

PROSPECTUS:

Academics and Activists: Confronting Ecological and Community Crisis in Appalachia ¹

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Appalachia as a region is characterized by persistent poverty and widespread environmental degradation. These two phenomena are linked by a history where the power to make decisions affecting the quality of life in Appalachia was made by people living elsewhere. Over the last several decades, academic observers have begun to document the structural and cultural causes of social and environmental problems that afflict the region. In parallel fashion, community groups have formed to confront both external power holders and their local agents. These citizen activists have demanded an end to the wholesale destruction of mountains, forests, and waterways. And critically, they have come to recognize that environmental degradation and political systems built on patronage and paternalism have to be challenged and changed.

The parallel raising of academic and public consciousness in Appalachia are not isolated phenomena, yet little attention has been devoted to the interaction between university-based teachers and researchers and community-based organizations. What little we know is mostly related to the role of the Highlander Center as a meeting place. Yet the interaction between academics and activists is broader and more complex than is commonly understood. Our proposed book is designed to examine the complex relationships that are formed when these two sets of actors get together. Our focus will be on Appalachia, but we believe our work will have relevance beyond this region.

READERSHIP

We intend to address the needs of three audiences. The first will be activists, who would often benefit from access to information, perspective, institutional support, and credibility that comes from association with a university or research center. But activists need to understand the limits within which most academicians must operate, especially those based in public colleges and universities. Our second audience is academics looking for ways to make their studies relevant to the society around them. Community activists represent an important resource as guest lecturers and subjects of research

¹ NOTE: We have two cases that do not officially qualify as being in Appalachia (Tillery, North Carolina and Ashurst Bar/ Smith, Tallahassee, Alabama). Despite not being Appalachian, these two cases represent two significant cases of community-university partnership that have developed to confront environmental injustices. Because of their relevance to this text and because of their definite interest to our readership, they are included (featured) in this book.

papers, but the opportunities for collaboration are far more substantive than that. Through this book we hope to demonstrate that solid academic careers can be developed through partnerships with community organizations. Such partnerships, however, require careful consideration of control over the research process and data. The needs of academic research oriented toward scholarly publication may be at odds with a community seeking a quick assessment of needs and opportunities.

Our third audience may be the most important: students. We intend to develop a book which will be adopted in courses on Appalachian studies and community development and to a variety of courses in applied social change within the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, political science. Several of the case studies to be developed will demonstrate how both graduate and undergraduate students have played key roles in linking universities and communities through research serving local needs. We believe the proposed book meets a need both from the standpoint of faculty teaching courses and students who are looking for a sense of relevance in their studies. Further, we hope and believe that the proposed book will have the effect of encouraging individual faculty and students to lend their talents to local social and environmental organizations.

CONTEXT

This book is about Appalachian communities and the local organizing efforts that have developed, among citizens, in partnership with academic supporters, to confront the ecological crises that face them and their home places. Through a selection of case studies, the reader will visit communities in Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The reader will learn a little about each of these places, its history, and people, and the local economy and politics of that particular area. The reader will learn a lot about social disruption and environmental degradation caused by certain corporate and governmental actors whose interests are in conflict with those of local residents.

The reader will learn to situate ecological crises in the context of a political landscape dominated by national or transnational corporations and governmental agencies who are in turn supported by local business leaders and politicians. These relations help explain the workings of state and federal regulatory agencies, whose decisions often reflect the interests of powerful outside forces rather than local concerns. Due to this imbalance of power, a growing number of communities in the Appalachian region confront serious ecological crises which have damaged or destroyed the livability of many peoples' home place and way of life in Appalachia. Other ecological crises, presented in other chapters, remain more imminent.

These chapters will highlight and discuss how local citizens have developed new strategies, partnerships and organizational forms to confront both the ecological and economic crises that challenge the livability of their local communities. The book chapters are not only about power structures, but are also about how area citizens have taken a stand to either protect the quality of their local environment or to prevent further ecological degradation. This book is about communities, conflict and environmental

crisis in Appalachia. It is a book about the struggle over the use and abuse of land and resources. For this reason, this book also presents a glimpse of new currents in the environmental movement within the region, by outlining and describing current environmental struggles happening at the local level.

Land and class struggle against corporate and government power structures have a deep and celebrated past within the region. Admittedly, some Appalachian communities have a deeper history of movement organization and resistance than others. This book will provide a contemporary account of cases of community resistance and community environmental organization against corporate and governmental forces. In an ironic twist, for example, in the case of mountaintop removal (MTR), local environmental groups confront their own history of resistance in organized labor. Environmental groups increasingly have found themselves at odds and outnumbered by members of the United Mine Workers Association (UMWA) in contesting MTR permit applications throughout some of the coal-producing regions of Kentucky and West Virginia. The economy versus the environment trade-off represents a real and immediate conflict in many job-poor places of Appalachia. Subsequently, each case study will provide a realistic, rather than idealistic, glimpse of the corporate, governmental, social and even cultural challenges facing local community-environmental organizations. In the end, some of the chapters will describe more ‘successful’ efforts at community organization than other chapters. Nonetheless, at the end of each chapter, the reader will have learned much from each case. The reader will come to know the barriers and traps that often confront local people in their efforts to protect their local communities and environments from broader corporate and governmental imperatives.

Each chapter will be written jointly by a community leader and an academic who has worked with the community on their cause. Each will bring to the task their own perspective and experience, and we anticipate the writing process itself will represent a learning experience for both partners. We imagine the community leader will help the reader understand what it has been like working within their communities by providing a firm sense of place as represented by local ecologies, economies and politics. The specific division of labor between community activist and academic will vary from chapter to chapter, and each chapter will have its own unique story to tell. However, all will contain basic information on the affected communities, the struggle in which they were engaged, and the benefits and difficulties of academics and activities working together.

As such, our proposed book represents a departure from other edited, case-study volumes on the environment (Bullard 1993; Bryant and Mohai 1992) and on the region (Fisher 1993; Gaventa, Smith and Willingham 1990). Several of these volumes have been excellent in bringing writers together to write on various topics and cases. However, for the most part the chapters are primarily “academic” with only several chapters that sound like “voices from the grass-roots.” Though the theoretical and empirical analyses of academic work in these volumes represent important contributions, they do not involve the kind of partnership between academics and community activists that we will present. In this book, the reader will be taken to different places in Appalachia. At each stop, the reader will hear another communities’ story as told by another community person. The

reader will hear about the constant adversities and humble successes that people face daily in struggling to maintain their home place. This is a book about Appalachian communities facing major and/or impending ecological crises. The reader, while turning each page, will feel that sense of place and crisis. The reader will hear the local person's sense of urgency to stop the eco-crisis that is barreling down upon them and their community.

The Book's Subtext

The ecological crises faced by many Appalachian communities might appear insurmountable to the reader, especially when local environmental conditions are tied to corporate twenty-year plans and national energy policies. But most social movements confront what at the beginning are seemingly insurmountable odds. The local environmental organizations featured in this book face no exception. Our intent is to gently move the reader from despair to understanding, organization, and action. In particular, the reader will come to appreciate the advantages of forming coalitions and the need to build partnerships capable of challenging entrenched networks of powerful persons in high places. In particular, we will examine the formation of alliances between communities and universities. Our intent is not to romanticize or sugar-coat the story, but to explore the joint learning process and need for compromise when two distinctly different sets of actors attempt to work together in an emotionally charged setting.

To capture this notion that movements start with people talking to one another, and forming partnerships with each other, each chapter will be co-written by two or more people who were involved in local community organizing efforts. Both community leaders and academics will be involved in developing each case study. The reader will hear different voices and perspectives and sometimes ease-drop on a shared conversation or debate. Our decision to draw attention to this partnership is not meant to suggest that local environmental organizations are or should be dependent on any form of partnership with academics. The focus on this connection is only meant to suggest that it is one type of partnership, among many, that may develop between people who are working together, within the region, to protect the environment and local ecosystems. Though not always a necessary partnership, the reader will be prompted to consider such coalitions between university and community people, as holding some importance in assisting local communities in confronting environmental challenges.

Across each chapter, the university person will help outline and describe the events surrounding the environmental crisis and will speak to their own involvement and partnership with people within the community. Here, the reader will experience a slightly different perspective, by hearing the university person's side of the story. In some of the chapters, the reader will hear about academics and research scientists working with community groups to evaluate pieces of proposed legislation and proposed permit applications. In other cases, the reader will hear about university persons working with local people in reading and evaluating agency risk assessments on impacted and potentially contaminated communities. In other chapters, the reader will listen to the stories of academics, working closely with community people, in evaluating and challenging environmental impact statements on proposed large-scale timber, farming or mining operations. In each chapter, the reader will read about these exchanges not in the

abstract, but based upon the on-the-ground accounts and first-hand recollections of university people working in “the field” with local people. In still other cases, within other chapters, the role of scientist or academic as “expert” or “consultant” is less clear and more blurred, as the reader will hear of local people taking the lead in bringing the outside academic “up to speed” with regard to the legislative, corporate and agency actions that have heavily impacted their communities. Across several chapters, it should be clear to the reader that the university person, in these cases, and in fact, all cases, has learned just as much from the community than vice versa.

Partnerships between academics and laypeople in tackling local development issues have a respected past within the region, through the seminal work of Hinsdale, Lewis and Waller (1995), Gaventa (1980,1990) and other scholars and academics who have worked with communities through the Highlander Center in Tennessee and elsewhere. The Democracy Resource Center in Lexington, Kentucky and the Rockefeller Fellows Program at the University of Kentucky represent a renewal and resurgence in community-based partnerships between academics, activists and other people, in addressing local issues in Appalachia (see, for example, Epstein 1999). Recent shifts in the regional discourse have been either at the fore or on the cusp of this resurgence. The recent discourse by such regional scholars as Taylor and Reid (2002) and Billings (2002) and others (Dirlík 2002; Smith 2002; Graham 2002; Gaventa 2002; McSpirit, Hardesty and Welch 2002a and Scott 2002) have called for a new “civic professionalism” in regional studies with an emphasis on a “civic science.” Within this emerging discourse, regional scholars have written with the intention of embracing and cultivating new partnerships between communities and universities tackling the challenges of globalization and underdevelopment that face the region.

Often times, the study of the environment is, itself, a study in the “sociology of science” and how supposedly objective “impact statements” and “risk assessments” are socially constructed to promote or appease outside corporate and bureaucratic agency interests. Through reading this book, the reader will come to know about a different type of science, perhaps aptly titled a “civic science.” The reader will hear the story of academics working with local people within the region to bend science back towards citizens. The reader will hear, based upon first-hand accounts, about the conversations and meetings between academics and locals, and how these exchanges and conversations were used to re-catalogue and reevaluate ecological damage, environmental degradation and potential health threats to the local community. Readers will also learn how citizens, now armed with this new science, are challenging risk assessments and permit applications of agency and company bureaucrats and beginning to democratically “take back” their communities.

Community-based environmental impact assessments and ‘popular epidemiology’ have increasingly been promoted not only within the regional literature, but within the general fields of environmental sociology (Kroll-Smith and Crouch 2001; Funtowicz and Ravetz 2001; Lidskog 2001), natural resource management (O’Faircheallaigh 1999; Brosius and Tsing 1998) and public and environmental health (Brown 1991, 2001; Wing 2002). There has been a proliferation of cases spotlighting community-based approaches to environmental risk assessment and risk management within the academic literature,

from assessing the impact of industrial forestry practices on local communities (Bailey et al. 1996; Bliss and Bailey in press; Carr and Halvosen 2001; Kruger and Shannon 2000), to measuring low-level radioactive contamination on indigenous food sources (Quigley, Handy and Goble 2000), to evaluating pesticide exposures among farm workers (Arcury, Quandt and Dearry 2001; Arcury, Quandt and McCauley 2000) as well as on other environmental fronts (McSpirit, Hardesty, Welch 2002b).

After nearly ten-years of scholarship and practice these community-based models of environmental assessment and natural resource management have yet to reach the general reader. In this book, through the conversations between community and academic authors, the reader will learn about new dynamic partnerships occurring between universities and communities, and how citizens are tackling environmental challenges within the region. If the reader happens to be a university student or faculty member, these stories and partnerships might encourage them to rethink their own, timeworn conceptions of science and inquiry while inspiring them to consider these new modes of community outreach that are being promoted by both regional scholars and researchers in the fields of environmental sociology, natural resource management and environmental health.

This dialogue too will be a sober account of the community-academic partnership. While there are subtle shifts occurring within the university, as outlined above, many people in Appalachia, for good reason, might see the university as a formidable place. Many local persons are astute enough to understand the close connection between research and development at local land-grant institutions and the agricultural, forest products and mining industries. Knowing about the faculty in the forestry, agriculture and geology departments and their corporate and agency connections have made many local people justifiably leery of university outreach. As one of our contributors puts it, “whether communities should go to universities for help may depend more on finding sympathetic individuals than on basic institutional good will” (Wing 2003). This cautionary note will emerge across the pages of some of these conversations that some of the book’s contributors will have with the reader.

Across other pages, some of the contributors will gently coax the reader to imagine the university differently. The military-industrial-agricultural-university complex has taken nearly six decades to root itself in U.S. science, politics and culture. Institutional politics and reactionary movements like McCarthyism and the current ‘red-baiting’ which attempts to liken environmental protest actions with ‘terrorism’ may have the effect of encouraging academics to retreat into the confines of academe. Some of the book’s contributors might speak to these intellectual currents, and counter efforts to freeze intellectual freedom and action.

By the book’s end, it is hoped, that the lines between scientists and lay persons will, in some cases, be sufficiently blurred by the contributions each author brings to their shared chapter. In other cases, a dynamic tension might exist between the authors and this too will be useful to highlight. Across all cases, the contributions of both authors will help situate the reader within the reality and complexity of the ecological crisis facing that particular community and the region, and each author might encourage the reader to also imagine alternative possibilities.

This book will challenge the long-standing tradition within universities to compartmentalize and segregate science from the daily lives of people. By calling into question the notion that science is the exclusive domain of experts, this volume will promote the view that science can and should serve shared and democratic social values. This in turn will gently prompt the reader to reconsider the relationship between the university and community. Across the book's pages, the reader will be invited to consider the idea of a 'public intellectual' (Jacoby 1987). The reader will be introduced to many people where only half have a Ph.D. But the reader will come to know that *all* of them have prepared for and spoken at public hearings, met with agency officials and legislators, filed open-records requests, checked regulatory records, reviewed statutes and regulatory guidelines and have deciphered the science of impact statements, risk assessments and air, water and soils data and have formulated a lucid commentary and critique on the state of things at the local, state, federal and even global level. These chapters will also show how this study and documentation has provoked conversation and discourse among people, and has hastened others who may never have done so to take a stand against the corporate and regulatory maneuverings that they have unearthed.

[The emerging regional literature] on "civic science," and the natural resource literature on community-based approaches to environmental and health risk assessment, has yet to fully speak to the intellectual traditions of Gramsci (Forgacs 2000), Hearn (1985) Jacoby (1987) Agger (2000, 1992, 1991, 1990) and others (Couto 1999; Busch 2000). There may be a need for a book that builds on these and other intellectual traditions, but this is not our intent.

Our intent is to produce a highly readable book, one that is approachable and useful to a wide range of audiences. We want to inspire our youth and put arrows in the quivers of our community leaders. We want to make students and faculty examine their place in their community, their university, and their positioning between the two. We want to help community leaders find ways to reach out to academic partners in ways that will enrich both of their lives. It is hoped that this book, through its subtext, will help in promoting a new type of democratic public science among university and communities within Appalachia. We also believe the stories from Appalachia are not so unique as to be without utility elsewhere. The contributors to this volume, through their stories and shared conversations, will attempt to persuade the reader that such new modes of thought, inquiry, organization and action are increasingly necessary in confronting the interlocked power of corporate and governmental actors that has undermined the social and environmental stability of an entire region.

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMAT:²

² **EDITORS' NOTE:** We are open to the possibility that other combinations of these same articles may make sense once they are written. Key factors that may suggest a different organizational format may include: differences and similarities in local groups, contrasting and/or similar partnerships with academics, etc.

Introduction:

The editors will write an introduction to the volume, which places the social and environmental problems, which characterize the region in context. We also will address in broad terms the question of partnerships between academics and activists. Apart from the introduction, we will also write transitions between sections that will help frame the cases/ chapters contained within each section. We envision the volume to be comprised of four sections with approximately fifteen chapters in total. The fifteen chapters that have been solicited so far are listed below in the order that they may appear in this book.³ However, a much fuller summary of each of these chapters along with a short bio sketch for each of the authors is included in Appendix A.

Section One:

While this book presents a series of community studies of ecological crises within the region, some of the community cases are more “local” in their focus than others. The first section of the book will present a set of more focused chapters that examine a particular ‘contained’ case of a pollution release that has resulted in toxic contamination to a local drinking water source either to private wells or to the public water system. These chapters will speak directly to the community's actions and the partnerships and struggles that developed between people to pressure state and federal agencies to take action and cleanup and/ or remediate the impacted site and to provide the impacted community with safe drinking water.

The first chapter will speak to a well-known case of ground and surface contamination in Yellow Creek, Kentucky and the local organizing efforts that ensued to provide the community with safe drinking water. Sherry Cable and Larry Wilson will speak to these events of twenty years ago, and how given the current rise of popular, community-based approaches to research, their research and collaboration might have played out differently if events were to happen today. This chapter will set the stage for the cases of community-based collaborative partnerships that follow across other chapters.

The second chapter, for example, will speak to the community-based partnership that developed between residents in a small town in Harlan County, KY and faculty at a local community college after area groundwater was tested and identified by the KY State Division of Water as PCB contaminated. This chapter speaks to the direct efforts of residents and local academics and of their struggles and negotiations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Local citizens based in the community and based in the community college were successfully in getting their community listed on EPA's *National Priorities (Superfund) List* for Superfund cleanup and remediation.

The third chapter will move from Harlan County, KY to Martin County, KY and will address the partnerships that developed between community and university people after

³ **EDITORS' NOTE:** Although the suggested and listed chapters that appear below are firm, we also know of several other possibilities with possibly still others to come to light. We believe that the problem will not be in finding adequate numbers of case studies but limiting our selection to the best ones.

the largest release of mine waste in U.S. mining history. This chapter will show area citizens working with university people in assessing the impact of the release on the community, the area watershed as well as potential impacts on public health. This chapter will provide a current view of community and university people working together. |

- **Chapter 1: Lessons from the Parasitic Researcher and the Man in the Cowboy Hat** -Sherry Cable and Larry Wilson
- **Chapter 2: Participatory Action Research: Combating the Poisoning of Harlan County's Dayhoit!** -Joan Robinett and Roy Silver
- **Chapter 3: The Martin County Coal Waste Disaster: A Faculty, Student and Citizen Research Effort** – Mark Grayson and Stephanie McSpirit

Section Two:

The next section of the book will deal with local community struggles against large-scale corporations and industrial practices in the resource extraction and agriculture sectors that are proliferating within the region. Several chapters will focus on community organizing efforts against destructive environmental practices in the mining, forest products and agricultural industries. While these several chapters will focus mostly on private sector actions, one chapter will focus on Army and Congressional decisions to burn a stockpile of chemical weapons and community reaction and mobilization. Be it government or industry, these chapters will focus on how local communities formed coalitions to confront powerful, top-down decision-making structures within the military/corporate/industrial/agricultural complex. These chapters will show that outside decisions occurring within the mining, forest products, and agricultural and military sectors pose serious ecological challenges to the quality of life of local communities within Appalachia.

These chapters shall reveal that local communities, at this level, confront larger national and global market imperatives with more entrenched structures of corporate power, that tightly reverberate through local, state and federal levels of governmental decision-making. Communities, confronting these challenges, have developed different forms of partnerships and coalitions and have formed multi-level strategies to confront the deep complexities of the serious environmental challenges that face them, their communities and local ecosystems.

- **Chapter 4: Keeping the Conversation Going: Community and University Activism on Chemical Weapons Destruction** – John Capillo, Robert Futrell, Richard Futrell and Craig Williams.
- **Chapter 5: Building Partnerships to Challenge Chip Mills: CCRC, the Dogwood Alliance and Auburn University** – Conner Bailey and Lynne Faltraco.
- **Chapter 6: Fighting to Protect our Mountains, our Streams and our Communities (Part I): The Save Black Mountain Movement, Harlan**

County, KY - Judy Hensley, Robert Gipe, Robin Lambert, Joan Robinett and Roy Silver

- **Chapter 7: Fighting to Protect our Mountains, our Streams and our Communities (Part II): The Mine Impoundment Project** –Ben Stout and Jomana Papillo.
- **Chapter 8: The Appalachian Land Ownership Project and Beyond: The Growth and Accomplishments of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC)** -Shaunna Scott⁴
- **Chapter 9: Environmental Justice from the Roots: Tillery, North Carolina.** –Gary Grant and Steve Wing.

Section Three:

The book's third section will include case studies of several other Appalachian communities. These communities confront not only one pollution source from one sector or industry, but also several or even many persistent and ongoing pollution challenges. Struggling to maintain the livability of already heavily polluted places probably poses the greatest environmental challenge to area citizens. This grave challenge is often compounded when such communities are targeted by other prospective dirty industries, because of a lax record of environmental enforcement and a lack of land use planning and/or zoning ordinances. These communities are typically unincorporated rural townships with a large number of economically distressed citizens, or, as in the chapter case of Anniston, Alabama—a city with a large African American population. This Anniston chapter and the other chapters in this section, should help connect the environmental and social injustice challenges facing communities across Appalachia, with the pollution challenges facing other distressed communities in the rural south, the southwest, the rust-belt and globally. These case studies will attempt to bridge a regional discourse with the broader discourses on environmental racism and development and underdevelopment. In each discourse, racism, poverty and inequality result in higher rates of exploitation of people, land and resources in the peripheral and more marginal reaches of the global economy.

This theoretical framework should be apparent when reading each case with little, if any, specific reference or citation to the broader theoretical literature on development and underdevelopment. The facts of each case and the story that is conveyed by each team of authors should make apparent to the general reader that the ecosystem crisis facing the region, in many instances, is no different than the systemic environmental crises facing other territories and regions throughout the globe. Many global regions are plundered because of their huge natural wealth. These places remain poor because they are resource rich. This conceptual framework is already well-established in the regional literature (Lewis, Johnson and Askins 1978) with a recent resurgence by such notable regional scholars as Gaventa (2002), Reid and Taylor (2002) and Smith (2002). Through

⁴ Persons from KFTC as well as others (possibly Dwight Billings –professor Sociology, University of Kentucky) will collaborate with Scott on this shared chapter.

each case study, and through visiting each place, the general reader will be introduced to this general conceptual framework. This theoretical underpinning will move the reader beyond the details of each case and will provide the reader with a broader understanding of the ecosystem crises that currently confronts the region as well as other places.

- **Chapter 10: PCBs, Chemical Weapons and the Struggle for Environmental Justice: The Case of Anniston Alabama.** Antoinette Hudson, Rufus Kinney and Suzanne Marshall.
- **Chapter 11: The Long Road toward Community and Environmental Recovery: Forming and Organizing SAVE – Supporting Appalachia’s Vital Environment.** Carolyn Bentley, Lisa Conley, Nina McCoy, Mick McCoy, Stephanie McSpirit, Melania Preece and Dan Preece.
- **Chapter 12: Race, Garbage and Community: Organizing and Research in the Ashurst Bar/ Smith Community, Tallasee, Alabama** Gail Guantt, Lani Merritt, Ann C. Smith and Conner Bailey.

Section Four

- The final section will focus more generally on the struggle over land and its uses within the region. Some of the chapters in this final section will also address the broader challenge of the sustainable use of Appalachia’s wealth of natural resources and maintaining the long-term viability of local mountain communities. Although these chapters will tackle broader questions of land-use and sustainability, they too will be locally grounded. Each chapter will present a case narrative of community efforts and strategies to address local issues of land-use, the sustainable use of local resources and/or sustainable community development.
- **Chapter 13: Just Connections: A Community-based Art, Educational and Sustainable Development Project, Harlan County, KY.** Robert Gipe, Lisa Smith, Carla Hatfield Barrett, Judy Hensley, Theresa Osborne, Janet White, Tony Sweatt, Jonathan Pope and Roy Silver.
- **Chapter 14: Linking Communities with Universities: The UK Appalachian Center and Beyond** -Shaunna Scott, Betsy Taylor and others from UK Appalachian Center/ Rockefeller Fellowship Program.
- **Chapter 15: Confronting the Global Food Market: One Small Movement at a Time** - Larry Burmeister and Dave Kennedy

COMPARABLE BOOKS:

This book will be written with three readerships in mind: 1) Activists and community people that are working on local and regional environmental issues, 2) academics that are interested in knowing more about the connections between the environment and community development within the region and, 3) university students taking courses in either environmental policy or environmental sociology and/ or regional studies. There are other books that have been written on the region that target these three combined readerships. Many of the university presses that cater to books on Appalachia, crosscut audiences and appeal simultaneously to both the ‘academic specialist’ as well as the ‘general reader.’ (See, for example, the book list for Temple University Press, North Carolina University Press and/or the University of Kentucky Press.) Reaching combined audiences is reinforced each year at the Appalachian Studies Association (ASA) Conference where community people, activists, academics and students often present papers on the same panel. At last year’s ASA conference in Richmond, KY, two of our editors (one academic and one community person) met with one of the acquisitions editor for the University Press of Kentucky. They were interested in developing and promoting a book on ecological and community crisis in Appalachia that was written for the “general reader” as well as for academic audiences.

Though, there are many books on Appalachia reaching across readerships, our review suggests two classic works on Appalachia that are comparable to the one that we are proposing. These two books are:

1. Steven Fisher. 1993. *Fighting Back in Appalachia: Traditions of Resistance and Change*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press).
2. John Gaventa, Barbara Ellen Smith and Alex Willingham. 1990. *Communities in Economic Crisis: Appalachia and the South*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press).

Both of these volumes, as with the one that we are proposing, appeal to a wide readership that crosscuts people living in communities and people working and studying in universities. Both of these books, due to their wide readership and appeal, have become widely referenced “classics” within the fields of Appalachian and community studies. Admittedly, the standards that we are setting are high in proposing to write a text comparable to Fisher (1993) and Gaventa et.al. (1990).

Both of these books, like our proposed work, are edited volumes. Both Fisher and Gaventa invite various people from various places, both in and outside the university, to speak directly to the challenges that local people face in confronting powerful corporate interests and locally entrenched networks of political power that threaten the viability of people’s home place or workplace. Like our proposed book, both Fisher and Gaventa have invited others to write about their community experiences and local organizing efforts. Through this engaged writing, the reader is invited to imagine the prospects and possibilities for more democratic alternatives to economic and community development within the region. We propose to do the same. Like our proposed book, both of these

books, and the stories contained within each, tend to inspire the reader to embrace a different approach to understanding the history, economics and politics of the region. These stories invite a different reading of Appalachia beyond tired stereotypes of deep poverty and complacency and instead, invite and inspire the reader to imagine Appalachia differently.

Though there are broad similarities, there are some significant departures between the book that we propose and these two volumes. First of all, these two classic works were written approximately ten-years ago, and we believe readers will be interested in something more current. The second difference is content. Our book will focus specifically on community-environmental conflicts. While both Fisher and Gaventa include chapters on the environmental challenges that face the region from strip mining,⁵ to hazardous waste landfills,⁶ to groundwater contamination,⁷ Fisher and Gaventa also include other chapters that speak more broadly to other issues of community development from voting rights, women's rights, local economic development policies, workplace health and safety issues to local union organizing efforts. Admittedly, some of the chapters that focus on union organizing efforts in the coalfields of West Virginia and Kentucky and the mill towns of North Carolina are some of the most inspiring. Chapters by Jim Sessions and Fran Ansley⁸ and Mike Yarrow⁹ help rank these volumes as classic works. We too, plan to write to inspire. But our focus will be on underscoring the ecological crises which underpins and straps many communities within the region. Finally, each chapter in our book will be the joint product of a community activist and a university-based researcher.

We believe that our book will have particular appeal for the growing number of courses appearing across the college curriculum in environmental studies. Again, Gaventa and Fisher have both compiled classic volumes where some of the chapters speak directly to the ecological crises that confront Appalachian communities. However, rarely would either book be assigned in an environmental studies course due to the other

⁵ See: Mary Beth Bingham. "Stopping the Bulldozers: What difference did it make?" Pp 17-30; Bill Allen. "Save our Cumberland Mountains: Growth and Change within a Grassroots Organization." Pp. 85-100; Joe Szakos. "Practical Lessons in Community Organizing in Appalachia: What we've learned at Kentuckians for the Commonwealth" Pp. 101-118. in Fisher (1993) *Fighting Back in Appalachia*. and Kristin Layng Szakos. "People Power: Working for the Future in the East Kentucky Coalfields." Pp. 29-37 in Gaventa (1990). *Communities in Economic Crisis*.

⁶ See: Richard Regan and Mac Lerton. "Economic Slavery or Hazardous Wastes? Roberson County's Economic Menu." Pp. 146-157 and Robert Bullard. "Environmentalism, Economic Blackmail and Civil Rights: Competing Agendas within the Black Community." Pp. 190-199 in Gaventa (1990). *Communities in Economic Crisis*.

⁷ See: Sherry Cable. "From Fussin' to Organizing:" Individual and Collective Resistance in Yellow Creek." Pp. 69-83. in Fisher (1993) *Fighting Back in Appalachia*.

⁸ Jim Sessions and Fran Ansley. Singing Across Dark Spaces: The Union/ community Takeover of Pittston's Moss 3 Plant. Pp.195-223. in Fisher (1993) *Fighting Back in Appalachia*.

⁹ Mike Yarrow. "Voices from the Coalfields: How Miners' Families Understand the Crisis of Coal." Pp. 38-52.

community and workplace issues that are addressed in other chapters of each of these books. As a departure, we plan to compile a volume that will often be assigned as a reader in classes in environmental sociology, environmental policy and planning and classes in environmental health.

We want our book to be widely used and widely read. As stated in our prospectus, we plan to introduce our wide readership to new coalitions and partnerships that are developing between university and community people. We want to speak to the more civic-minded, democratic forms of science and partnerships that are developing between locals and academics. We want to speak to how these new alliances between people, armed with this civic science, are working together to confront and challenge the bureaucratic and corporate strongholds over agency risk assessments, impact statements and permit applications. We plan to invite and inspire the reader, whether an activist, academic or student, to think not only about Appalachia but also to think about science and the university differently.

For this reason, though there are comparable books in Fisher and Gaventa, we believe our book to be unique. One of our constant sub themes will speak to the need for more public forms of science and discourse in creating democratic and sustainable alternatives for the region. To reinforce this democratic exchange and discourse, we are inviting community persons and academics to partner in co-writing chapters. Whereas Fisher and Gaventa have invited persons both in and outside the university to contribute chapters to their volumes, we plan to invite university and community people to work together to write about their separate and combined experiences of working *on the ground* in a community to forestall or mitigate environmental crises. These coauthored chapters will create a sense of dialogue that can be read as a public discourse on the events that have unfolded across communities in Appalachia. We believe that this dialogue between co-authors will lead to a highly readable and engaging volume that will be widely read by students, academics and activists working on, or studying the environmental challenges that face Appalachia and its communities.

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