APPALACHIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
THE STRUGGLE TO FIND A PAST AND MAINTAIN A FUTURE

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Appalachian includes a large area in the Eastern United States; however, little is known nationally or globally about the region and its development. The research on Appalachian development is limited and often outdated. There is a gap between Appalachia and the rest of the nation economically and that has not gone unnoticed by the United States Government so an agency was created to address this gap and help the Appalachian region reach parity with the rest of the country. The progress of the Appalachian Regional Commission is primarily measured by the agency itself and few scholarly sources exist in modern times that look at the progress the Appalachian Regional Commission has been able to make.

The following are research questions that are addressed in this paper to better understand Appalachia as a distinct region and its development. What is the perception of the Appalachian Region and its peoples versus the reality? Why was the Appalachian Regional Commission commissioned by the United States Government?
but does contribute to other goals completion, such as reduction of isolation. Area Development Districts or Local Development Districts, which are local multi-county organization are development coordinators within the region, are pivotal to the success that the Commission has experienced and continue to contribute to the development efforts within the region. They operate within states and include multiple counties focusing efforts on the local level that are customized to meet local needs. This local coordination of efforts allows the ARC to direct things on a large scale and deal with overarching issues the region faces while keeping smaller areas within the region from being left behind and not receiving development attention. The Commission propagates that they still have a long way to go to complete all of their major goals for the region and it is hard to tell when that development will be near completion.

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I have been lucky throughout my entire academic career. At the start I decided on Morehead State, it was the only University I applied to. I came to the gateway of knowledge young, naïve, and confused and I am leaving in a different condition.

As an undergraduate I was lucky to be a part of what was formally known as the Geography, Government and History Department or GGH as those who walked the halls of Rader affectionately referred to it. I was taught by wonderful professors whom I still admire and some of which I am lucky enough to call friends. They taught me to believe in myself as a student and a person and I owe them a lot of gratitude. I also met some incredible and unique students during the years I traveled those halls and they were invaluable to my experience and success.

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This leads me to special thanks for the colleagues I was lucky enough to enjoy the "grad school" experience alongside, specifically Stephanie Webb and Michael
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As for non-academic relationships, in 2005 I was a lucky enough to apply for the position of Resident Advisor, simply because there happened to be a spot opening up in Mignon Hall, where I lived. Fortunately, the supervisor of the building saw potential in me that I did not know existed and a large part of who I am today is due to her, thank you Shannon Colvin for everything you have done for me and for continuing to be one of my best friends. This was the start to the career I have now entered as an Administrator and a Housing Officer.

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Last but not least I would like to thank the other professors of the MPA program; there have been times I have wanted to quit, times I thought I would not make it and those times I consider some of the best of my life thus far. From you all I have received encouragement, advice and the support I needed to make it. All of you have played distinct roles in the last few years of my life and I thank you all for what you have done for me and the memories I have gained, but more importantly the knowledge you have imparted onto me. I would tell anyone if they wanted to open their eyes and to go out and change the world that the MPA program at Morehead State University would be a great first step in that direction.
“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”

-Sir Winston Churchill
Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1
 METHODOLOGY ............................................................. 2
 LITERATURE REVIEW ...................................................... 3
   HISTORY OF APPALACHIA ......................................... 3
   STEREOTYPES ............................................................ 8
   ABOUT THE APPALACHIAN REGION ......................... 10
 APPALACHIA AS A REGION ............................................. 11
   GEOGRAPHY OF APPALACHIA ................................. 12
   THE OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF APPALACHI A ............ 18
   THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE REGION .......... 20
 THE APPALACHIAN PEOPLE AND THEIR ROOTS ............. 28
 FEUDING ........................................................................ 31
 NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE APPALACHIAN REGION ........ 37
   EDUCATION IN APPALACHI A ................................. 38
   THE APPALACHIAN DEPENDENCY: SPECIFICALLY CENTRAL APPALACHI A ......................... 42
 COMMISSIONING THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION ........ 55
 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION: PROGRESS TOWARDS ITS FOUR GOALS ............ 66
 POOREST OF THE POOR: DISTRESSED COUNTIES IN APPALACHI A ....... 74
 THE BACKWARD GO FORWARD WITH DEVELOPMENT: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARC, LDDS/ADDS ......................... 76
 LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT .............................. 82
 CONCLUSIONS ................................................................ 98
 BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................. 105
Introduction

The Appalachian Region is well known throughout the world but profoundly misunderstood. It is hard for those who do not hail from the area to grasp the differences that exist culturally, economically, and historically within its borders. Appalachian development has occurred at its own pace, the region has had a different growth experience, juxtaposed to the national development pattern, and looking at the Appalachian region's progress it is discernible that a gap does exist between the region and the rest of the nation. The issues of the region stem from the exploitation of the region by outsiders who come in to lay claim to the natural and human resources of the region without contributing to the area.

The region's distinct nature and characteristics dictate that it is dealt with in a different way. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) was created to help the region play "catch up." It is imperative to have an understanding of what role the Appalachian Regional Commission plays in Appalachian development and what they are doing to attain successful results. Non-government intervention within the region would not be better suited at facilitating the development for the regions, but it may be useful at supplementary development efforts for region.

As stated, it is important to understand Appalachia as a distinct region and ask its role within the nation. What is the perception of the Appalachian Region and its peoples versus the reality? Why was the Appalachian Regional Commission
commissioned by the United States Government? What were its purposes? Does the
ARC function effectively? What progress had the ARC made on its four strategic
goals? What role do Area Development Districts (ADDs) play in the development of
the local region? What have been the results of efforts by ADDs, Local Development
Districts (LDDs) and how they relate to the ARC for the Appalachian Region?

I plan to explain Appalachia's regional distinctiveness, to establish its distinct
history and culture, to discuss the reasons for its lag behind the rest of the nation and
to discover whether the Appalachian Regional Commission is acting in a capacity that
will successfully further the development of the region through government
intervention. I will also explore the purposes of the Appalachian Regional
Commission and its effectiveness. Finally, I will examine the purpose of Local
Development Districts (LDDs) or as they are referred to in Kentucky, Area
Development Districts (ADDs) and how they contribute to the development of the
local region in relation to the ARC.

Methodology

The methodology used in this research will be to review secondary sources in
pursuit of pertinent information about the region's history, the creation of the ARC
and what efforts the ARC has been taking to develop the region, as well as any
measure of success or failure that exists. I have conducted two interviews to
supplement the secondary research. The interviews were conducted with personnel
from the Appalachian Regional Commission and one of the Kentucky Area Development Districts.

Valuable academic resources about the Appalachian region do exist, but most must be closely studied to see a relationship between the topics they cover; history and culture of the region and its development. Most sources do not directly address development and when they do, they are often are obscure or overly philosophical. There is not a lot of direct research on the Appalachian Regional Commission and the success of their efforts to cultivate the region, economically, socially or educationally. Much of the work is outdated or overly complex and leaves the average reader struggling to see the whole picture. Other documents are too narrowly focused and do not expand on other factors that affect the region, leaving a `cannot see the forest for the trees' type of issue for readers. This work may not be comprehensive and does rely heavily on other sources but it should been seen as a start, something that can be expanded on and added to by others to create a better understanding and awareness of the region through existing literature, interviews, and a perspective that looks at Appalachia as a historical and geographic region, that was not created in literature but rather distorted by it.

Literature Review

I. History of Appalachia

The Appalachian Mountains stretch from Newfoundland (in Eastern Canada) to Northern Alabama (Southeastern United States), 2,000 miles of noncontiguous
mountain chains. The Appalachian Mountains gained their name from sixteenth century European explorers who named the highlands and Southeastern part of the United States Appalachia after the Apalchee Native Americans who currently live in Northern Florida and Southeast Georgia. Only after the American Civil War did the term “Appalachia” begin being applied to the area and not just the mountain system. Then there came an effort in the 19th and 20th century to understand and define the area culturally and economically in writing.¹

The research available on the history of the Appalachian Region is usually generated from scholars within the region or outsiders who try to color the region through their eyes right or wrong, and for the better part is outdated, usually written before the 1970s. I tried to focus on the more recent and relevant works published about the region. Of specific relevance were Ronald Eller’s work published in 2009 and Alexander Williams work published in 2002.

Appalachia is said to be a region without a formal history. According to most literature on the region nineteenth century color writers “invented Appalachian” which implies that they created a region where none existed. These writers included William Wallace Harney’s 1873 travel log, “A Strange Land and a Peculiar People” with emphasis on the physical and cultural isolation of the Appalachian People. William Goodell Frost’s “Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains.”

Also, John Fox Jr. wrote novels that created Appalachian "otherness." All of these interpretations of the region became accepted as a history, even if some portions of their reporting were closer to fictional than historical. Henry Shapiro refers to the situation as the "Myth of Appalachia," saying Appalachia's invention in writings of that time is a fallacy,² the region may have started becoming a popular topic at that time, but the history itself, and the geography of the region does have a shared past. Other regions also have a distinct geography and share regional characteristics, such as the Midwest, the traits they geographically share allows for distinct regional histories and a shared existence. This is supportive evidence that the Appalachian Region was not invented; however, the stereotypes about the region were established in these works and others with similar themes. Those writers were able to propagate common misconceptions about the region. For example, Appalachia contrary to popular belief has never been particularly isolated, physically or culturally, it does not have a more intensely uniformed homogeneous population than other regions of rural America. A researcher could dig into the past and present of Appalachia for decades and still not know all there is to know about it. The region has complex geographical, cultural, and economic features, all of which contribute to its development.

Ronald Eller is a leading scholar on the Appalachian Region; he is currently a professor of history at the University of Kentucky and serves as the John D. Whisman

Appalachian Scholar for the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington; amongst other accomplishments and positions he has held or currently holds. His most recent book, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945*, provides a chronological history of the region since what he considers its conception, after the Civil War. Ron Eller covers the essentials of socioeconomic developments and challenges for the region and then gives a detailed account of the policies and organizations that are working to develop the region. He does not offer solutions to the problem but instead focuses on illuminating readers on the causes of Appalachian economic and developmental limitations.

In the book Eller explains the shortcomings of the government and its policies in the region. He proposes that established organizations have transformed the region and created a shift in the policies that address Appalachian poverty and development, stating that the creation of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the passing of the Appalachian Regional Development Act show that federal and state government have committed themselves to "modernizing" the region and bringing it up to par with the rest of the nation. Eller explains that the policy has failed the region because of the region's participation in the service industry in the second half of the twentieth century and that economic development focuses around those industries, which have left it fighting poverty and natural resource destruction. A large part of that failure is due to absentee ownership of the land which creates a loss of a good tax base and drains the region not only of resources but also of the profits from the
It is unfortunate that Ronald Eller has not set forth any recommendations or ideas for solutions to fix the situation that encompasses the region. While I disagree with the popular notion that the region was created post-Civil War by the pen of authors and that it does not share a long-reaching and deeply-embedded culture, it is important to note that this is when the stereotypes of the region were first propagated and when the “backwardness” of the region first became an issue to the American public. Eller takes the matter further using World War II as a starting point when he explains how the region developed with its history of exploitation from that point on. The excuse of blaming the region’s inhabitants for their own issues has been relied on for a long time when it comes to the reasoning of why it is acceptable to take advantage of the region and its people. They are “backward; so they deserve what they get,” has become the sentiment. Eller succeeded in explaining why the extractive practices of absentee owners and corporate interests have been a huge and problematic force in stunting the growth of the region. He argues that they have left the people economically crippled by denying them a sustainable tax base to fund their public infrastructure and meet their needs. As is, the infrastructure development within the region usually serves the purpose of resource extraction, which simply fuels the industry taking from the region while the inhabitants of the region, as Eller
points out, have no choice but to work for those destroying their home and way of life.

John Alexander Williams' work, *Appalachia: A History*, provides a comprehensive review of the history of the region. He does not propose that the region was created by writing after the Civil War era but that the geography of the region coupled with its unique heritage and history make the region distinct. He gives an account of the geography of the region and the sub-regions within the Appalachian Region. Williams also describes the exploitation of the region, outmigration, and immigration from the region. Williams concludes that Appalachia is not a homogeneous, static, rural, white, violent, and primitive region.

Williams begins with a discussion of how Hernando De Soto came to the region looking for conquest and gold. Further, he explains De Soto’s description of the region, the natives that inhabited the region, and the interaction between the natives and the European settlers. Finally, he explores other cultures and ethnicities that came into the mix and shaped the past of the region, indicating a long standing diversity within the region as well as a flow of trade and information in and out of the region that even pre-dates the frontier days.

II. Stereotypes

Stereotypes are hard to avoid when talking about Appalachia in any literary work on the region. The people of the region have fallen victim to the opinions of
outsiders. "Local colorists," such as William Henry Harney, have been labeling the region with various terms to paint the region in a negative light, such as backwards, hillbillies, rednecks, ignorant and violent.

*Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920* by Henry Shapiro is written to combat stereotypes and the way that Appalachians are perceived. He incorporates the authors who have had an influence on how Appalachia is perceived by outsiders, such as Harney’s “A Strange Land and a Peculiar People,” and William Frost’s “Our Contemporary Ancestors,” the missionaries and do-gooders who came to the region to save its people, and others who dared to tackle the labeling of the region with any degree of success.

Billings, Blee and Norman edited the book, *Back Talk from Appalachia: Confronting Stereotypes*, which began as a series of responses to a play, Robert Schenkkan’s “The Kentucky Cycle,” and to the latest round of stereotyping of Appalachian peoples and their cultures. The book is a compilation of 21 essays about the region and the people that inhabit it. Each of the essays focuses on specific stereotypes that need to be understood and then proceeds to provide evidence to refute it. The essays encompass a large range of issues: isolation, homogeneity, race, hillbilly stereotypes, redneck jokes, women and regional consciousness.
III. About the Appalachian Regional Commission

Most of the literature written about the Appalachian Regional Commission has been published by the Commission itself, but the more recent and comprehensive coverage of the topic has been by Ronald Eller and Michael Bradshaw, an English Geographer who gives an insightful and refreshingly straightforward description of the agency and what it has been able to accomplish.

Michael Bradshaw in his book, *The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty-Five Years of Government Policy*, covers the history of the ARC between 1965 to 1990 looking at the politics of the organization and examines it as an example for regional development. He holds it as a model of local, state and federal resource allocation that has operated successfully and had a positive impact on the region since it was established (up until 1990) when he wrote his book. Bradshaw looks at three different points. First, whether the ARC has fulfilled its legislative charge up to date. Second, whether the ARC has been able to change the human geography of Appalachia. Third, what lessons the ARC have provided for regional development theory. Bradshaw concludes that the ARC has contributed greatly to improving infrastructure and providing support for the human resources of the region. Bradshaw says that the ARC's ability to establish good federal-state relationships and cooperation was one of the main factors in the success of the Commission.

Bradshaw seems to explain the ARC in a way that simplifies it and gives details of how it was established in a precise and detailed manner that helps readers
get an understanding of the Commission, why it was established, and who it benefits. I believe he provides a comprehensive detailed work on the Commission.

**Appalachia as a Region**

Appalachia is a unique region with its own distinctive geography, history and culture. There is a break between the reality and the scholarly outlook about the region, and neither seems to coincide entirely with the perception of the general public, but it seems that the academic opinion has colored the public’s view. It is important to understand the reality of the region, what it has been, currently is, and to separate it from the stereotypes. Stereotypes encompass most people’s understanding of the region and its inhabitants. The people have historically been exploited and they are currently still facing the abuse of their resources and population. To understand Appalachia it is important to understand the region’s geography and the effect that has on the people. A look at the geography of the region can explain whether it is really isolated and reclusive.

The official definition of the region has been designated by the Appalachian Regional Commissions, the contemporary definition of the region included counties that are not traditionally part of Appalachia but have been added because of the politics of appropriations. The next topic that it is important to cover is the history of the region as well and the cultures that exist within the boundaries of the region. The
people and the stereotypes that revolve around them are important to confront when
you are trying to get an idea of what Appalachia is really like.

There is a view of the Appalachian Region which is shared by most federal
and state agencies, including the Appalachian Regional Commission. They consider
the Appalachian Region is a 13 state congressionally defined multi-jurisdictional,
administrative district characterized chiefly by a number of inter-related and
economic problems; the ARC is responsible for the region’s problems. In
bureaucratic realism the problem of poverty has dissolved into the more general
problem of economic underdevelopment. 3

I. The Geography of Appalachia

Appalachia should first and foremost be defined as a geographic construct in
terms of the spatial make-up of the region. To understand Appalachia it is important
to think of it as a region as a whole for this particular research. Geography in short is
where things are and why they occur in that location. The defining geographic
boundaries of a region are not a naturally occurring phenomenon; they are defined by
humans, especially if there is a natural feature separating the area from the rest of the
United States terrain by specific topography. It does not mean it is solely based on
those physical features; because boarders tend to be defined by political contexts.

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3 R.A. Lohmann, “Four Perspectives on Appalachian Culture and Poverty.” Journal of the
Therefore, the definition of a region is dependent on the individual or organization propagating the description and their particular agenda. Appalachia is not only historically a cultural region and physically a geographic region but is also defined as a political construct. The official definition of Appalachia given by the Appalachian Regional Commission and has fallen prey to those political constructs mentioned above, which I will go into more in-depth when talking about the creation of the Appalachian Regional Commission and how non-Appalachian counties were put into the mix.

Defining the characteristics of a region, and how Appalachia fits into that category will bring an understanding of the cultural and the political definition of the Appalachian Region. The concept of a region is a geographical concept in which units or an area is defined with some form of uniformity. There are three types: a formal region, a functional region, and a vernacular region. The formal region is a group of places defined with similar features: examples include the European Union nations and the Mediterranean climatic province. The functional region is a group of places defined with geographical link and movement: the watershed composed of the Mississippi River, Missouri River, and Ohio River, and the subscription area of morning papers. The vernacular region is a group of places sharing identity: the American Midwest, Northeast, etc.\(^4\) Appalachia is without a doubt a region under at least one of these distinctions; the United States government has made it an official

political region, to individuals and outsiders it perceived as a cultural region with a
shared identity making it a vernacular region based on culture, which is to say that it
is spoken of as a region by people who do not rely on the official definition. People
view regions based on their preconceived notions, location, and cultural backgrounds.
The Appalachian Mountains also divide the region geographically and economically,
leaving it with a unique set of social issues. The labels “Appalachians” and
“Alleghenies” can be used interchangeably because they both refer to the mountains
of the region. The sub-regions that many people often identify within Appalachia are
Blue Ridge Mountains, Great Smokey Mountains, and the Southern highlands. 5

The concept of Regionalism (the political division of an area with a degree of
separation making it a distinct region) originated after the pre-industrial times, during
which focus was on the community. Values, sources of revenue, friends and marital
partners originate within the community. Industrialization expanded the frame of
reference within which people function, things were traded outside of community,
source of revenues relied on outside areas, distance became less important, and
people began identifying with the Nation-State not the community where they grew
up. Trade naturally tends to be more common among people who are relatively close
together. Therefore people who have a closer proximity to one another tend to be

5 Messer, David R. Ablaze in Appalachia: A Social Approach to a Forgotten Culture.
more similar than people farther apart. They may share more similar ways of speaking, customs, prejudices and other traits although as distance becomes smaller the similarity between those closer together still matter, especially in more isolated regions where people are more likely to have internally focused communication than in more open and connected regions. These characteristics comprise a culture and solidify a region culturally. Regions again often lack clear borders and may be limited by geography, in the case of Appalachia this would be a mountain chain.

To define culture is not easy; to define culture in relation to geography is even more of a difficult task. The Oxford Dictionary of Geography might be helpful in this pursuit; culture is defined as, “a learned behavior which is socially transmitted, such as customs, beliefs, morals, technology and art”. Culture is the primary factor affecting the way in which individuals and societies respond to the environment. A cultural landscape is as expression of the response of a culture to its natural surroundings. A cultural region is characterized by a common culture. This is what Appalachia would be characterized as. A cultural distance is the gap between the culture of two different groups, such as that between the culture of rural societies and that of the cities. There is a cultural gap between Appalachia and the rest of the United States which is evidence of the regions cultural distinction and shared history.

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Regions often possess similar cultures. Many cultural traits exist which are ascribed to the Appalachian region that do not coincide with the industrialized society of the rest of the nation, including but not limited to:

- Independence
- Religious fundamentalism
- Strong family ties
- Living in harmony with nature
- Traditionalism
- Fatalism

Many see Appalachia as an isolated colony unto itself with a homogeneous people who all speak the same language and conduct themselves in the same backward way. This was first propagated by historians and has been continued on into literature of today. To an extent the region is spatially isolated and there are some issues that the population shares, such as poverty and education levels. The sub-regions are closer in homogeneity than the region as a whole, but the overall region categorized as Appalachia still shares more in common than those areas within share with the nation and national trends. Refer to the map below to see the sub-regions within Appalachia and notice how large the area is and how much of the nation can be categorized as Appalachia.

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Appalachian Sub-Regions Map

http://www.arc.gov/assets/maps/Subregions_2009_Map.gif
II. The Official Definition of Appalachia

The best official definition of Appalachia can be taken from the Appalachian Regional Commission. Appalachia, as defined in the legislation from which the Appalachian Regional Commission derives its authority, is a 205,000-square-mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. About 24.8 million people live in the 420 counties of the Appalachian Region; 42 percent of the Region's population is rural, compared with 20 percent of the national population.

The region's economic fortunes were based in the past mostly on extraction of natural resources and manufacturing. The modern economy of the Region is gradually diversifying, with a heavier emphasis on services and widespread development of tourism, especially in more remote areas where there is no other viable industry. Coal remains an important resource, but it is not a major provider of jobs. Although in Appalachia manufacturing is still an economic mainstay it is no longer concentrated in a few major industries. It is also important to note that some of the counties included in the definition provided by the ARC include counties that were not historically and culturally Appalachia.

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11 Ibid.
The article, "Appalachia just got bigger by 10 counties", illustrates official political boundaries and how they can be changed. President G.W. Bush redrew Appalachia’s geographic boundaries and redistributed federal aid to cover the additional counties. There were ten counties added to Appalachian Regional Commission’s service region. The counties were in Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee and Virginia. When the ARC was created by Congress in 1965, there were 360 counties. Since then sixty counties have been added and now there are 420 counties within 13 states. According to the ARC definition there are 200,000 square miles and some of what is included is not historically, geographically or culturally Appalachia. Those ten counties Bush added were economically similar to the region but were added for political reasons. Over the last 43 years ARC has pumped $11.7 billion to build highways and expand the economy of the region. Those in the pre-existing Appalachian Region did not agree with the addition of these counties, it meant wider dissemination of the resources set aside for their region to people who were not self identified Appalachians. 12 The region is ever changing according to official definitions, but people of the region do not want to go past the cultural boundaries that have existed historically. This is evidence of a cultural bond that exists in the region, a people that consider themselves Appalachians and that those at its boarders do not wish to be classified within Appalachia and live under its labels.

IV. The History and Culture of the Region

Four paradoxical images of Appalachia exist today; they are often portrayed by mass media and accepted without question. The first is of a Pristine Appalachia with unspoiled mountains, hills, trails and beautiful untouched trees. The second, Backwater Appalachia; the home of Wallace’s “Strange Land and a Peculiar People”. This is the most widely published version of the region. People can watch this on television and read about it in a fiction book anytime. Third, is that of the Anglo-Saxon American, which is entirely not true, because the region has a very diverse and rich past that involves many ethnicities and cultures. The last of these four paradoxes is that of the pitiful Appalachian, the poor, illiterate, barefoot and pregnant Appalachian folk. 13

Appalachia has a rich history with multiple influences and possesses many resources which make it vulnerable to exploitation. In the 1700s settlers began flooding the Southern Appalachia Mountains migrating from earlier settlements in search of better farm land. The Appalachian Mountains are rich in coal, timber and natural resources, making it a particularly attractive place for settlers during an era when living was based on what the land yielded. Then in the late 1800s, The Northern coal companies came to the mountains and changed the region extensively. 14

The Appalachian Mountains, and people who inhabit them, are very diverse; however, stereotypes that exist about the region are widely known, accepted and propagated by the media. When the white man began settlement in the region its communication with the outside world started to increase. However, before this time the natives who inhabited the region where already globally connected. Alexander Williams’ book and the DVD Series “A History of Mountains and People,” argued that Appalachia and its people are not severely isolated and that stereotypes about the region are just that, stereotypes. The video emphasized the majesty of the mountains; which are some of the oldest and grandest in the world. The mountains of Appalachia were created by a cycle of uplift and erosion over a time span of half a billion years. The mountains are living and inhabited with many types of flora and fauna. The Appalachian Mountains stretch 2,000 miles from New Foundland, in the North to Central Alabama, in the South and are some of the grandest in the world.

The video mentioned that there is more known about Appalachia that is untrue, than known truths about any other place in the world. The mountains, despite the stereotype of being isolated and homogeneous, are a place filled with many species of plants and animals. In the region there exists more species of trees than in the whole of Europe. Animals and humans migrated in and the area continues to house a very diverse mixture of animals and people. The American Indians or natives were the first people to come to the area and were joined by Europeans starting in 1540 with an exploration trip into the region by Hernandez De Soto, the Spanish
Conquistador and his men. They killed many Natives with disease in addition to other forms of violent devastation. The introduction of Whites changed the social make-up of the region’s culture.

Natives were held together by three aspects, a common belief system, languages, and a kinship system. The settlement of the region by Europeans created a commoditization of land which was the beginning of a long-lived cycle of exploitation of the region. This in itself opened the region up further to outsiders and extraction of the region’s resources to other places in the world. The tribes that existed in the region had traded previously and they survived with what the land provided by being good stewards of the land. The whites did not want to live in the landscape but to change it to make a profit.

Williams describes the region of Appalachia as a place of mind, a geographical construct that became a separate and distinct area. He also tells us about the Cherokee Path, which was a trade route that the Indians used that connected them to the rest of the world. Then Appalachia was part of the peripheral fringe but still interfacing globally through economic trade. The Native Americans of the Appalachian region were trading with Europe well before the areas of the wilderness were settled. The Appalachian area started out in fact from its inception as an integrated area in the world’s economy as opposed to how it is popularly known today as an isolated area. People have historically settled the region and left the
region for many diverse reasons, it is not a static group that has occupied the area
from the beginning till now.

The people of Southern Appalachia, which includes West Virginia, Eastern
Kentucky, Western North Carolina, and Northeastern Georgia, are referred to as
“hillbillies”. They also do not refer to themselves as “Mountaineers” or
“highlanders”, if anything they refer to themselves as “plain folks”. Prior to the Civil
War the plain folk practiced grazing and farm economy; they grazed cattle and hogs
on unfenced free range public lands, which at the time was safe guarded by law. At
that time they engaged in patch farming fields for temporary use from the forest,
which entailed clearing land and planting corn on that land until the yield decreased,
and then they would leave that field and clear another. The open range farming
provided meat for families and some surplus for sale. Patch farming provided corn for
family, fodder for animals and cash for liquor distilled from the corn. 15

During this time the agricultural and livestock practices combined to allow
people to maintain a subsistence living and have some cash that allowed them to have
their folk culture. They lived in dispersed rural neighborhoods, in houses made of
logs cut from the forest, and fashioned their own agricultural implements, garments
and furniture. Socializing was focused around churches and places of work, or voting

15 John Solomon Otto, “Hillbilly Culture: The Appalachian Mountain Folk in History and
2010), 171.
which was done in the county seats. The Civil War and the Cotton Boom shattered
the lifestyle of most Southern Plain Folk when post-bellum state legislator’s enacted
laws forcing folks to fence range cattle and hogs which ended the use of open range
(common lands) and forced the people to turn to cotton growing. This dramatically
changed their lifestyle and created dependence which replaced subsistence living.

Plain Folks were forced to borrow money for cotton seeds, fertilizers, clothes
and other supplies to last them until harvest time. After the harvest they would pay off
their debts and made a small profit when cotton prices were high; low prices meant
that they would become long-term debtors often losing their farms in the process.
The landless would be forced to join the ranks of millhands and tenant farmers.
Cotton wiped out the Plain Folk of the south but the Appalachian Plain Folk still
survived. ¹⁶ The feuds of the region brought the Appalachian Mountains and its
people to the attention of the rest of the nation and brought outsiders in to help
develop the region to deal with the Plain Folk and their backward ways.

After 1900, forest land was not as abundant as it was previously in the
Appalachian Mountains; the extractive industries were competing for the use of the
land. Private companies bought up tracks of land, public and private. Whole valleys
were given to Rail Roads, coal mines, and coal towns, leaving only 60% of the land
in the hands of farmers. Appalachia had the highest birthrates in the United States and

¹⁵ John Solomon Otto, “Hillbilly Culture: The Appalachian Mountain Folk in History and
2010), 112.
over population causes further issues which intensified with the loss of agricultural land. 17

As previously mentioned, after the Europeans came to Appalachia there was a commoditization of the land and the Natives were displaced. The land was settled and exploited, exposing it further to the global market. The extraction of resources was the largest contributing factor to this global interconnectedness. The construction of railroads intensified this by providing an easier means for the regions precious natural resources to be hauled away (and to some extent it still does). The regions, timber, coal and human resources have been taken from the region to be used in other places, first in Europe then into the industrialized North (United States).

The establishment of the Broad Form Deed, gave coal mine owners the right

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**The Broad-Form Deed**

According to the Kentucky Resources Council...

Broad-Form Deed Mining Stopped: 1985 marked the beginning of the end for the “broad form” mineral deed. This deed, which was held by the Kentucky courts, allowed the state to authorize strip mining permits, despite the fact that the deed had been executed at the turn of the century, before the method of strip mining had even been invented. In 1984, the state adopted a law limiting mining under the deeds to those methods commonly employed, unless specific intent to use strip-mining was expressed in the deed. Despite this law, the state agency continued to issue mine permits that violated both state and federal regulations. The Council served notice on the state of this problem, and ultimately sued to end the practice. Success came in February 1985, when an injunction was entered in federal court revoking all permits since June 1984, and prohibiting further permit issuance. As a result of the ruling, the Kentucky state court voided the 1984 law that limited strip mining, while the federal injunction remained in effect until June of 1988. In November 1988, the state adopted a constitutional amendment that incorporated the same requirements as the voided law, protecting landowners from the “broad form” mineral deeds. That state amendment was upheld against a coal industry challenge in 1993, with the Council’s arguments forming the core of the landowner’s brief in support of the amendment and for reversal of the 1956 court decision upholding the use of the “broad form” mineral deeds.

to extract the coal by any means desired which exacerbated the situation. People would sell their land rights to outsiders, without grasping the gravity of the situation, and they would lose the valuable material from their land, as well as the beauty of the land as it was destroyed for resource extraction. (See the figure below for more information on the Broad Form Deed). Many Appalachians are poor today as a result of disadvantages steaming from the broad form deed and absentee land ownership. They now rely on subsistence living or welfare because they are attached to the region but they do not own their own land or resources.

The railroads not only made it easier for resources to leave the area, it also changed life in the region drastically. The railroad system opened up the area to outsiders and many immigrants came to the area. Railroad’s also changed the importance of towns and cities and the placement of a railroad could make or break areas within the region. Many people were economically dependent on the railroads. This allowed mountaineers to live their lives with families the way they wanted on weekends because they worked railroads during the weeks again changing the subsistence lifestyle of the past. The Appalachian people had access to modern movies, newspapers and radio, allowing them to keep up with global and national news as well as sports.

Industrialization of the nation expanded the frame of reference or scale within which people function in Appalachia, by making distance less pertinent. The spatial make up of the region was altered when distance was essentially shrunk because the
area did become more connected to the rest of the nation through better roads and railways. This left Appalachia more globally attuned but also opened it up to outmigration and exploitation. The exploitation of the region became easier because of better transportation leading to the area.

The video also mentions the feuds of the area, but Williams goes in depth in his books about them, as do other sources. They were more political and about alliances than the actual blood feuds as they were claimed. As an example, Williams used the famous Hatfield and McCoy feud. It lasted many years, resulted in many deaths and was allegedly only over a pig; in reality it was much deeper than that. The feuds left a scar on the Appalachian regions public image, creating a distinct violent reputation and fostering previous indictments of the region with evidence. The video showed pictures and mentioned one feud that was close to Morehead, KY the picture was of two descendants of the feuaders shaking hands. That photo stood out because that is not the publicity the region ever gets. The positive light of our area has to be shined from our own direction because outsiders still seem to enjoy thinking of the region as the “Wrong-Turn District”\textsuperscript{18}. The region is not seen for its majesty and redeeming qualities, only from the viewpoint of the negative and disturbing.

The Appalachian region is truly spectacular, and its’ beautiful landscapes, attractions, rich cultural attributes and the stories of the Appalachian people are

\textsuperscript{18} Appalachia: A History of Mountains and People. Directed by Ross Spears Performed by PBS. 2009.
underappreciated. The Medias' depiction completely misses this because the area appears scary or extremely different. The movie industry and media exploit the region as well in this way, selling its reputation in fictional plots playing off of the negative stereotypes about the land and the people. There is nothing sacred and untouched about Appalachia to the rest of the world. People within the region sometimes buy into this mage themselves and they spread it too.

The video series depicted Appalachia as a diverse, beautiful and majestic place, with people who sound like they could burst with emotion at any moment because they are so proud to live here and tell others how much they love the area. One of the ladies on the video equated the mountains to a hug from God. To some there is something safe and inviting about living in the hills and valleys of Appalachian Mountains. The DVD series and the Williams' book both contain interesting observation about the region. Not all of them are pleasant, the feuds and exploitation and what happened with the Natives certainly are not, but they are more realistic and benevolent than what the people not from the region are interested in, the reality instead of fiction.

The Appalachian People and Their Roots

Moonshine and mayhem are two words that can be used sum up the stereotypical culture of Appalachia. Outsiders and some residents of Appalachia, do not understand its' history which has left it steeped in mysteries and stereotypes. The
region is branded as being full of barefoot and pregnant women, moonshiners, illiterates, feuders, hillbillies, rednecks, and solely poor white trash segment of society. The population is portrayed as a dangerous group of people who should be shunned and avoided. Some people within the region do identify and conform to stereotypes and it would be foolish to ignore that some of them have legitimate roots and that others are codswallow. Typically, ‘Hillbillies,’ the primary group people associate with the region are people who are from lower socioeconomic families in the mountains. These people are typecast to be more like Billy-goats than people, crude and animalistic. They live an isolated lifestyle that is not what is considered “normal” in modern society. It is still acceptable to make fun of Hillbillies; jokes at their expense are common and accepted. These stereotypes that concern them are varied and often extremely incorrect. The common speculations are that they live in two room shacks, are perpetually barefoot, the women are continuously pregnant and everyone is on welfare. It is difficult to explain the Appalachian culture, but safe to say that these stereotypes are not correct descriptions of the whole population. A culture has existed historically, changed with time and modernity, leaving behind stereotypes and misconceptions about the region which seem to have transcended time. In truth the region has held its share of diverse cultural roots and varied populations.

For example, the Cherokee people were the first people to live in Appalachia. They helped the colonist who arrived from Europe survive in the new area and passed
some of their knowledge to them, especially in food gathering and basic survival during the cold months. The Indians were dwindled in population by disease or murder and those remaining were forced out during the trail of tears unless they were able to take shelter in the protective mountains.  

The arrival of European colonist forever changed the region, leaving their culture and legacy on the Appalachian population. The Pilgrims were the first white settlers in the region. They contributed to the long standing tradition in Appalachia that a man is only as good as his word, when people would seal a deal with a handshake. This is still valid, within the region people tend to know their neighbors and people within close proximity to them and whether they are trustworthy or not determines their relationship with them. The English settlers or Anglo-Americans contributed to the importance of holding up a good name for your family. This is part of the culture that has developed in the region and has been retained over time. People are involved in their community as far as reputation and trust based on that reputation.

Swedish settlers also had an influence on the region, they brought with them a sense of family and community that were ‘tight knit’ and depended on each other. The first President of the United States, George Washington was a descendent of


\[20\] Ibid.
Swedes. The Irish brought histories and legends to the Appalachian Mountains, they were known to be hardworking creating a strong workforce and were very instrumental in building the canals and railroads of the region. The Irish had a strong influence in arts, politics, and work ethic of the region in Early American culture. There were many Irish here before the potato famine occurred in Ireland, which is contrary to popular belief. The German influence on the region grew when William Penn opened land up in Pennsylvania, as a place where people who had suffered religious persecution could seek refuge. The people who headed there were looking for religious protection. There were a multitude of religious factions that came into the region adding additional diversity.

i) Feuding

Mountain moonshiners are historically associated with Appalachia. Since the Whisky Rebellion of 1794 until now there has been an economic pressure on Mountaineers and moonshinerring has been supplementary to the income of some Appalachians. Crops were becoming more difficult and expensive to transport and its value was low. In liquid form crops become more valuable per unit of weight and created more profit for the mountaineers. This was historically a particularly popular form of turning a profit since legal alcohol was expensive and dry counties prohibited

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
the sale of the legal product. Moonshiners were entrepreneurs who were looking for a superior profit and easier way to supplement their income with a high return on production rather than keep transporting their crop in its raw form to sell legally.

Moonshining still exists in Appalachia, it is doubtful that the motives have changed in relation to making a profit, but it is arguable that transportation of crop is still more difficult and less profitable to ship crops in their original form.

When talking about history and roots of the region the Hatfield and the McCoy families are used as evidence of the backwards and violent inhabitants in the area. The two were on opposing sides of a waterway, the McCoy family lived on the Kentucky side and the Hatfield family resided on the West Virginia side. The feud is one of many that occurred in Appalachia, but definitely the most famous, it paints images of "bearded mountaineers brandishing rifles and jugs of moonshine as they defend illegal stills from federal "revenuers", enforce "shotgun" weddings, and lawless perpetration inherited family grudges." The reality of the situation is not a simple and neat as "hillbillies" fighting over their corn whiskey and petty differences.

Both the Hatfield and the McCoy clans lived in log cabins along the Tug Fork on the Big Sandy River; the families lived a subsistence lifestyle that was supplemented with hunting of wild animals and the slaughtering of livestock (including pigs). Both family heads were well known and established in the


community. In fall 1878 a McCoy thought that a Hatfield cousin stole his hog, so he complained to the closest justice of the peace.\textsuperscript{26} This is interesting to see, considering that stereotypes of the region would suggest that the first thing the people would turn to would be a shotgun and a lynch mob. The jury was made up of six Hatfields and six McCoys. One McCoy vote went to the other side and the McCoy’s lost the trial.

One and a half years later two nephews of Old Ranel McCoy got into a fight with a Hatfield witness (from the trail) and killed him. The Hatfields again used the legal system and had a warrant issued and the two boys arrested. The boys were acquitted on grounds of self-defense in the court of a judge who was Devil Anse’s brother.\textsuperscript{27} This added fuel to the feud fire.\textsuperscript{28}

That same year there was a Romeo and Juliet type of forbidden love blossomed. Johnse Hatfield (an 18 year old) and Roseanna McCoy (single and age 21 which was past the normal age of marriage in those days) meet and fell in love at an election. Roseanna went to live with the Hatfields but Devil Anse McCoy would not let them marry even though Roseanna was pregnant. She left to live with some of her family members, but when she heard that some of her brothers planned to arrest

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\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
Johnse she went to warn his father so he could be safely hidden. Shortly after that her baby died and Johnse for some reason married Roseanna's cousin Nancy McCoy.  

The next year on Election Day a fight broke out when a McCoy lunged with a knife at a Hatfield. Two McCoy brothers joined the fight and one had a handgun, one of them shot the Hatfield family member, after he had been stabbed twelve times. A judge had the three McCoy's arrested. The Hatfield died and Devil Anse had the three involved tied to bushes and executed in retaliation. For five years no action was taken or arrests made. Old Rane! again used the legal system in 1887 and persuaded a distantly related lawyer to convince a judge to begin the extradition process. The McCoys invaded West Virginia and captured the Hatfields that were to be tried. This created another bloody turning point in the feud. New Years 1888 the Hatfields came to Kentucky and killed two of Old Ranel's sons and one daughter in addition to beating his wife. They also burnt down the McCoy home that day. This created a national sensation that released rumors of towns and communities being burnt and people fighting in the streets.  

The Governor of West Virginia was outraged because the Kentucky officials ignored proper extradition procedure and did what he considered “kidnapping” of two West Virginia citizens; he obtained a writ of habeas corpus from the U.S. District court in Louisville, KY. Governor Wilson lost the case to get citizens returned and the
extradition failed. He appealed to the Supreme Court of the U.S. May 1888 and was denied because of Kentucky's right to retain and try the prisoners. In 1889, Hatfield supports tried in Pikeville were convicted of murder and eight of them were sentenced to life imprisonment and the one convicted of murdering Ranel's daughter was hung until dead. The feud with this was over after twelve long years and many deaths. 31

The Hatfields and McCoys were really in a competition over property, the McCoys were less successful than the Hatfields and when their personal property was taken (a hog) it was a factor in inciting a feud after the legal system did not uphold justice the way the family saw it. In the end, the feud was about economic stability for the family. The feud showed self-determination, independent people with a proud spirit and culture more bent on will than what was right. 32 Use of the legal system was an important factor in this feud, yes it was still physical and bloody but the legal system was put to use in the beginning and the end of the feud to settle disputes, the families did not immediately take things into their own hands and act lawlessly without seeking other channels. This feud produced rumors far and wide that lasted a long time that still effect the perception of the region. This perception perpetuated a nationwide image of hillbillies with pitch forks and shot guns taking to the streets and

killing one another when really the fighting was contained within the two families and their territories after initial actions within the court room left one side dissatisfied.

The Hatfield and McCoy dispute is a good illustration of how isolated events in the region found their way not only into history but also into creating stereotypes about the region. The brutal events that took place allowed a bloody picture to be painted and created a prejudice in the minds of outsiders about the regions inhabitants and their past. This unfair observation and others like it have help built the perception of backwards people that need to be dominated or changed to become more like “normal” society.

The Appalachian region in this very brief overview is shown to have a unique culture that is complex and sometimes misunderstood. It exists to some in stereotypical terms, as it is portrayed in the media as an isolated, violent and unfriendly place, a pristine untouched wilderness, the white Appalachia monoculture and the poor illiterate version. None of these are wholly true or completely false. Appalachia is a hodgepodge, comprised of many groups of people and cultures and the region now holds an even more culturally rich and diverse population. The stigma associated with the region, leaves Appalachia as a loosely defined cultural region that warrants severe and holistic study by contemporary scholars.

There is evidence of a shared history and culture for the region and its existence is further supported by the expansion of its boarders by political means.
Neighboring areas do not have those historical and cultural traits in common with the Appalachian region and it is clear when politicians have to add them in just to get a piece of the pie for their districts. This shows that Appalachia needs some sort of different way to deal with development of the region. A diverse collection of cultures and ethnic groups have moved into the region and shaped it into what it is now. You will find influences from Native Americans, the Spanish conquest, the English (Anglos), the Swedes, the Irish, the Germans and many others which came into the region leaving their own mark on the region’s identity.

Need for Development of the Appalachian Region

The Appalachian Region lags behind the rest of the nation in several ways: in education, economically and reliance on outsiders. One of the key ingredients for success of a geographical region involves higher educational attainment, Appalachia does not have a high level of attainment for its population, and there is an issue with brain drain in the region. Economic Dependency is another aspect that plagues Appalachia needs some type of development to counteract. It is important to note the lag of the region was so predominant that the rest of American noticed and eventually accepted its need when governors from the states that had Appalachian areas within their borders called for intervention.
Education in Appalachia

Appalachia academically lags behind the rest of the nation. The 1990s saw a widening of the gap and the region has yet to recover from this shift. University counties do have a better chance of producing college graduates than the other regions of the nation because of the attention they give in recruiting from their service region. The focus on local and closed regions exists but brain drain or the exodus of the educated population form there region to seek higher degrees or jobs with better pay elsewhere, exists and it hurts the education levels of the region. This high-mobility that exists among those willing to seek higher education is a negative for the region; it creates a loss of human resources for Appalachia. Policies are too narrow and unsupportive of education in the region. People do not get the education opportunities that they need unless they work very hard to get it. Education is shown only to benefit the region only if the people receiving it stay, the problem is that those motivated to receive higher education often leave Appalachia once it is obtained.
The map above shows that Appalachia, on average, lags behind the rest of the nation. The national average of education completion is 80.4% and the Appalachian average is 76.8%. The map shows that Central Appalachia is lagging far more than the rest of Appalachia. The Northern part of Appalachia that benefited more from Industrialization

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and suffered less from the cotton boom post Civil War have the highest education completion rates, up to par with that of national averages.

Appalachia is a distinct cultural region and has a reputation forced upon it from outsiders. The opinions formed in the 1960’s and 1970’s have stuck with the region and now contribute to limiting the role Appalachia plays in the nation and global market. According to Appalachian scholars, Ronald Lewis who is employed by West Virginia University and Dwight Billings from the University of Kentucky, Appalachia is a myth created and defined by outsiders. They proposed that those ideas have stuck and then failed to change with modernity. They say that education can play the role of a cultural bridge, that was what the conference decided would be the best way to integrate the region. The conference focused on school reform and educational strategies as well as adult improvement such as literacy, job training and extension services for universities Lewis and Billings agreed education could be key to development.34 The Appalachian Regional Commission does focus on education as part of its development of the region and they ensure that steps taken to educate the population.

The rest of the nation does not understand Appalachia and what the conditions really are. Assumptions are made about the people and their culture, that are outdated and have become stereotypes and mask the true issues that need to be dealt with to fight poverty and rural restrictions, the image and opinion of the region needs to be

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changed. It is pointed out that education in 1970 seemed to be the only form of social institution that would be effective in creating a “Cultural Bridge” between Appalachia and the rest of the United States allowing them to adopt the “norms” of the rest of the country.\footnote{Ronald Lewis, and Dwight Billings. “Appalachian Culture and Economic Development: A Retrospective View on the Theory and Literature.” \textit{Journal of Appalachian Studies} 3.42 (1997): 1-30}

Education is highly beneficial to a community or region by creating better jobs, increasing the tax base, creating better infrastructure and increased quality of life. Sources say that there is a cycle that exists when it comes to educational attainment and that people need to be educated before they can realize the true value of education. It’s difficult for the Appalachian region to integrate into national education standards and benefit from higher rates of completion because over all education is not valued like it should be since the uneducated neither understand nor appreciate it.\footnote{John Hagga. “Educational Attainment in Appalachia”. Demographic and Socioeconomic Change in Appalachia. \textit{Population Reference Bureau}, 2004.} Historical limitations and outdated policies cause the region continues to lag. A foundation in education is needed to integrate Appalachia into the realm of higher education rates and better opportunities. This is hard to change without first dealing with the poverty and ignorance preventing the Appalachian people from obtaining higher education.
I. The Appalachian Dependency: Specifically Central Appalachia

The Appalachian Regional Development Act (legislation that created the Appalachian Regional Commission) charged that investment should be made in areas with significant potential for future growth. This was to make sure that scarce resources were not disbursed too sparsely over a large area with little benefit to anyone. This complemented the development theory of the time, which was to focus on the concept of "grow centers". This was the approach the Appalachian Regional Commission subscribed to until the Finish-up program mandated a reverse and called for remaining benefits to be disbursed to the poorest areas of the region. 37

The Appalachian Regional Commission was meant to increase the production capacity of the region, through the provision of "basic facilities", such as physical and transportation facilities, and the development of human resources. These improvements were interchanged to create more diversified industry in the region. The infrastructure should provide the foundations for an economy to develop transportation links, communications, power supplies and public utilities. Roads were supposed to reduce the isolation of the areas, the ARC originally planned to build 2,350 miles of highway to link together the existing networks of interstate highway in

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the region. As states were added to the ARC's boundaries the length of road increased to 3,035 miles.\textsuperscript{38}

Highways increased individual mobility, provided access to more jobs and social services, healthcare, schools, and tourism. New industrial plants were established along the highways systems and more businesses were enticed to enter the region.\textsuperscript{39} Of course not everyone who has access to the Appalachian Development Highway realizes that it is a result of ARC funding and planning because they were given national route numbers.

The agency has been criticized for not creating a comprehensive transportation policy for the region but it was never charged to do so and the rest of the nation also lacks such a set of policies. The transportation problems continue to plague Appalachia and the ARC still views transportation as an unresolved dilemma for the region.

The ARC not only focused on the roadways but also on railroad rehabilitation as an attempt to decrease the isolation of Appalachia. The ARC did not put much effort into control and development of the natural waterways of the region because most were already the charge of the TVA. In the 1970's the ARC focused on other aspects of the infrastructure-national environmental legislation provided grant in aid to improve water and sewer systems. Local Development Districts used EPA grants


\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 319.
to help poor rural districts to obtain better utility services adding some employment opportunities and modern facilities to the region.\footnote{Michael Bradshaw. The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty-Five Years of Government Policy. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992),319.}

Human Resources are the capabilities of the population of a region; they would at least include the educational and health status of the population of a region. Schools, primary-care centers, hospitals and trained personnel would also be included in the development of human resources. The Commission created Appalachian Education Satellite projects to use the television as a tool for education; the project was so successful that it eventually became independent in 1980 when it became the National Learning Channel.\footnote{Ibid., 321.}

The need for education was clearly addressed by the commission, they also funded vocational technical schools to provide training and skills to Appalachians and improve their chances of finding jobs. There has been over $350 million spent on over 700 facilities and equipment for courses in Appalachia.\footnote{Ibid., 321.} Hospital facilities and clinics in key parts of the region were expanded by ARC funding. By 1981 primary healthcare was available in all but 65/397 counties and half of the remaining 65 were covered by 1985.\footnote{Ibid., 321.}
The ARC’s structure established a framework for political cooperation between the federal and state levels. The state governors were instrumental in establishing ARDA legislation that dealt with Appalachian problems, because it affected sections of their states. The states gained the ability to spend federal funds and took on the responsibility of recommending local and state projects to the federal government.

The most funding per capita goes to Central Appalachia and it still remain one of the poorest regions in the United States. Job diversification efforts in Central Appalachian have involved manufacturing more than the tertiary sector. There are continuing needs in Central Appalachia, which is clear when you look at the distribution of the distressed counties in Appalachia. Extractive industries could be a large factor in this predicament. The coal industry is subject to world economic and ecological conditions, including alternatives fuel sources, costs, and technological advances, all bearing influence on price setting. The ARC has implemented programs in the region and progress has been made, but not enough has happened in the area to catch it up to the national averages. It is impossible to know what Central Appalachia would be like without the effect the ARC has had on it but as it stands a large portion

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of the land in the region belongs to the coal companies and this creates a barrier to development. 45

Salstrom, in his book Appalachia’s Path to Dependency, talks about the economic dependency that exists in the region and how it grew to be so. He refers to dependency as not meaning an area is part but that it is dependant to another economy. The book is concerned with the Dependency Theory, which states that “economic development can be hampered not only by local obstacles but also by obstacles that are external to a region…” 46

“Economic dependency does not necessarily prevent all forms of development. It prevents independent development. Meanwhile it can actively foster dependent development in some economic sectors—such as in Appalachia’s extractive sector. In other sectors it can foster underdevelopment—such as Appalachia’s agriculture, manufacturing, and finances.” 47

Appalachian extractive industries are almost entirely dependent upon outside capital. The elite that live within the region manage industrial development for the Appalachian Region and they do so through their alliances with outside investors.48

46 Paul Salstrom, Appalachia’s Path to Dependency: Rethinking A Region’s Economic History, 1930-1940. Lexington: The University of Kentucky, 199, ix.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
Between 1880-1930 the Southern Mountains rapidly transitioned towards industrialization. As this happened its self-sufficient food production began to fail. During the Great Depression the industries of the region were hit hard and they found people were becoming dependant on the federal government for relief. This made the region more stable than in the past but dependant on outsiders. 49

In Geography there is a concept of core and periphery. The core has dominating interests and often controls the periphery because it is weaker or and less advanced. This concept supports why the Appalachian Region is a desirable region to exploit within the United States, the rest of the nation considers it as periphery. 50 It is not on the geographical fringe like typical peripheral area but it is on the American economic market periphery. Appalachia could be considered an internal colony. 51

According to Billings and Blee there are two distinct and very different ways to view the explanation of Appalachian poverty that have been advanced. The older approach was that cultural values, conceived, also referred to as culture of poverty and traditionalistic folk culture. The newer model sees Appalachians woes as being attributed to the exploitation of the region. There has been documentation of the historical exploitation of the region which is clear when you look at the history of the railroad building, timbering and coal mining. This explanation states that the

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50 Ibid., xiv.
51 Ibid., xiv.
mountain region's poverty needs to be understood in terms of Appalachian's connection with the national economy not just the relationship to its isolation.  

The most prevalent view of Appalachian communities is that they are a part of a unique subculture whose internal deficiencies that was responsible for the poverty of the region. Society is convinced that the Appalachian people cling to beliefs and practices that keep them from developing along with the rest of the nation. These beliefs include fatalism, fundamentalism, and fatalism identifying "Hillbillies" as being responsible for their own plight because of the practices they chose to subscribe to. Fatalism is the belief that things are on a predetermined path and nothing we can do will change that path. The true reasons for the conditions of Appalachia are that of political and economic situations that the region suffers from as a result of the isolated geography of the region and the exploitation of the region by outsiders.

Colonialism, the exploitation of the weaker by the stronger, which is usually to take control of resources, can be according to secondary sources is described as the explanatory model for Appalachians current conditions, colonialism may not provide a complete explanation about everything that Appalachian faces now but it is clearly a contributing factor. The form of Colonialism used in literature (or what I could more accurately use the term "dependency") for Appalachia is Internal Colonialism, Exploitation or External Oppression model. These stand counter to the Culture of

Poverty model which attributes regional problems to deficiencies of the people themselves and their cultures, hillbillies, apathy, poor health, ignorance, primitive and backward ways. 54

This type of dependency they refer to as colonialism (Appalachia’s reliance on outsiders for development as a result of their historical relationship with people who are not residents of the region) explains how outsiders dominated the region, established their interests, and controlled the region to exploit it. “The colonial model implies that solutions to Appalachia’s problems lie in the radical restructuring of society with redistribution of resources to the poor and powerless.”55 This is not the system that the ARC follows, instead they outline in their policy that they want to focus on the areas of the region that are capable of benefiting from development and can show the most growth and progress in order to benefit the rest of the nation. This shows an interest of the Commission to seek a return on the investment for the rest of the nation, not to just funnel money into the region without some kind of noticeable benefit; this is not socialism or welfare in the sense of no expectation on the part of the United States government in return, this is to help build up a section of the nation that has historically suffered by being exploited by those on the outside. Colonialism has not been eradicated in the world, let alone in the region. For example, coal is still

55 Ibid., 4.
a large industry in Appalachia, but we can see that the ARC has made efforts to invest in the region and help improve its economic situation and decrease the lag that exists.

People moved into the areas we now call rural America with the intent of taking advantage of the natural resources that existed there, originally to find sustainable survival. Other areas moved forward and diversified their economy while others stayed behind and became solely dependent on those agricultural and mining practices that relied on those resources of their region. This is especially detrimental in regions with lower rates of educational attainment such as Appalachia. Improvements in technology have made some coal sources that were previously seen as not equitable valuable again, “A seam of Coal does not create jobs unless coal prices are high enough and the available technology is efficient enough to make extraction worthwhile.” The coal industry is characterized by a boom and bust cycle making the areas dependant on that industry subject to the same economic boom and bust in their communities. 56

Central Appalachia is where Eastern Kentucky is situated; it is located in the middle of the area and often have the poorest conditions within the Appalachian Region. The population finds themselves dependant on absentee owners who hold the purse strings, such as coal mine owners. The War on Poverty started on the front lawn of Eastern Kentucky in 1964, literally. Lyndon B. Johnson took over President

Kennedy's charge of the Appalachian Regional Commission and he commanded a War on Poverty, standing on the front porch of a resident's house in Inez, Kentucky (Martin County).

**POVERTY RATES IN APPALACHIA**

Eastern Kentucky faces a particular set of issues because they are reliant on coal. As you can see on the map above produced by the Appalachian Regional Commission the poverty levels in Central Appalachia and Eastern Kentucky are in
some of the poorest areas of the region. This focus on a single industry leaves them dependant on the fluctuations of that industry in the world market. According to a chapter in a book on economic crisis and Appalachia, Kristin Layng Szakos wrote, "...in the area, which is dependent on a single industry—coal—for its economic health, they face a special set of obstacles to their search for the good life.”

the Kentucky state government had long bolstered the coal industry and left the residents of Appalachia suffering all the pitfalls in the relationship. The residents of Appalachia have endured as a result infamously poor infrastructure: roads, bridges, schools and services while the coal industry made millions. Until 1988, Kentucky was the only major state in Appalachia not allowing local governments and school districts to tax mineral wealth as property, allowing coal taxes to essentially be exempt until an appeals court ruled it unconstitutional. The mineral owners due to absentee ownership are not the same as the owners of the land; this created a burden on the tax payers in the region and created a vast loss of taxable property historically in the area.

The government, planners, and economists often explain the area as being a result of underdevelopment due to the Region’s isolation, poor transportation, inadequate capital and lack of programs to stimulate growth in the lagging regional
economy, no incentives for investments and no skilled labor or competition. 60 These ideas lead to programs to improve the infrastructure, create incentives to develop, encourage immigration and provision of agents to encourage modernization and industrialization. 61

In Central Appalachia in the nineteenth century, early settlers relied on subsistence living and kinship based systems of social organization. The region was isolated and had a dispersed population. 62 In the 1800s and 1900s lumbering, railroads and coal mines were established in the area. In Kentucky the first load of coal was shipped from Harlan in 1911. The industry that came to the region brought rapid population increases in the areas where work was available. 63

Until World War II, three social systems co-existed in the region:

1. Original rural mountain settlements-isolated with reliance on subsistent farming;
2. Coal camps- homogeneous work groups who were socially segregated and economically dependent on a single extractive industry; and
3. Middle class towns-socially and economically tied to eastern urban centers. 64

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61 Ibid., 82.
62 Ibid., 10.
63 Ibid., 10.
64 Ibid., 11.
After World War II there was a change that affected the coal fields. Mechanism of the mining technology between 1950-1960 lead to a decrease in employment by 62% in mining employment for Eastern Kentucky and a 42% decrease in population for the area was followed by a steady outmigration in the 1960’s. The wider prevalence of the automobile helped facilitate not only outmigration but also commuting to work. This is a part of the boom and bust cycle which coincides with the coal industry.

The Appalachian sub-society has been structurally separated from the rest of the nation. They do not control their own resources which makes them a part of the Exploitation or Colonialism Model. The people controlling the resources discriminate against Appalachians. Colonialism begins with forced and involuntary entry which has an impact on culture and social organization. Cultural contact and acculturization after the colonizers entry creates rapid modification of values, orientation and way of life in the region. A relationship develops where the colonizers become the administrators of the group of people within the area of colonization and a level of discrimination develops, where the dominant group feels the other group is inferior.

Those who are being colonized have resources, natural or human, which are useful to the colonizers; technological superiority usually plays a role in the domination and expedites the process of colonization. Without intervention mining

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66 Ibid., 15.
67 Ibid., 16.
tends to develop characteristics of exploitation or colonialization. The resources used by the area itself as meager, as it is in Eastern Kentucky with coal. The wages paid to the workers and the taxes paid to local government are small and of little benefit to the region. The regions resources are depleted and eventually the region will be left without its natural unrenewable resources. 68

I. Commissioning The Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission is a federal-state economic development program created to assist in the economic development of Appalachia through projects on area infrastructure, human resource development and business/entrepreneurial development. It was established in 1965 to support economic and social development in the region. The ARC programs service region includes thirteen states, all of West Virginia and parts of twelve other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. 69 To understand the reason the ARC was commissioned by the government you must understand first the need for such an organization.

Appalachia according to Ronald Eller was created by urban journalists in years following the Civil War. The writers disliked modernity and saw the region as a

remnant of the frontier life the rest of the nation had left behind. The creation of Appalachia was an attempt at making a counterpoint to definitions of progress during the turn of the century. Eller believes that Appalachia was created to serve as a contrast to the American dream, to fulfill a need for an example of “otherness” and allowing the rest of the nation to feel superior. Academics wanted a simpler time and thought it should be protected and preserved. Those who felt material comforts, consumption and technology were the way the nation should grow had a less romantic view of the region and its people so they said that the isolation and backwardness of the region and people needed to be created. When there is a need to advance or develop a region then there must be an agency to facilitate that development. Eller said that, “Americans have an enduring faith in the power of development to improve the quality of our lives.” For Appalachia that need for a catalyst of development became the Appalachian Regional Commission.

In 1940 a pattern of growth without development existed in Appalachia which included rapid expansion of jobs and the capacity to develop and sustain internal prosperity. World War II created the high demand for Appalachian resources, both natural and human, and to an extent, the nation became dependent on what Appalachia had to offer. Appalachian enlistment rates during the war were the highest in the nation. Those staying in the region found new jobs and new opportunities. War

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mobilization redistributed the population within the region and also increased
outmigration towards urban centers over the next three decades. 71

After World War II Americans had a faith in the government because this
success and prosperity was seen as a promise, it had developed into the norm for the
country. Depressed areas of the nation were considered “Poverty Pockets”, or the
“other America”, which lacked opportunities to prosper. Poverty was increasingly
viewed as a deviant condition, effecting only those regions and people who
themselves were deficient.

The Culture of Poverty Model is based on families in Mexico and Puerto Rico
and later scholars started applying it to American regions, such as Appalachia. 72 The
poor began to be seen as part of the third world and this allowed policy makers to see
it as a universal condition that they could sure in their “American-style of
development”, and that through government intervention these problems of the poor
and their culture could be overcome. 73 The beliefs that allow the idea of the
government’s ability to fix the poor and change their ways with their intervention
naturally lead to the addressing of Appalachia and its problems, and eventually led to
the establishment of the ARC as a means of intervention.

71 Ronald D. Eller, Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945. (Lexington: The University Press
72 Ibid., 100.
73 Ibid., 101.
When John F. Kennedy came to Appalachia in 1960 during his campaign he talked about how he was going to address the issues of the region and help the people, despite his party ties and his religious faith, two things many people felt would keep him from winning votes in the region, he carried the vote of the people who were eager to have someone listen to them and deal with their problems. JFK’s untimely death left Lyndon Baines Johnson as president, Johnson wanted to carry forward the late president’s antipoverty campaign and also bring in his own ideas within his Great Society plan. Johnson was a New Deal supporter and sincerely believed that government intervention was the route needed to save the people from themselves. He was paternalistic and committed to helping the disadvantaged as a good shepherd.

January 8, 1964 President Johnson announced the “War on Poverty,” Appalachian governors urged Johnson to continue the Appalachian program as well. The President’s Appalachian Regional Commission (PARC) hurried to complete a report so they could convince him to agree quickly. Special interest groups attempted to influence staff recommendations but the PARC did not succumb to these efforts. 74

The creators of the ARC legislation believed that they could make progress in the region through several strategies of development. First, infrastructure would help the region; the construction of “developmental” highways, vocational schools, health facilities and other public infrastructure would help the region be connected to the

national market and promote growth and prosperity. In these ways the ARC has played a vital role in modernizing Appalachia according to Ronald Eller. 75

The Commission, unlike Great Society Programs, was a partnership between state and federal governments which distributed the power equally between the 13 governors in the Appalachian States and Washington. This also presented a new science of planned regional development. 76

The goal of the Appalachian Regional Commission was to change the culture and economy in order to could contribute to and benefit from national growth. The economists involved in the ARC intended for it to raise the per capita income of the region and to change the regions’ culture and economy so it could expand. Appalachian governors said the region was underdeveloped and needed infrastructure (highways, factories, and schools, water systems) to sustain a modern economy and life style. To satisfy the Whitehouse staff, the language of the legislation mandates that the investment of resources on the region should be in areas that have the most potential for future growth so that the government would not be wasting valuable resources. Also, this facilitated the core-periphery model held dear by economists of that time, believing that developments and benefits would trickle down from cities to rural areas also known as Growth Center Development. 77

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76 Ibid., 177.
77 Ibid., 179-180.
ARC were intended to connect rural areas to growing metropolitan areas and urban centers.

The issue with this theory is that Appalachia has few growth centers and some large expanses of land have no major urban center within its boundaries. Other urban centers are located on the periphery of the Appalachian region or in valleys which limit their capacity to benefit rural areas within Appalachia. 78

The first four years that the Appalachian Regional Commission was running they focused on non-highway funds going to urban centers, politicians such as Whisman in Central Appalachia fought hard to get benefits for their area. There was eventually a compromise that retained the essential elements of the growth strategy but provided political flexibility for state ARC offices to invest in non-metropolitan areas. In central Appalachia this focused on the Local Development Districts (LDDs) and Area Development Districts (ADDS) and their surrounding counties. 79

Construction of modern transportation networks and upgrading of the labor force by the ARC helps integrate the Mountains and the people into the emerging urban society. Roads and schools make it better to stay in the region and easier to leave. At the close of the century Appalachia had become a more diverse place, with modern highways, vocational schools, health facilities, other public infrastructure which altered the mountain landscape. Appalachia was reshaped into the pattern of an

79 Ibid., 182.
American consumer society but old problems still exist in the region. The ARC road systems have connected growth centers and hallows to the national economy and culture. Some people benefit from this and others do not. Appalachia still lags behind national trends in the areas of income, health, education and job security. The other issues that the region still faces include:80

✓ Inadequate tax base
✓ Low-wage economy
✓ Environmental abuse
✓ Civic fraud
✓ Political corruption
✓ Absentee land ownership
✓ Corporate irresistibility
✓ Physical destruction of the land
✓ Rising drug addictions
✓ Loss of traditions and values (destroying what makes the region unique)

Development occurred unevenly in Appalachia leaving local communities with policies directed at recruiting outside industries and these (i.e., Wal-Mart) just facilitated further transfer of funding out of the region, contributing to the decline of smaller community-based businesses and the taking of public resources form the area. In most areas community-based solutions for development were bypassed in communities who were suffering and starved for housing, healthcare and education services. 81

81 Ibid., 237.
Mechanization and integration further into the national economy left many older and uneducated farmers, miners and unskilled workers with no options. Opportunities increased for individuals who were in positions to take advantage of then, especially those rural residents who had not previously benefited from the growth center development centers. Educational gains were not in Central Appalachia, they faced consolidated school, which destroyed small community participation due to distance. People who did benefit from the educational advancements were often led away from the region permanently to colleges, universities and for job opportunities not available within their local areas. Therefore, educational improvements sometimes served as facilitators of an exodus of the talented students from rural areas.82

In 2000, Appalachia was still one of the poorest places in the U.S.; the worst poverty is in the central part of the region. Economic distress improved significantly across the U.S. between the years of 1960-2000 but Central Appalachia even with improvements still lagged behind the rest of Appalachia and the rest of the nation. The poverty rate in Northern and Southern Appalachia was 12.8% while the national average was 12.3%. In contrast, Central Appalachia’s poverty rate was at 22.1%, which is almost twice the national average. The majority of the distressed counties in

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Appalachia are in Central Appalachia. Eighty-five of those distressed counties in the 1960s were still distressed in 2000. 83

The mechanization and global scale of competition that Appalachia entered into alongside the rise in technology and the increase in the knowledge base left many older, uneducated farmers, miners, and unskilled workers with no options. The options increased for those who younger and able to take advantage of them. Most of the people taking advantage of these changes were not from Central Appalachia. These education improvements by some viewed as facilitation of an exodus of talented students from rural areas. 84

The Appalachian Regional Commission was established in 1965 to assist in meeting the special needs of the Appalachian Region. It deals with the region’s special problems and economic development challenges along with other directives set out in the legislation written by congress. The construction of the Appalachian Regional Commission effects the region’s economic viability by improvements through diverse programs and funding used to build the region’s infrastructure, develop human resources and businesses including entrepreneurial development. The Appalachian Regional Commission began with a relatively small and flexible budget to use when accomplishing these goals. The Commission is working to increase the number of job opportunities and per capita income in the region to match the rest of

84 Ibid., 239.
the nation. Appalachia is at a historical disadvantage from the rest of the nation based on the regional geography and culture. ARC focuses on highways to reduce isolation and open the region to the outside market. They partner with nonprofit organizations and other agencies to accomplish goals and share their budget through programs. Research has shown that the region has been improved by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Steven Covey the author of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective people wrote an article on the Ideal Community; in this article he sets forth several points that are relevant to my research. He says that connections are key in making things work in the world at large and that, "The survival and success of every enterprise will be based upon stakeholder relationships-on human and electronic connections to a much broader community". When talking about the Appalachian Regional Commission it is important to note that the goals set forth are meant to affect not only the region at large but also the communities that exist within its boundaries. Therefore, the success of the ARC, according to this logic, is dependent upon the connection that is established with the community or communities that exist within the region. Successful development of the region must be reached through close working relationships with the people who live in it.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was established by the United States Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965. Under the findings and statement of purpose the Act states that,

"The Congress hereby finds and declares that the Appalachian region of the United States, while abundant in natural resources and rich in potential, lags behind the rest of the Nation in its economic growth and that its people have not shared properly in the Nation's prosperity. The region's uneven past development, with its historical reliance on a few basic industries and a marginal agriculture, has failed to provide the economic base that is a vital prerequisite for vigorous, self-sustaining growth. The State and local governments and the people of the region understand their problems and have been working and will continue to work purposefully toward their solution. The Congress recognizes the comprehensive report of the President's Appalachian Regional Commission documenting these findings and concludes that region-wide development is feasible, desirable, and urgently needed. It is, therefore, the purpose of this Act to assist the region in meeting its special problems, to promote its economic development, and to establish a framework for joint Federal and State efforts toward providing the basic facilities essential to its growth and attacking its common problems and meeting its common needs on a coordinated and concerted regional basis. The public investments made in the region under this Act shall be concentrated in areas where there is a significant potential for future growth, and where the expected return on public dollars invested will be the greatest. The States will be responsible for recommending local and State projects, within their borders, which will receive assistance under this Act. As the region obtains the needed physical and transportation facilities and develops its human resources, the Congress expects that the region will generate a diversified industry, and that the region will then be able to support itself, through the workings of a strengthened free enterprise economy."

This legislation is important and illustrates the need for the Appalachian Regional Commission to help serve the region and guide it toward economic prosperity.

Covey makes another point that is particularly relevant. He stated that every leader tries to create an ideal community in which the organization is structured, staffed, positioned, managed and operated relative to its mission. This is engaging when linked to my research in two ways. First, it directly implies that leaders or in this case the government is concerned with the make-up of the community by way of attempting to make it an ideal community. To me this means that they want it to be successful and sustainable. The second is that when the government established the ARC, as with any other organization, they always have a shared mission within the organization to reach their goals. The mission of the ARC is to improve the conditions within the Appalachian Region, and they have, as mentioned, attempted to organize and structure the organization so that its mission will be successful.

II. The Effectiveness of the Appalachian Regional Commission: Progress Towards its Four Goals

The Appalachian Regional Commission is intended to assist with economic development of the Appalachian Region through a diverse number of projects in the area, including public infrastructure (waterways, sewer, solid waste, housing, and telecommunications), human resource development (education/workforce

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development, affordable healthcare, and leadership development) and business/entrepreneurial development. 88

In comparison to other federal agencies, the Appalachian Regional Commission's federal funding is minimal. In the fiscal year of 1998 it was $170 million. They do, however, have a flexible budget, meaning the Commission has fewer budgetary restrictions. 89 The Commission, however, does not have the authority to write implementation grants directly. Therefore, it grants moneys through other federal agencies, such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These agencies act as administering agencies agency for ARC projects. 90

The Appalachia Regional Commission is a very important mechanism in facilitating The Appalachian regions endeavor for economic viability. The legislation that established the Commission shows that it has a very lofty task set before it. While the Commission does not have the power or budget of larger and longer established Government Agencies it must still accomplish its tasks in an efficient manner. The success of the Commission is central to the future sustainability of the lifestyle of people in the region which makes the evaluation of its effectiveness in implementing

its budget (using its budget in a beneficial way) in the pursuit of making the region more economically stable.

When Congress passed the Appalachia Regional Development Act it established a mandate to focus on the socioeconomic gap between Appalachia and the rest of the nation and attention on advocacy, regional planning, research and grant making as ways of reducing this gap. 91

The goals of the Appalachia Regional Commission have been to increase job opportunities and per capita income in the region to match that of the rest of the nation. They want to strengthen the capacity of the people of the region to compete in the global economy. Another important goal of the Commission is the development and improvement of Appalachia’s infrastructure to facilitate economic competition and to build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce isolation. 92

ARC’s mission has not been finished by any means, increased global competition and technological changes has resulted in job loss and restructuring in many industries within the region. The Appalachian Regional Commission uses a strategic plan to try to bring Appalachia up to par with the rest of the nation, it

92 Ibid.
provides guidelines and framework to help the meet its goals for the economic
development of the region.93

The Appalachian Regional Commission advocates for the region by
partnering with nonprofits and other agencies; convening regional and sub-regional
forums; identifying regional initiative and grant priorities that will receive ARC
funding; setting policies that guide investment of ARC funds and by participating
with the Interagency Coordination Council on Appalachia. 94 For example, the ARC
partners with the Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD), which is one of
several programs designed to address a number of imposing economic and
environmental hardships in the region. An ARC startup grant in 1995 helped
establish ASD which serves several counties in both Virginia and Tennessee. The
focus was on the sustainable forestry and collaborative efforts with cooperatives of
small, organic farms. ASD also focuses on extracting timber in a sustainable way and
creating a value-added market for wood. ASD keeps farmers guided toward
sustainable agricultural practices and allows for prospects of preserving the area’s
farmland. They have been successful at helping meet the regions goals. 95

The Appalachian Region has made broad socioeconomic improvements as a
result of multiple macroeconomic and social factors, including the activity of ARC.

94 Ibid.
95 McDaniel, Lyndia. ARC: Appalachian Harvest: Growing for the Future. September-
ARC claims its efforts have helped by:  

- Cutting the Region's poverty rate in half;  
- Reducing the infant mortality rate by two-thirds;  
- Doubling the percentage of adults age 25 and older with a high school diploma;  
- Creating over 400 rural health-care facilities;  
- Constructing over 2,400 miles of new highways;  
- Providing water and sewer services to over 800,000 households;  
- Creating over 1.6 million new jobs in addition to 766,000 generated by the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS); and  
- Cutting the number of severely distressed counties from 223 in 1960 to 91 in fiscal year 2004.

Even with the list of improvements ARC has accomplished since its establishment, the majority of the region's communities still do not have the economic vitality and standard of living conditions as the other regions of the country. The Appalachian region still faces high poverty rates, unemployment rates, educational disparity, high disease rates and serious outmigration of its population.

The Commission attempts to promote homegrown solutions to regional problems. Creating sustainable economic development is high on the list of strategies for regional development. The ARC acts as a strategic partner to the region and as a catalyst for change. They want to start the process of innovation and they support inclusion of comprehensive local decision making. The Commission strives to be the

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97 Ibid.
clearing house for ideas to help the region and capitalize on existing assets while encouraging life-long learning. 98

Even with the planning and goal setting, the efforts of the Commission still come up against many challenges to implementing its strategic plans. This includes the economic downturns which often hit the Appalachia Region harder and persist longer; the government’s regulations and policies impede their progress. This is often referred to as red tape, which are the policies and procedures that the government must meet in order to proceed further. The large number of areas and agencies that the commission works with can also be tedious. The ARC partners with the federal government and 13 states, as well as 72 local development districts. The budget constraints and policy redirection within the States and local development districts also make it more difficult for ARC to reach its goals. The nature of unexpected demographic shifts can also hinder ARC goal accomplishments, such as a natural disaster can affect population numbers, migration, birthrates, and death rates. A sudden increase or decrees in population, a large portion of the population getting older, settling of a high volume of people with low educational attainment and language skills could significantly change the amount of funding that goes to certain areas within the region. 99

99 Ibid.
Stephen Covey points out in his article; “Ideal Communities,” that connections are the key to success with those connections being reached through meaningful outreach, into broader communities.\textsuperscript{100} The Appalachian Regional Commission reaches out to broader communities within the region through Local Development Districts (LDDs), or as we call our system in Kentucky Area Development Districts (ADDS).

Local planning is undertaken through ARC’s Local Development Districts. These ADDs cover multiple counties in order to economize on planning costs and facilitate coordinated regional strategies.\textsuperscript{102} Kentucky has fifteen Area Development Districts (See map above). The staff of each ADD provides planning and other services to the counties in the service region. Each has a board of directors composed

\textsuperscript{100} Stephen R. Covey. The Ideal Community in The Community of the Future. Hesselbeir et al., Eds Jesse-Boss: San Francisco. 1998. 50


\textsuperscript{102} Bagi, Faqir S., Richard J. Reeder, and Samuel D. Calhoun. "Federal Funding’s unique Role in Appalachia." Rural Development Perspectives, 2009: 14-21
of area elected officials and citizens who reside in the district. Recently an evaluation concluded that ARC-assisted areas significantly outperformed similar places elsewhere in the country. ARC provides supplementary funds that benefit Appalachia’s most “distressed” counties, those with relatively high poverty and unemployment rates coupled with low incomes. The counties considered “transitional” counties, which are less distressed but still need improvement receive less assistance.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, as a part of meeting its set of goals wants to focus on renewing the deteriorating infrastructure of the region and budgeting for its long-term maintenance. In 2007, an evaluation of ARC infrastructure investment projects conducted by the Economic Development Research Group in Boston and the BizMiner/Brandow Company, they examined a sample of 104 projects funded by ARC between 1999 and 2005, and concluded that these projects created more than 17,600 new jobs and led to the retention of 9,580 existing jobs. Another study indicates that a net of $1.3 billion expansion of annual personal income, representing a return on ARCs investment 9 to 1 in dollars, and generated $1.7 billion leverage in the form of private investment, a return of 75 to 1 on public dollars and generating

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$44 million in tax revenues through income, sales, and property to state and local
governments. 106

The ARC Highway Program ARC is meant to end isolation and to stimulate
the economy. The cost of building roads through Appalachia is high because of the
geography of the land. This leaves the area with deteriorated roadways that are often
too narrow, winding and unsafe. The interstate system largely bypassed the region in
pursuit of cost-effective practices. This is one of the reasons that modernization of
the Regions highways is a top priority of the ARC. Congress authorized the
Construction of the Appalachian Development highway System (ADHA) in the
Appalachian Development Act of 1965. ADHA’s purpose is to generate economic
development in areas formally isolated and to supplement interstate access and
connect Appalachia to the interstate system thereby opening it up to national markets.
In 2008, the ADHS has completed approximately 86.5 percent of the authorized
roadways (2,682 miles). Completion of the ADHS remains a top priority for ARC. 107

Poorest of the Poor: Distressed Counties in Appalachia

Distressed counties are defined as those with poverty and unemployment rates
one and a half times the national rates and with per capita incomes that are two-thirds
or less than the national rate. According to Lawrence Wood and Gregory Bischak a

significant improvement in the Appalachian Region after 1960. The number of distressed counties decreased by half, from 214 in 1960 to 161 in 1970 and down to 78 in 1980. The gains were counteracted during the 1980s when the number of distressed counties grew to 106 in 1990. The rise and fall of the number of distressed counties in Appalachia followed the national trends in the rise and fall of number of distressed counties. The report also found that one-quarter of the Appalachian counties that were distressed over forty years ago are still distressed when the report was written in 2000. 108

The rise and fall of distress levels nationally and regionally are associated with rising inflation and energy prices that changed during the 1970s and into the 1980s, which corresponded with shifts in public policy toward anti-inflation policies, drawing attention away from employment policies. These macroeconomic factors effected manufacturing and extractive industries which greatly influence the economy of the Appalachian Region. 109

The Commission began targeting “distressed counties” in the 1980s for increased assistance. The criteria they used compared the socioeconomic status of Appalachia counties with national rates of poverty, unemployment, and per capita income. This report proposes that the socioeconomic change in the Appalachian

109 Ibid.
Region is highly sensitive to national policies and macroeconomic factors that are largely beyond the scope of the ARC and other development agencies. 110

Covey in his article on ideal communities also mentions community service as a way of helping build an ideal community. He says that "...well-intended government programs often make the situation worse" and that only the non-profit sector is equipped to deal with social problems in a community. He believes that the service to ones community should not be mandatory but strictly voluntary and that it will benefit a community as a whole. 111 This suggestion is relevant because one must wonder what is the motivation or capacity of the people in a community to take action and serve their community. In Appalachia low levels of educational obtainment can pose a problem when it comes to the capacity of the people to take control and make a difference within. This begs the questions, so what can the members of the community do if they are not sure of how to proceed or that they can make a difference, and does this type of lagging in the region make government intervention a necessity to power development.

The Backward Go Forward with Development: and The Contribution of the ARC, LDDs/ADS


Appalachia has to represent the other America and be backwards, poverty-stricken, rich in romance and tradition to serve as the counterpoint of the American identity to foster its needs in the debate over national identity. \textsuperscript{112} Eller states, “Despite decades of behavior modification strategies, welfare management practices, and infrastructure development, the gap between the rich and the poor within Appalachia and the loss of land and community by longtime residents continued.” \textsuperscript{113} He argues that these failures are a result of strategies designed to address the “Appalachian Problem” but do not confront the structural inequities behind the conditions. The Appalachian economy has always been tied to the greater market and the advancements of the ARC have lead to a greater global connectivity.\textsuperscript{114}

The economic and cultural “deficiencies” of Appalachia that others perceived were seen as a free path to take the region’s natural resources in the name of development—which did nothing but make conditions worse in the region.

Appalachians natural and human resources fueled the modernization of the rest of the nation.\textsuperscript{115} In the 1960s, President John F. Kennedy’s campaign contradicted popular notions of an affluent America. The rediscovery of Appalachia as a cultural and economic problem area was an embarrassment and a challenge to a generation confident of its ability to share a better world. The attempt to eliminate disparities

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 222.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 223.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 10.
between mainstream America and Appalachia by the government allowed the region to be a testing ground for economic growth policies and social science strategies. 116

"The diversity that is modern Appalachia belies a growing gap between the rich and the poor, and it ignores the continuing sacrifices of Appalachian resources and people for the comfort and prosperity of the rest of the nation." The changes in the region, according to Eller, have been a result of government planning, the promotion of assimilation, and growth. This has happened through the War on Poverty and the Appalachian Regional Development Act legislation. He also states that often we mistake growth for development and change for progress. 117

Ronald Eller elaborated on the difference between change and development by discussing several instances that people commonly confuse. Economic growth generates employment opportunities but the jobs that are created are of a poor quality, providing low wages and few to no health benefits, essentially reinforcing the conditions of dependency and powerlessness. New highway systems may increase commerce and access to services for communities but can bypass communities and create displacement and decline. Expansion of mining and extraction industries may produce short-term employment but unregulated it can leave environmental damages and threaten sustainability of communities and ecosystems for future generations. 118

It is important to note that not all of the so called benefits of development that have

117 Ibid., 5.
118 Ibid., 5.
occurred have benefited the population of the region evenly or that they seem like benefits in some areas but the risks or draw backs make it seem less like a benefit than a quick fix with negative impacts. Therefore, the changes in Appalachia create a type of development that involves give and take within the region, these benefits come with a price.


“In, Appalachia, exploitation goes hidden under the rhetoric of economic development. People are forced out of their homes and from their farms because it is more profitable to let mud slide into living rooms and across cornfields than it is to mine coal with care...People find that there are not jobs in the Mountains because a cheap and ruthless method of mining requires few laborers. People are forced to take mining jobs which destroy their homes and entire economic base of the region...miners are injured and die because it is more profitable to mine coal in unsafe conditions than it is to run safe mines.”

Wealthy land owners pay only a small fraction of taxes for schools, roads, and other public facilities in impoverished communities. A 1987 ARC taskforce found that 90% of surface land and 100% of mineral resources in some Appalachian counties do not have taxes paid on them. The taskforce concluded that absentee ownership limited job opportunities and economic development alternatives, restricted the local tax base and shifted the burden for public services to local

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residents. Studies of landownership and taxation in the Appalachian Region found a direct correlation between the poverty of a county and the percent of property which mineral companies own.

Harry Caudill, in "Night Comes to the Cumberland’s," wrote that economic problems of Central Appalachia are a result of the neglect of the government and corporate greed which turned the Mountains into an industrial waste land. Caudill held that absenteeism was draining the regions wealth and exploiting its natural and human resources. He called for tax reform and political structure changes to solve the problems of the region. He also described the region as an internal colony and claimed that this explained the paradox of a rich land with impoverished people. In Eastern Kentucky the counties tax on un-mined coal was set at such a low rate that it was considered uncollectable, despite how much the owners of the corporations were profiting on the coal. He called for community action and regionalism to solve these issues. He and Eller both say that Appalachia was a proving ground for the democratic process, to fulfill American values. Caudill recommended the organization of the poor to get them to take control of their lives and resources and that should be on the national agenda for regional transformation.

The Appalachian Regional Commission assisted in increasing the linkages between agencies through the Local Development Districts, allowing for flexibility

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121 Ibid., 169.
122 Ibid., 169.
which made it possible for states to do what federal agencies could not.\textsuperscript{123} All thirteen Appalachian states by 1973 have created Local Development Districts, in some cases they were able to utilize existing local planning districts.\textsuperscript{124} The participation of these districts allows the ARC to overcome problems that previous programs could not, they allow delivery of grant-in aid to the neediest areas. They serve as a mechanism for local contact and involvement and well and creation and management of programs.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was able to assist poor Appalachian jurisdictions in obtaining funding and enhancing facilities in order to aid economic development and make a better life attainable. Supplementary funds were essential for the implementation of rural infrastructure projects. The Area Development Districts and Local Development Districts coordination removed the pork-barreling and made federal politicians have less of an impact on decisions about funding being sent to specific areas.

Local Development Districts were effective in reducing the difficulty in obtaining federal grant money and program implementation. LDDs expanded the process of goal setting, assessment, priorities, and evaluation. They come into contact with other agencies frequently forcing them to participate on the local level; examples include HUD, the EPA, and the TVA. The result was the creation of government


\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 324.
support on multiple levels, governors on the state level, LDDs on the local level and Washington, on the federal level. 125

Local Community Development

The ARC had Local Development Districts help to administer and manage local areas within Appalachia; they control funding and act in the best interest of their service region. The districts coordinate with other entities and levels of government to help reach the goals of the ARC when it comes to local development. Within Kentucky the districts are known as Area Development Districts and while they serve the same function as LDDs they preceded them and also set the standard when legislation created the districts to manage resources and funding distribution in the local regional clusters within Appalachia.

"Community Development" became a popular term internationally during the 1950's. In 1960, President Kennedy proclaimed a Decade of Development for the United States. Since then the term has gained recognition within the U.S., especially with public and private organizations fighting the "War on Poverty". The meaning of the term changes depending on the individual or entity, their location, organization and profession. Community development efforts in rural settings often try to focus on common problems but are usually more fragmented in urban areas. 126

In distressed U.S. communities organizations and leaders are searching for what builds strong communities and they are trying to integrate that into their practices. They are searching for community-building tools; most communities still need to rely on local development to make progress. It is also clear that outside intervention is still needed. Communities can often find help with groups and organizations which come together to pursue a wide range of activities. This is necessary because all communities rely on the contributions of its residents, even when that is only a small percentage of the local citizens who are involved. Local involvement can allow citizens to have control and influence how resources are used and directed.  

Congress allocated billions of dollars to ensure the continued well-being and development of communities. They use economic incentive programs, such as block grants and matching funds. The phrase “community development” and “planning” refer to process by which cities, towns and rural communities consciously shape the course of their physical and economic growth to improve their economic health and quality of lives within the community. Community development includes the strategies for improving the conditions within a community and a comprehensive scheme for the community’s future development.

Development takes place on every level of government and agencies must work closely with the organizations outside of government to make planning work. Federal government not only effects community development by distributing financial aid, they also can control by direct regulation. In the 1990's there were around 3,500 special government districts devoted to community development in the U.S. and most of them were on the local level. Typically in communities state or local governments grant the local planning commission the power to create a master plan to make proposals concerning the city’s growth. This is meant to direct how land will be used, utilities provided and where to build infrastructure such as schools and libraries. This planning often manifests in the form of guidelines for policy and municipal legislation. Often the planning commission gets approval of development to ensure that municipal construction follows the master plan.\textsuperscript{129}

The first settlers in America were Puritans, they were able to anticipate zoning restrictions and they required residence to be a certain distance from churches and town, typically one mile. Development and planning has a distinct and traceable history with many famous names and types of planning known to those studying the field. The New Deal programs of the 1930's gave the U.S. government an opportunity to set the stage for future federal aid programs and gave the government a more direct

\textsuperscript{129} "Administration of Urban Planning and Community and Rural Development." \textit{Highbeam Business, 2011}.
role in community planning and development. The New Deal encouraged people to migrate out of decaying urban areas so that they could be rebuilt. 130

Community development includes the strategies used to build local capacity and improve the quality of life in geographic communities. It is a promising approach for taking advantage of information and communication technology to further the goal of community development. An up and coming technology that assists in community development is Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS is a computer based tool for mapping and analyzing spatially referenced data. GIS can help planners to understand the spatial aspects of social and economic development. Lack of spatial information in rural and regional levels is a large problem for development practitioners, government officials and local planners. 131

Community development experts advocate comprehensive approaches to address the problems of distressed neighborhoods because of complex, interrelated problems. Comprehensive approaches enhance the chances of improving conditions in distressed neighborhoods because these problems are complex and interrelated. Comprehensive approaches are more viable now because community organizations have gained experience and infrastructure has evolved to provide funding and technical assistance. However, it is important to keep in mind that conditions in

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131 Ibid.
distressed areas cannot be quickly reversed and that the outcome is hard to qualify making evaluation difficult. 132

In 1965 when President Johnson signed the Appalachian Regional Development Act it established the ARC and also Local Development Districts, which were created to strengthen the local participation in the partnership. LDDs are organizations that are meant to help counties share information, address common concerns and develop regional responses to critical issues. LDDs are supposed to act in accord with the Commissions goals and directives. They should perform a wide range of area wide planning, program coordination. They should assist local governments in the provision of local services and promote activity that encourages a public/private partnership at the local level for development and strengthening of the local economy. 133

The Appalachian Regional Commission’s programs are divided into two areas: a highway program focusing on the construction of 3, 025 miles of highways in the region and a community and human development program seeking local economic growth. An integral part of the ARC’s mission is to build partnerships and create alliances for regional collaboration among the 410 counties the ARC serves. Economically distressed counties make up one-fourth of the 410 Appalachian counties. The ARC provides support for the 72 local development districts. ARC

133 Suzanne Slusser, and Denise McLaud. "What is the LDD Network." (NEPA) 2011: 1-2
funds must be used for only projects in the region, all grants must be requested from the states and approved initially by the state’s governor. ARC program grants can be requested by local agencies or government bodies and nonprofits but not to individuals or private for-profit corporations. 134

According to the Appalachian Regional Commission, Local Development Districts

"...ensure that funds are used efficiently and effectively, and to strengthen local participation, ARC works with the Appalachian states to support a network of multicounty planning and development organizations, or local development districts (LDDs), throughout the Region. The 72 LDDs cover all 410 counties in Appalachia.

The LDDs’ most important role is to identify priority needs of local communities. Based on these needs, the LDDs work with their board members and other local communities. Based on these needs, the LDDs work with their board members and other local citizens to develop plans for their communities’ economic development, to target and meet the most pressing needs, and to build community unity and leadership." 135

These multi-county Local Development Districts administer the U.S. Department of Labor’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, while others are

a part of the workforce issues that are a part of the comprehensive economic
development strategies. Each LDD acknowledges that the workforce is among the
more important issues Appalachians face. LDDs work towards beginning public,
private and educational sector leadership together to cultivate a workforce that is
highly motivated, prepared and trained. Workforce development is dependent on the
local districts needs as an important aspect of Appalachia's future economic
development. Workforce development ranges from initiatives focusing on program
administration, fiscal management and accountability, regional convener and strategic
partnership for education. 136

Transportation is important to the Appalachian Region and its development.
Adequate transportation infrastructure is fundamental to communities hoping to gain
private investment and to increase economic potential for the region. LDDs are able
to develop partnerships and funding resources to ensure that transportation projects
are prioritized in regions. LDDs enlist the ARC and other federal, state and local
partners to met transportation goals that would otherwise be unlikely. 137

The concept of the Area Development District originated in Kentucky in the
early 1960's and eventually became the model for the 1965 ARDA legislation format
for LDDs. The ADD mission is to bring local civic and governmental leaders together
to accomplish major objectives and take advantage of opportunities which are not

136 "Local Development Districts: Linking Workforce and Economic Development."
137 Ibid.
within reach of governments acting alone. ADDs are meant to coordinate Federal-State partnerships for improvements of quality of life in the Commonwealth. The ADD network has operated for almost forty decades, so they have a long established system that works well within the state of Kentucky and they act as the LDDs within the state for the ARC. 138

ADDs serve as forums, clearinghouses, technical centers and conveners for the region and have both federal and state statutory authority. ADDs in Kentucky are divided into 15 districts and cover 120 counties. ADDs provide systematic linkages between local leadership, Governor’s office, state and federal agencies and private organizations.139 They were designed to serve as locally-focused sub-state districts directed by elected officials from the local service region and regardless of funding sources they are meant to act on behalf of the region. ADDs always have a local perspective when taking action.140

The ADD network is responsible for a wide selection of programs which serve the local government, contractually with federal, state and local governments but also as a delivery system for various activities. The programs fall under many arenas: community and economic development, health and human services, public management and administration and technological support. ADDs offer over 75 programs that are meant to support local government; many of these were

139 Ibid.
140 Ibid.
recommended by the ADDs themselves. These programs have direct impact on the regions quality of life.\footnote{Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts. "When you talk to us, you talk to all of Kentucky". 2009. http://kcadd.org/Support.html (accessed January 31, 2011).}

Community Development is clearly important in improving conditions within the Appalachian Region. The Local Development Districts and Area Development Districts are key in the success of the distribution of local funds and they serve as advocates for the local regions they serve. These local points of organization keep the interest of the local areas from being lost in the bigger picture and also allow the ARC to serve a large region without neglecting certain areas in the process. They are important for the management of local areas and work very close with municipal governments to keep decisions on track with strategic planning efforts and keep the progress in the area in line with those plans.

Peggy Satterly is the ARC Program Manager Department for Local Government, located in Frankfort, KY. When I interviewed her we established that we would focus on the Appalachian Kentucky and its relationship with the ARC. Much of the information we discussed will not be released until the upcoming 2011-2016 Strategic plan.

According to Ms. Satterly the biggest challenge the Commission faces in this decade is that Kentucky has the largest number of distressed counties under the ARC
guidelines (42 out of 54 counties). This creates the greatest challenge for our section of the region with the lowest per capita income and lowest number of job opportunities in all of the Appalachian Region. She believes that the ARC and Kentucky have met some of their developmental goals. She says there is still a need to improve in all of these areas (maybe least of all in highway development).

Kentucky isolation has been reduced and increased job opportunities and per capita income have been addressed in Appalachia in an attempt to reach parity with the rest of the nation. She said that stimulus money is still in the works- a great deal of it has been obligated already but to no specific projects. Infrastructure (health care, education) all should eventually contribute to the creation of jobs. Those have to happen to accomplish this goal. We still need to work hard to be capable of this.

The strengthening of the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy is limited by the health care and education disparity which exists. The Development and improvement of Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive has been the area Kentucky has made significant progress in. They have increased the number of important roads, water/sewer systems and housing within the region. Broadband expansion is still in the development process but it lags behind that of the rest of the nation. With housing the Kentucky ARC counties invest a lot in Kentucky. Some states do not support it at all with their

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142 Peggy Satterly, interview by Stephanie C. Pollitt. Appalachian Regional Commission (November 17, 2010).
portion of ARC funds. Appalachian Kentucky has spent $500,000 per year on average for the last 10 years on housing.

Kentucky has made a lot of progress with its infrastructure. Community development block grants, Environmental Protection Agency waste and drinking water grants and stimulus are used in conjunction with ARC funding within the region to meet infrastructure needs. Building the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation has been successful. Kentucky has made as much progress as any state in the Appalachian Region in this area, road systems have become the least of our problems. There are a few miles left to finish but they are costly miles.

Central Appalachia is the furthest behind in the areas of job opportunities and per capita income within the region and to become up to par with the rest of the nation, strengthened capacity of the of the people to compete globally, and improvement of the infrastructure within the region. For the job and per capita gap to begin being closed agencies need to work more on creation and expansion of small business jobs. Peggy Satterly talked about the “Governors Kentucky Export Initiative” which is supposed to launch more global export trade. An eight million dollar ARC grant has been given to help ARC region and then rest of the state. Appalachia needs to compete to make progress. She said that the governor has said that Appalachia has seen clean progress but the majority of the population does not enjoy the same economic vitality as the rest of the nation. There are disparities within Appalachia
(with poverty, education, high disease rates, alcoholism, outmigration and substance abuse—particularly within Central Appalachia), economic distress and unemployment rates which are high. She said that challenges still exist in the whole region. The quality of life is an issue with job creation, health and education.

The ARC cannot provide funding to for-profit entities so they also provide loan opportunities as a source of assistance. These industries often help build the region and its infrastructure. For example, Ms. Satterly said that there is a company which uses house boat factories to build Appalachian housing that is energy efficient. 143

There is a debate about the creation of Appalachia versus an evolution over time into what it is today. I asked does the ARC consider Appalachia a region created by man after the Civil war in literature or do you feel it exists geographically and historically as a distinct place? Why does the agency view it this way? She said that personally she thinks that geographically and historically Appalachia exists as a distinct place. She said the answer might change depending on who you ask. She says that she was stumped by this question at first because she knows it is a distinct place with its own qualities, assets, and that it is geographically distinct from surrounding regions; its mountains, tourist activities, and coal industry are unique to the region. She sees it as a chicken and the egg debate.

143 Peggy Satterly, interview by Stephanie C. Pollitt. Appalachian Regional Commission (November 17, 2010).
The terminology differs when talking about the multi-county entities that administer ARC aid and programs and I wanted to know if it was solely in name they diverged. I asked Peggy what relationship the ARC has with Area Development Districts and Local Development Districts and if there is a difference between the relationships of ADDs vs. LDDs. She said that the LDDs are a collective term ARC uses but in states a lot of LDDs have other names. Mississippi has many LDDs, Tennessee has fewer. They vary by state and number of counties within that state. They all have the same mission and function. She mentioned that they have a governing body made up of the directors of the LDDs. Local Development Districts are local elements of the ARC development system. LDDS make the legislation work. Ms. Satterly said that the stool that ARC's success rests on has three legs: federal, state and local. All three are needed for it to stand. 144

Peggy Satterly feels that the ARC would not be as successful without the LDDS/ADDS involvement. Without the local element of partnership it would not be successful at all. Representation of local governments, minorities, business, education, and health care meet criteria to get funding for boards essential elements. These elements could not operate without this partnership/three elements of the ARC. The largest benefit of the connection you have with LDDs and ADDs is local involvement; if any locals do not buy into the programs then progress would not be

144 Peggy Satterly, interview by Stephanie C. Pollitt. Appalachian Regional Commission (November 17, 2010).
made. Set-asides try to build local capacity and leadership in local elements to make progress based on this foundation. It varies by state and by district but all of the development districts include representatives of the local governments. In Kentucky, half of the board members made up of local elected officials, judge executives, mayors, 1-3 class cities, and representatives of the rest of them.¹⁴⁵

Development and implementation requires community driven development and this makes money a huge difference and gets a lot of people involved in different areas. Most development and encouragement plans make the local elements essentially. If you do not work on basic health and education then the region will never progress. Ms. Satterly said that education and information for the local population helps them to benefit from these services. For example, dental, and health care practices.

The ARC program administrators’ effectiveness vary by LDD but wouldn’t work without application processes, planning and implementation get funding set aside since ARC creation formulation goes to ADDs. Ms. Satterly states that the Gateway district is one of the smallest and that they work hard. She said that Gail Wright and her staff work very hard to make their limited funding work for them and their small number of counties.

¹⁴⁵ Peggy Satterly, interview by Stephanie C. Pollitt. Appalachian Regional Commission (November 17, 2010).
When I interviewed the Director of the ADD, Gail Wright which serves Rowan County, in the Gateway ADD I found out more information about the system of ADDs/LDDs. The Gateway Area Development District was established in May 1969. When asked about the governance system of the Gateway ADD she said that the Statute designated the system, the board of directors (Every County Judge Executive and every Mayor of the County Seat). The also have citizen members who are nominated by the Mayor and Judge from each county. We have ex-officio members which consist of the remainder mayors of small towns in the region, the state legislators in the region and President of the University. It is not a state or federally chartered corporation. Gail said that ADDs have a lot of flexibility because we are not federal or state entities and are considered quasi-governmental.

Their goals are to provide jobs for our citizens and improve the quality of life in our region. Their biggest accomplishment thus far has been that they have touched every aspect in our communities and contributed to the success in most communities. One accomplishment that could be considered greatest would be underscore. She feels they have been able to make a significant impact on their service region in many ways. Their services range from providing services to the elderly, to assisting businesses with applications and locations into our region, to working with infrastructure projects. ADDs write grants and administer grants for local communities. Basically we assist the local communities and elected officials with anything they need. They provide services to the private sector through business
development. The Gateway ADD crosses lines and works on projects all the time with other ADDs, when it is feasible. Ms. Wright said that, “the GADD have a good partnership with ARC and they provide some of our core funding”. 146

I asked Ms. Wright about the relationship between the ARC and the GADD based on funding, Gail said that the Appalachian Regional Commission provides many types of grants to the ADDs (i.e. Matching Grants, Block Grants, Program-Related Investments) Gail said that, they receive $50,000 for core staffing, under the local development planning dollars. Ms. Wright said that the GADD receive money from EDA, ARC, and Transportation Planning. Federal, State and Local funds and subcontractors are linked through administration of grants. All of the funds that the GADD receives are restricted. She did not think that the GADD could function as well without the funding from the ARC and that they still need more money. The GADD works with too many private sector parties on projects to list. They have lots of participation from our local communities.147

Community Development has progressed since it was first introduced as a global concept in the 1960’s and the American concept of development has grown out of Presidential efforts to improve the U.S. regions, including the efforts focused on alleviating the problems within the Appalachian Region. The ARC focuses its efforts on local development in communities through the help of LDDs which are located in

146 Gail Wright, interview by Stephanie C. Pollitt. Area Development District (November 11, 2010).
147 Ibid.
all 13 states of Appalachia and are the catalyst through which funds are distributed within the region. Within Kentucky the LDDs are known as Area Development Districts and they work very close with the ARC and other ADDs to accomplish their goals. The efforts of the ARC and ADDs have lead to community development within the region and within Kentucky. It is apparent that the highway system is where ARC efforts have shown the most development. That is the most tangible evidence of the ARCs success. Other goals are harder to measure and show success because they are not always accompanied with tangible physical results. It is clear to see however that the ARC and LDDs/ADDs are working towards community development of the Appalachian Region and those sub-regions within the greater region. They are acting in a way that they believe will create a change to better the region and all of its smaller communities that make up the whole.

**Conclusions**

The issues that exist within Appalachia are a mixture of the geography of the region, its history, and the lasting impact of dependency on those outside of the region. The Appalachian regions’ lag behind the rest of the nation created the need for a catalyst of development. The result today is a complex government agency that contributes to many ventures, and spearheads programs with other public and private organizations. The funds they have access to and the flexibility they are afforded allow them a larger degree of success than other regional planning organizations of the past, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority.
It is important to understand that Appalachia is a distinct region and the role it holds in the nation; the majority of scholars portray the region as a recent development-most believe it was created post-Civil War and that the region does not share a long history or culture. This is not true, Appalachia, named long ago by explorers had been inhabited by native people long before it was “discovered” by Europeans. The Natives, even then, were not completely isolated because despite its geography, the region has never been completely closed off. The geography of the mountains themselves do separate the region from the rest of the nation and if you look at a map of the area you can see how the region follows along the mountains ranges. This does provide some degree of isolation, especially pre-road systems.

The ARC was created based on a need for development in the Appalachia. The need for the some aid is evident when you look at the challenges it faces: isolation, economic dependency (modern colonialism involving the extractive industries), and low levels of educational attainment (brain drain that persists when persons do receive education they leave). The ARC is the answer to that need for the region. The governors who had pockets of Appalachia in their states decided in the 1960’s to push for legislation, making a combined effort to help the areas of their state that are a part of Appalachia. This led to the creation of the commission, to increase job opportunities, reduce isolation and per capita income in Appalachia. The major goal was to reach parity with the rest of the nation.
The Commission has made some type of progress within each one of its distinct charges, but they have all experienced varying degrees of success. The Commission's work has definitely had an impact on the region but it is unknown what the full impact has been. For example, the ARC was charged with building the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation. The ARC has successfully built 3,035 miles of roads in the Appalachian Region. This road serves to connect the region within but also to provide a more adequate connection to the outside, reducing isolation, which brings industry in but also makes it easier to take resources out of the region or for people with higher education and skill levels to leave. This creates a mixed result. While the ARC had planned to develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the region more economically competitive and reduce isolation the connectivity made the region inadvertently more susceptible to the exploitation of outsiders.

There has been a creation of other infrastructure in the region, such as education and health facilities that have benefited the region by providing better education and healthcare for Appalachians. These are services that Appalachia did not have and may not have had if the ARC had not been established. The easiest of the charges (four charges ARC was given when created) to measure any degree of success in are the ones that involve the physical creation of structures and roadways, these results are easier to see, and for many seeing is believing.
The real issue can sometimes be distorted when you look at Appalachian development and that can become a blockade to progress. Stereotypes are prevalent in writings about the region. The perception of the Appalachian Region is very negative and the basis for this lies within the literature regarding the region. In literature and media the people are depicted as ignorant, violent backwards and other terms that make the people of the region seem uncivilized. These depictions were a creation of colorist who “created” the region after the Civil War in writing and those labels persist through current portrayal by the media of Appalachia in a negative light. This negative viewpoint is considered more exciting and intriguing to the public at large.

My research has shown that the stereotypes about the region are credited as the reason for the regions lack of development, or backwardness. The stereotypes accredited to the problems of the region are not the only reasons behind the regions issues. Dealing with the true underlying issues of the region could have an impact on creating sustainable development within the region and benefiting the people. It is important to fight stereotypes; the misconceived root of disparity in the Appalachian Region, so that the real underlying issues can be addressed. A large amount of criticism is directed towards the void the ARC’s effort leaves open by not directing more programs and research toward the betterment of the Appalachian people and sources of stereotyping of Appalachians. They do not make any prescriptions on what can be done to move away from and dispel the negative aura surrounding the region and its people. They focus more on the development of the infrastructure within the
region and not the people. This is not to say that they do not have any programs that are meant to directly better the people through education or training, such as Vocational Schools but that they do not address the stereotypes directly, which would be a momentous challenge in of itself.

The Appalachian populations are some of the poorest and most uneducated in the country, but this does not mean that they live up to the stereotypes that outsiders thrust upon them. In fact, if you look at the truths behind some of these suppositions you will find that they have been blurred and twisted by outsiders. The McCoy and Hatfield families did do horrible things, but there was also a use of the legal system at the beginning of the feud, but when rulings were found unsatisfactory other means of settling the score were sought. It also must be noted that they were an exception and not a rule when it came to feuding. This is just one of the past events that has leant itself to the violent stereotypes painting the view of the region and masking the real issues that need to be dealt with in order to seek progress.

Despite all of the challenges present in the development of the Appalachian Region I believe that the ARC has been doing all it is capable and is still making efforts to bring the Region up to par with the rest of the United States. Development of the region is not something that can happen overnight or in fifty years, it will take an unknown amount of time, if it ever is to happen. The Appalachian Regional Commission has made progress in some areas, but as other areas it could go much further. I do not think they should be considered a success story, but as a work in
progress. They rely on inside and outside help currently to make that progress happen.

The ARC keeps the counties and cities in focus through Local Development Districts or Area Development Districts as we call them in Kentucky, the multi-county organizations that focus on the local areas' development. The LDDs take the pressure off the ARC to focus on small scale development, freeing them up to attend to the region as a whole. As Ms. Satterly said in the interview, this is a three legged stool: the federal, state and local levels working together to facilitate development in the region.

The Appalachian Regional Commission is the organizing point for the region, coordinating and often funding or co-funding efforts to develop the region. It has helped the region in various ways, the one that has been the most noticeable and subsequently a measurable successful has been road development. It is hard to determine success in some areas when considering the natural progression of modernity and society. The development that they have been responsible for, however, has been seamless. The ARC has made its contribution from the shadows. It is hard to see from an outside perspective without study what they are responsible for. They do not openly and widely broadcast their efforts. This might hurt their reputation as an agency. Development should be seamless and those responsible for that development should not continuously have to communicate to outsiders what you
are responsible for but instead be concentrating on the actions they are taking to assist in that development.
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