

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN APPALACHIA: ADDRESSING REGIONAL CHALLENGES

FSU Appalachian Festival Symposium

NOON- 4:00 PM Under the big tent on the FSU's Upper Quad

NOON – The Music of Coal Country with singer-songwriter Jay Smar

Complete with two guitars, baritone vocals, clawhammer banjo and fiddling, singing and flat footin', Jay Smar serves his audience an "acoustic buffet" of traditional American and original folk, old-time mountain music, bluegrass and gospel. His work has been recognized by a 2009 Pennsylvania House of Representatives Recognition Award.

1:00 PM Labor Unrest, Social Justice, and Folk Music in Appalachia: The Great Depression Years- Dr. Greg Wood
This presentation examines how depression-era labor militancy and struggles with poverty in the region of Appalachia gave rise to the folk music of Sarah Ogan Gunning. In addition to a lecture that establishes the broad political and social context, the talk will feature a short documentary film about Gunning's work.

1:30 PM

In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower: Neighborhood Relations in a College Town - Dr. Kathleen Powell

Dr. Powell presents aspects of a year-long ethnographic study of the campus-adjacent neighborhood in Frostburg envisioning our college town as the "new company town."

2:00 PM The Mountainside Movement: Promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution in Western Maryland

-Jerilyn Jackson and Dr. Elesha Ruminski

Interactive session about alternative dispute resolution approaches available through the Mountainside Community Mediation Center, which serves Allegany and Garrett Counties, and the Sustaining Campus and Community Dialogue Series, which is helping promote safety and civility in Frostburg. Both initiatives are funded by the Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office. Those who would like to learn about or participate in the local "movement" promoting nonviolence are encouraged to join the conversation.

2:30 PM Appalachian Prison Book Project- Dr. Katy Ryan

Founded in 2004 by West Virginia University Associate Professor of English Katy Ryan, The Appalachian Prison Book Project has helped provide education and promote literacy to inmates throughout the Appalachian region. Prisoners from West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee request a variety of literature by letter.

3:00 PM An Aggrieved Appalachia: Community Activists Take On the Energy Industry- Dr. Kara Rogers Thomas
From Mountain Top Removal to Natural Gas Drilling, a growing number of Appalachian residents believe their region is under assault by the nation's energy industry. Despite the proliferation of digital media in community organizing, traditional folkloric elements including song, narrative, and symbol remain a vital component of community action movements. Featuring regional coalitions and localized grass roots organizations, this presentation examines the role such discourse plays in forming public opinion and prompting residents to take action.

3:30 Media and Social Justice—Appalshop Case Studies- Dr. Melissa Boehm

The media organization, Appalshop, focuses its efforts on giving voice to the people of Appalachia to tell their own stories. Mostly relying on the mediums of film and radio, Appalshop serves as an example of using media for positive social change. This session will provide an overview of how Appalshop, for over 40 years, has used media to poignantly tell the complex stories of people who live in Appalachia. In doing so, the organization provides space for people to challenge stereotypes, raise awareness about inequality, and empower individuals to fight for social justice.