

Freshman Seminar 1020
Appalachia on Film
Fall 2003

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Mondays, 9th & 10th periods
Wednesdays, 9th period
Classroom: LeConte 101, 201

This course will serve as a brief introduction to issues related Southern Appalachian history and how Appalachian people have been perceived in American popular culture, in particular, through that most pervasive and influential of media – Hollywood films. We will view the seven films listed below (in historical order, not the order in which they were produced) on the Monday afternoons indicated, and meet on the following Wednesday afternoons to discuss them. Because this is to be only a one-hour course, we will compensate for the extra time we're putting in these seven weeks by only meeting the first half of the semester.

Assigned readings will be limited to a single novel: James Dickey's *Deliverance*, which we'll read, discuss and write about in comparing the book and film versions.

Another book, J.W. Williamson's *Hillbillyland: What the Movies Did to the Mountains, and What the Mountains Did to the Movies*, will be put on reserve at the main library, for optional reference throughout the course.

Films	Film Showing Mon. 4:40-6:40 PM LeConte 101	Discussion Wed., 4:40-5:30 PM LeConte 201
<i>The Journey of August King</i>	Aug. 25	Aug. 27
<i>Matewan</i>	Sept. 8	Sept. 10
<i>Songcatcher</i>	Sept. 15	Sept. 17
<i>Sergeant York</i>	Sept. 22	Sept. 24
<i>The Dollmaker</i>	Sept. 29	Oct. 1
<i>Deliverance</i>	Oct. 6	Oct. 8
<i>Foxfire</i>	Oct. 13	Oct. 15

We may reconvene for one final meeting at the end of the semester if the film version of *Cold Mountain* comes out in time.

(over)

Each student will write a 2 to 3-page review (typed, double-spaced) of each film (except *Deliverance*) to be turned in *before* the Wednesday discussion of that film. The review should critically examine what each film reveals about the Appalachian experience -- both in reality and in stereotype or myth. The review should critically examine the issues laid out below:

1. What tone does the movie take toward Appalachian life? (degrading, contemptuous, satiric, reverential, etc.)
2. How do the characters in the movie come across? (heroic? noble? villainous? comical? pitiful? etc.)
3. What techniques are used to convey these characteristics? Are they persuasive?
4. What impact would the movie likely have on how American filmgoers view Appalachia?
5. How does the movie reflect its time and attitudes of the time in which it was made?

For *Deliverance*, the paper should be a comparison of the book and the film.

This course will be graded on a traditional A-F scale. The grade will be based on a combination of papers and class discussion. Regular attendance is important, and will be a factor in grading. There will be no exam.