalachia and its people, who battled with rifles, hoes, and frying pans, sacrificing for the promise of dignity and freedom.

STORY OF RED BIRD MISSION, THE, - Its Beginning and Growth, Roberta Schaeffer; Red Bird Mission, Inc. of the United Methodist Church, c. 1980; 119 pages. Story of largest home mission project in the US.

TAKING UP SERPENTS, David L. Kimbrough, University of North Carolina Press, 1995. 232 pages. First hand portrayal of life inside and outside the Holiness Pentecostal Church. Highly recommended!

THEIRS BE THE POWER, Harry M. Caudill; University of IL Press, c. 1983, 200 pages. Coal barons and capitalists industrialized Appalachia, making mineral wealth into enormous personal fortunes.

UNQUIET EARTH, Denise Giardina, Ivy Books, 1992, 339 pages. The sequel to Storming Heaven.

VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS, Guy and Candie Caraway; Univ. of IL Press, 1982. This is a second edition of the 1975 book of songs, poems and stories of Appalachian people.

WATCHES OF THE NIGHT, THE, Harry M. Caudill; Little, Brown & Co., c. 1976. Social issues of the 1970s.

WHAT MY HEART WANTS TO TELL, Verna Mae Slone; New Republic Books, Washington D.C., c. 1979. A heartwarming memoir of Verna Mae and her father, Isom B. 'Kitteneye' Slone in Caney Creek Kentucky.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG IN THE MOUNTAINS, Cynthia Rylant, Dutton Children's Books, 1982. Caldecott Honor Award! Touching, memorable book! Highly recommended!!

WILL APPALACHIA FINALLY OVERCOME POVERTY? Anthony J. Salatino, McClanahan Publishing House, 1995, 267 pages.

WISH YOU WELL, David Baldacci's, story of the mountains of 1940, but the spirit and love are the same as today. Mr. Baldacci was born in the mountains of Dickenson County and has a real love for the area and people.

WORLDS APART: WHY POVERTY PERSISTS IN RURAL AMERICA Cynthia M. Duncan (1999) New Haven, CT: Yale.

ON CHRISTIAN SERVICE

THE CARPENTER AND THE UNBUILDER, David Griebner, Upper Room Books, 1996, 127 pages. Written by pastor and ASP volunteer, David Griebner, these short connected stories will challenge the reader to go deeper and remember "where" they are going in their faith journey. Recommended by ASP staff!

THE CATHEDRAL WITHIN, Bill Shore, Random House, 1999, 292 pages.

EXPERIENCING THE HEART OF JESUS, Max Lucado, Thomas Nelson Pub, 2003, 241 pages.

IMPROVING YOUR SERVE, Charles Swindoll, Word, Inc. Waco, TX 1981. A must for people serving others.

LIVING MORE WITH LESS, Doris Janzen Longacre, Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1980. A Christian response to material consumption. "Do"-able and logical within Christian living.

FILMS AND VIDEOS

RECOMMENDED APPALSHOP VIDEOS: Appalshop (www.appalshop.org) was begun in 1969 to provide meaningful jobs and training, while helping to preserve the culture and history of Appalachia. We at ASP have found documentaries from Appalshop to be well worth their cost (average \$35).

STRANGER WITH A CAMERA, 2000 – strongly recommended for all ASP groups!

A film probing today's unresolved questions concerning media images and the individual's lack of power to define themselves within the American landscape. This film focuses on the murder of documentary filmmaker, Hugh O'Connor, as a pivotal point to explore issues in representation, culture, media and community.

COAL BUCKET OUTLAW, 2002

Built around a day in the life of a Kentucky coal truck driver, this documentary asks Americans to look at where our energy comes from, and reveals the human and environmental price we pay for our national addiction to fossil fuels.

TO SAVE THE LAND AND PEOPLE, 1999

An expose on strip mining in Eastern Kentucky and the response of the people.

JUSTICE AND THE COALFIELDS, 1995

This film demonstrates how current labor law has crippled the collective bargaining power of unions and weighed the scales of justice against working people. The documentary follows the United Mine Workers strike against the Pittson Coal Company and explores the strike's social, cultural, and economic impact on coalfield communities.

BEYOND MEASURE, 1995

Shows the tensions in an ever changing economy with the Appalachian people struggling through mine shutdowns and loss of jobs due to advanced technologies.

STRANGERS AND KIN, 1984

Shows how the stereotypes of the Southern Mountain people developed and have been exploited in the media.

HAZEL DICKENS: IT'S HARD TO TELL THE SINGER FROM THE SONG, 2002

A wonderful bluegrass singer from Appalachian Virginia, Hazel's songs of hard work, hard times, and hardy souls have bolstered working people at picket lines and union rallies throughout the land. Her vocals provide the soundtracks for documentaries Harlan County USA and Matewan.

OTHER FILMS AND VIDEOS

AN AMERICAN HOLLOW: An HBO movie about Appalachia.

HARLAN COUNTY, USA

HELPING STRANGERS: This 20-minute color videotape orients volunteers by interviews with professionals within service agencies and leaders within community organizations. The tape begins with the volunteers' understanding that they will help strangers and evolves into an understanding that they are strangers helping others. Rental \$10.00. Available from Center for Health Services, Vanderbilt University, Station 17, Nashville, TN 37232-8180. Phone (615) 322-4773.

LEARNING TO SERVE: This 27 minute video outlines a program which sets professional training in community settings of need and combines professional instruction with orientations from community leaders on the socio-economic correlates of the lack of professional services. Rental \$10.00. Available from Center for Health Services, Vanderbilt University, Station 17, Nashville, TN 37232-8180. Phone (615) 322-4773.

MATEWAN

OCTOBER SKY: Based on the Hickam Book, Rocket Boys. A commercially produced recent video (1999) that shows life in a coal mining town; set in 1957. The true memoirs of a young boy and his buddies who gave hope to a town trapped by the dying coal industry. Can be rented at any popular video store.