

Appalachian Curator

Volume 1, Issue 1, Spring/Summer 2019



The *Appalachian Curator* is a publication of the
Special Collections Committee of the
Appalachian Studies Association

Volume 1, Issue 1, Spring/Summer 2019

The *Appalachian Curator* is a newsletter by and about special collections and archives that collect primary and secondary materials related to the Appalachian mountains. Our intended audience is scholars, students, researchers, archivists, librarians, and anyone else with an interest in resources that document Appalachia.

The *Appalachian Curator* is a publication of the Special Collections Committee of the Appalachian Studies Association. It is a free, online newsletter published triannually (Spring/Summer, Fall, and Winter) and hosted at the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

We welcome questions, comments, ideas for articles, news about Appalachian repositories, updates on new acquisitions, and anything related to Appalachian resources.

Editorial board

Gene Hyde, Editor

Liz Skene, Assistant Editor

Marc Brodsky

Stewart Plein

Dustin Witsman

Ramsey Library

University of North Carolina Asheville

8504, 1 University Heights

Asheville, NC 28804

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Cover photo: Swinging bridge, The Little Pigeon River, Edgar Purdom (1900-1987), Hunter Library Special Collections, Western Carolina University

Editor's Column

Gene Hyde, University of North Carolina Asheville

In 1966, West Virginia University librarian Robert F. Munn noted that a researcher wanting to write about Appalachia would discover “distressingly little in the way of useful primary and secondary material” about the region.¹ Munn’s observations were later echoed by Appalachian scholars Cratis Williams and Ronald Eller. Lack of archival resources was a problem, and scholars were concerned.

Over the decades since Munn identified this problem, archivists and librarians throughout Appalachia have worked to identify, collect, arrange, describe, and make available primary resources about the region. Researchers have dug into these collections, producing a significant body of Appalachian scholarship in the process.

In my work as an Appalachian archivist, I’ve met many other archivists who are working to document Appalachia. Archives are scattered throughout these mountains, located in large universities, smaller colleges, public libraries, museums, local history and genealogy societies, church historical agencies, and other places. As archivists working in the region, we share common goals, struggle with similar challenges, and often work independently — and sometimes collaboratively — to gather the documents, photographs, oral histories, and other materials that tell Appalachia’s rich and diverse history.

Which brings us to the inaugural issue of the *Appalachian Curator*, a new newsletter published by the newly formed Special Collections Committee at ASA. Our intended audience is both the Appalachian archival community and the larger Appalachian Studies community. Our goal is to use the *Appalachian Curator* as a forum to share new resources, highlight repositories and individual collections, explore a bit of Appalachian archival history, examine the role of bibliography in Appalachian Studies, discuss and explore digitization and digital collections, promote and highlight upcoming

exhibits and displays, and generally share information about what we have in our collections and what we do as Appalachian archivists.

This inaugural issue includes sections that will be regular features in the *Appalachian Curator*.

- Each issue will highlight a collection/repository, and we start off with a history of Appalachian State University's W. L. Eury Collection, written by Trevor McKenzie of ASU.
- We'll also include articles on Appalachian archival and bibliographic history, such as Stewart Plein's article on the Appalachian Bibliography at WVU and Dustin Witsman's article on the original *Curator* newsletter — the inspiration for the new *Appalachian Curator*.
- Another regular feature will be on the craft and practice of archival work, and Marc Brodsky starts this off with a fine essay on teaching with primary sources.
- The newsletter will also include a list of recent acquisitions in Appalachian archival collections, and this issue features new materials at ten different repositories.
- We'll also feature events and exhibits. This issue has a brief article about an exhibit of Appalachian archives in Western North Carolina displayed at UNC Asheville during the 2019 Appalachian Studies Conference.
- Future issues will include news and updates about the ASA Special Collections Committee

Call for articles, new acquisitions, exhibits and events

While this issue was largely written by the *Appalachian Curator* editorial staff, we are actively seeking articles by other archivists, librarians, and Appalachian researchers. We are looking for stories and articles about anything related to Appalachian archives — things you want to share with the Appalachian Studies community. Possible story ideas include:

- community archiving projects
- digitization projects
- histories and profiles of archival repositories
- profiles of archivists and donors
- descriptions of collections
- articles on the craft and practice of archival work
- lists of new acquisitions
- upcoming workshops or training opportunities

- upcoming or current exhibits and events
- news about grants or collaborations
- or anything else related to Appalachian archives

Have an idea? Please contact the editors – Gene Hyde ghyde@unca.edu or Liz Skene emskene@wcu.edu. Our next issue will be published in September, with a copy deadline of August 1.

We want this to be your newsletter, and hope that you will consider contributing to it. We look forward to hearing from you!

ⁱ Munn, Robert F. "Research Materials on the Appalachian Region." *Mountain Life & Work* 42, no. 2 (Summer 1966), 13.

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History of the *Curator*, 1996-2002

Dustin Witsman, Appalachian State University

The *Appalachian Curator* takes its inspiration from, and pays homage to, *The Curator*, a print newsletter published by members of the Regional Collections Committee of the Appalachian Consortium from 1996-2002. The original iteration of *The Curator* was geared toward what are now commonly referred to as “Lone Arrangers” – archivists working as the sole custodian of a repository’s collections materials – stationed in various cultural heritage institutions entrusted with overseeing the preservation and care of Appalachian-related collections. The newsletter worked to help archivists at small Appalachian archives to “feel a part of the overall professional archival community.”

A typical issue of *The Curator* featured a calendar of events, an archival Q & A column written by then University of Tennessee at Knoxville archivist Jim Lloyd, lists of preservation professionals, lists and reviews of relevant books published at the time, conference updates, collection showcases, and updates and conversations regarding archival theory and practice.

Though somewhat outdated in much of its pre-digital era discussion, *The Curator* offered up interesting case studies as well as fundamental archival advice which still

provides sound guidance to its readers. For example: “A wise curator also designs the simplest and most flexible system possible, knowing that an elaborate set of forms and



The Curator - Spring 1997

procedures can easily become an end in itself rather than a tool for making research resources easily available...” (Ellen Garrison, Volume 1, Number 1, p3).

The new *Appalachian Curator* seeks to continue, and update, the legacy began by *The Curator*. The new iteration is published by the Appalachian Studies Association’s newly-formed Special Collections Committee. We hope to provide helpful, up-to-date information on the work being done in the field of Appalachian archives.

*Dustin Witsman is a Processing Archivist at Appalachian State University
witsmands@appstate.edu.*

The *Appalachian Bibliography* at West Virginia University: A History

Stewart Plein, West Virginia University

“The current revival of interest in the Southern Appalachians differs from previous ones in at least two important respects. It is centered largely in the universities, and those conducting the studies are trained in research. Equally important, there is a general recognition that both sustained and well-coordinated efforts are required.”ⁱ

The history of the *Appalachian Bibliography* is both expansive and profound, and it rests on the shoulders of librarians who worked decade after decade to identify and compile the richness of the region in research, geography, foodways and folklore, travel and natural history, biography, memoir, and genealogy, as well as many other topics. As a research tool it has moved and grown through the changing methods and subjects of study and survived the many revolutions in modern library practices.

It all began with Robert F. Munn, an unsung figure in the study of Appalachia. His book, *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies*, published in 1961, along with the *Appalachian Outlook*ⁱⁱ, a quarterly index of Appalachian topics, became the foundation for today’s online version of the Appalachian Bibliography. Both Munn’s work on the *Southern Appalachians*, and the periodical *Appalachian Outlook*, were published by the West Virginia University Library.

A pioneer librarian and Appalachian scholar, Munn sought to understand the region and make it understandable to others through a series of bibliographies. His first, *Index to West Virginiana*, was published in 1960. *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies* followed the next year. The 1970’s saw Munn continue to produce important bibliographies with the publication of his work, *Strip Mining: An Annotated Bibliography*, and finally, *The Coal Industry in America: A Bibliography and*

Guide to Studies. Each bibliography was based on a special book collection designed to illuminate these topics developed by Munn for the WVU Library. Here was a man who saw what was happening around him and worked to collect, compile, and create the documentation in order to make it available to readers and researchers through his collections and publications.

In his introduction to *The Southern Appalachians*, Munn drew on his own article,



Robert F. Munn

“The Latest Rediscovery of Appalachia,” published in the journal, *Mountain Life and Work*,ⁱⁱⁱ and from there he contributed to the interest and study of Appalachia. In both of these pieces Munn discusses what he calls the “rediscovery of Appalachia,” as an event that resuscitates the region and its people into the American consciousness, recurring approximately every 30 years.

Munn gives a glimpse of these cyclic resurgences, beginning with the rise of local color literature, in the magazines and books that appeared at the turn of the twentieth century. A literature of both

fiction, non-fiction, and sometimes a combination of the two^{iv} that developed, enforced and cemented the stereotypes of Appalachia that are still with us today. In this, the first in a line of re-evaluations, Munn calls out Charles Gooddell Frost’s^v description of Appalachia as the “mountainous backyards of nine states,” and the brief but intense popularity of local color literature by the likes of John Fox, Jr. and Mary Noailles Murphree, writing as Charles Egbert Craddock, among others “who popularized stereotypes from the rugged mountaineer and mountain maid, to the barefoot hillbilly, and the feuding Hatfields and McCoys.”^{vi}

The next wave of interest in Munn’s thirty year cycles hails from the Depression era, with the rise of a variety of government sponsored work projects such as the CCC,

and the WPA. These work projects, an outgrowth of the preceding Progressive Era, were efforts to support, advertise, popularize, and enhance travel through the region and its newly created parks; Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway, among others. Though the work to develop these parks displaced residents whose families had lived on their land for decades or even centuries, these parks remain today as a reminder of the beauty and natural diversity of the region.

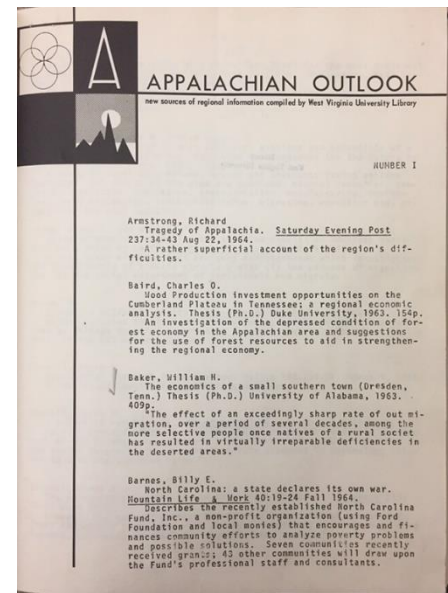
Munn found himself living in what he termed the third thirty year resurgence. This was the 1960s' society as a state of flux that saw the rise of the civil rights era, space exploration, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and a focus on Appalachian poverty as revealed by Harry Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, that aimed to erase poverty by making it front and center on the television sets of American citizens across the country. Each of these periods of renewed interest in Appalachia and its people are represented in the *Appalachian Bibliography*.

The West Virginia University *Appalachian Bibliography* is not alone in its attempts to collect the publications, recorded music, recipes and natural history of the region and its people. Before and after this effort, other bibliographies took on the long process of searching for information, compiling data, and aggregating the results in bibliographies, each one limited in time and scope, but each one continuing the important task of recognizing and publishing the various works, as they interpret our Appalachia. Notable among these are Lorise C. Boger's *The Southern Mountaineer in Literature: An Annotated Bibliography* (1964), Charlotte Ross's *Bibliography of Southern Appalachia* (1976), Marie Tedesco's *Selected Bibliography* (2007), and John R. Burch, Jr.'s *The Bibliography of Appalachia* (2009).

The first iteration of the WVU Library's bibliography was a collaborative effort. The published indexes from the *Appalachian Outlook* quarterly and Munn's *The Southern Appalachians* bibliography were combined to form the initial *Appalachian Bibliography*, which was published in three volumes. A cadre of reference librarians searched records and compiled information for the *Appalachian Outlook*, first published by the WVU Libraries in October 1964.

The *Appalachian Outlook* placed an emphasis on the social sciences, education and government documents. Before the days of computer databases, standard library indexes were checked as were individual journal entries. The *Outlook* finally came to a close in 2002, and all of its issues cumulated in the *Appalachian Bibliography*, first in 1972, and updated in 1977 and 1980.

The life of the bibliography extended over a number of modern library practices. When computerization began to invade the traditional tasks of the library, it too left its mark on the *Appalachian Bibliography*. Carroll Wilkinson, University Librarian, was hired in 1979 for her first position at WVU as reference librarian and Appalachian bibliographer. At that time, the head of reference, Cliff Hamrick, created a paper form with a number of bibliographic fields along with space for annotations. Carroll Wilkinson's responsibility was to fill out the forms, checking the indexes and drafting the annotations. Ms. Wilkinson explained that collecting citations, reading the indexes and assigning subject headings were all part of the job.^{vii} Tools included extensive, homegrown authority files of subject headings and cross references.^{viii}



Appalachian Outlook, No. 1

The handwritten citations were typed on a keypunch machine that generated Hollerith cards,^{ix} an early computer punch card, which were then fed into IBM reader machines. From approximately 1964 to 1984 the information for the *Appalachian Outlook* was typed by assistant Marianne Courtney to create the cards. To accomplish this, she hand carried the prepared slips of citations to Stewart Hall, the university administration building, and hand punched the information into the keypunch machine located in the basement. It was an unforgiving task since any mistaken keystroke required rejecting that card and beginning again with a fresh one. Hollerith cards as well as a large green printout with holes punched on the sides could be produced from the keypunch machine. The printouts were bound^x and placed at the reference desk for public use.

The first program that processed the information was called WYLBUR, a text editor developed at Stanford University. WYLBUR was followed by ProCite^{xi}, a word processing software created in the 1980s. Finally the shift was made to Microsoft Word before the *Appalachian Bibliography* found its final home as an online accessible file.



Jo B. Brown

Ms. Jay Morgan-Bungard was the next person to fill the position of Appalachian bibliographer. She held this role from 1980 to approximately 1985. Librarian Jo Brown, the helmsman of the *modern Appalachian Bibliography*, joined the WVU Library in 1981. He began contributing to the bibliography and became editor in 1985. He described the process this way, “Our hybridized master list of subject headings, sub-headings, and cross references, written on 3×5 cards, (was) filed in several shoe boxes.”^{xii} Brown goes on to say that “Writing a descriptive but concise annotation was a valuable, honed skill, but so was the selection of up to five correct subject headings.”^{xiii} It was this information, “slip by slip, line by line,”^{xiv} that was keypunched onto the Hollerith cards for the *Appalachian Outlook*, “eventually culminating in a 1980 edition of approximately 8,000 entries. This

information, arranged under 175 topics and indexed by hundreds of subject headings, along with Munn's *Southern Appalachian Bibliography*, forms the foundation of the *Appalachian Bibliography* as we know it today.

In the early days, Munn chose not to index fiction^{xv} in his *Southern Appalachians* bibliography. When Jo Brown took on the bibliography as a solo project he began including fiction and dissertations. These two areas provided an important addition. Fiction traced a burgeoning field while dissertations revealed the work of emerging researchers, often on topics that are ignored or overlooked by mainstream scholars.

The *Appalachian Bibliography* found a new life and wider exposure for nineteen years (1994-2013) within the pages of the *Journal of Appalachian Studies*. As the bibliography grew in length, and took more and more of the space dedicated to articles and reviews, the journal opted to end its publication of its "Annual Bibliography" and the printed edition of each year's compilation came to an end. *The Appalachian Studies Bibliography*^{xvi} lives now as a free online resource available in two formats: PDF and HTML. This version of the bibliography is split into two timelines, 1994 – 2012, and the recently added, 2013-2016. Each of these online formats contains a wealth of topics arranged under twenty five subject headings.

Both of these outstanding librarians, Robert F. Munn and Jo B. Brown, have been recognized for their contributions to the scholarship on Appalachia and their dedication to the creation and sustained maintenance of the *Appalachian Bibliography*. At WVU the Robert F. Munn Library Scholars Award for the Humanities and Social Sciences^{xvii} is awarded each year to a graduating Honors student for outstanding research contributions in the humanities or social sciences that have culminated in the production of an exceptional thesis or capstone research paper. In addition, Dr. Munn was posthumously awarded WVU's highest award for service, the Order of Vandalia,^{xviii} the equivalent of a honorary degree.

In 2017, librarian Jo Brown was awarded the Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award^{xix} in recognition of his long service to Appalachian Studies and the *Appalachian Bibliography*.

At the present time, the future of the *Appalachian Bibliography* is undecided. Jo Brown's recent update to June 2016 is the last installment to the bibliography. Options are available to continue this work but it will require a dedicated team to pick up the thread.

As Dr. Munn anticipated, it appears that we have entered into a new resurgence of interest in Appalachia, given the current conversations regarding depictions of Appalachians and the region through books such as J.D. Vance's memoir, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*.^{xx} The reviews, commentary, and press that followed publication have reignited the old stereotypical stories and unleashed a passionate conversation on the subject that inspired published responses such as Elizabeth Catte's *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia*,^{xxi} and the newly released *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy*,^{xxii} edited by Anthony Harkins and Meredith McCarroll. In the midst of this discussion, the *Appalachian Bibliography* offers a wealth of resources to place this renewed interest in broader context and anticipate future interest in the region and its people.

In conclusion, as Dr. Munn states in the introduction to *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies*, "Comprehensiveness was the goal, and no effort was made at evaluation."^{xxiii}

This has to be. To allow the geographer, the passionate enthusiast, the scholar, the musician, the quilter, the digger of ginseng, the musician, and the miner to speak within the confines of the *Appalachian Bibliography*, is to allow the full portrait of the thinking on Appalachia, good, bad or otherwise, to be known, to be examined, recognized and understood, no matter the vantage point, as a way to understand our own region and its people. Taken all together, as the *Appalachian Bibliography* does so

successfully, it provides a full range of resources and invites everyone to read, and to study, the full and unadulterated history of our region.

Stewart Plein is Curator of Rare Books & Printed Resources at the West Virginia and Regional History Center at West Virginia University Libraries Stewart.Plein@mail.wvu.edu.

Photographs courtesy of West Virginia University

ⁱ Munn, Robert F. Introduction, *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Library, 1961, p.2.

ⁱⁱ *Appalachian Outlook: New Sources of Regional Information Compiled by West Virginia University Library*, was published by the West Virginia University Library, 1964 – 2002.

ⁱⁱⁱ Munn, Robert F. "The Latest Rediscovery of Appalachia," *Mountain Life and Work*, XLI (Fall 1965)

^{iv} The work of James Lane Allen and Ellen Churchill Semple come to mind. Both used fiction to inform their ideas and scholarship on Appalachia and refer to it in their work.

^v Frost, Charles Goodall. "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains." *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1899. Vol. 83.

^{vi} Jo Brown. Speech to Munn Scholar awardees, May 14, 2011. Unpublished.

^{vii} Conversation with Carroll Wilkinson.

^{viii} Brown's note to author.

^{ix} Wikipedia punch cards: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punched_card.

^x The lower cover had nylon pins that held the printout in place, another cover was placed on top and then secured.

^{xi} Wikipedia. ProCite: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ProCite>.

^{xii} Brown's notes to author.

^{xiii} Brown's notes to author.

^{xiv} Brown's notes to author.

^{xv} Jo Brown postulates the reason behind Munn's exclusion of fiction at the time was due to the publication of Lorise Boger's, *The Southern Mountaineer in Literature* bibliography, published by the WVU Library in 1964. Brown speculates that Munn may have thought that Boger would continue to compile and publish the literature bibliography.

^{xvi} *Appalachian Bibliography*: <https://wvrhc.lib.wvu.edu/collections/appalachian/bibliography/>.

^{xvii} Robert F. Munn Library Scholars Award for the Humanities and Social Sciences <https://www.honors.wvu.edu/academics/resources/munn-award>.

^{xviii} Order of Vandalia: <https://vandalia.wvu.edu/>.

^{xix} Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award: <http://appalachianstudies.org/awards/pastrecipients/>.

^{xx} Vance, J.D. *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*. New York, NY: Harper, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2016.

^{xxi} Catte, Elizabeth. *What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia*. Cleveland, OH: Belt Publishing, February 6, 2018

^{xxii} Harkins, Anthony, and Meredith McCarroll. *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy*. West Virginia University Press; 1st edition, February 13, 2019

^{xxiii} Munn, Robert. Introduction, *The Southern Appalachians: A Bibliography and Guide to Studies*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Library, 1961, p.2.

The W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection at Appalachian State University

Trevor McKenzie, Appalachian State University

The W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection at Appalachian State University recently celebrated half a century of collecting, cataloging, processing, and preserving materials on the Appalachian region. Although customary, it would hardly be appropriate to call this



Cratis William at the dedication of the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection, October 18, 1971.

(Photo courtesy of the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection.)

celebration a “golden anniversary.” Perhaps something more Appalachian should mark this milestone, something solid, like the “Amphibolite Anniversary”? Regardless of whatever metal or rock usually shines over these occasions, researchers worldwide know and appreciate the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection as a jewel unto itself.

The Eury Collection’s roots extend back to 1943 and to the collecting efforts of the premiere Appalachian scholar, Cratis Williams. Williams, although a recent arrival to the campus of Appalachian State Teachers College, was eager to construct a course entitled “Ballads and Songs.” In looking for materials on regional balladry and

mountain people within the library stacks, Williams found only a handful of volumes. To rectify this lack of Appalachian-focused materials, Williams, with the permission of Librarian W.L. Eury, began to seek out books on mountain life and folk songs. Williams redoubled his efforts in the 1950s, enlisting Acquisitions Librarian Zeb Shook to seek out and purchase books found in the Selected Bibliography of his dissertation, *The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction*. The books collected by Williams and Shook

for this seminal work in the field of Appalachian Studies formed the nucleus of what would grow into a vast collection.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the Collection remained small in size and scope, evolving through a number of name changes (including “The North Carolina Room”) before appearing in the 1968 Belk Library Handbook as “The Appalachian Room.” While taking a faculty spouse tour of the library, Charlotte Ross, a north Georgia native and wife of History professor (and later Chair of the Center for Appalachian Studies) Dr. Carl Ross, expressed interest in the room and its contents. The next year, Ross was appointed the first Collection Librarian and the “Appalachian Room” was gradually expanded to become the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection. At the Collection’s dedication on October 18, 1971, Cratis Williams spoke earnestly about the collection’s significance and its future:

In the early days of Appalachian State University the cultural tradition, handcrafts, and artifacts of the people served by the University were taken for granted. Educational programs were directed toward the orientation of the sons and daughters of the mountain farmers to a general American culture; and what lay immediately about them was largely ignored. In time, though, owing to the vision of such men as Dr. I. G. Greer, a native son and long-time instructor at the college, Dr. W. Amos Abrams, and the librarian, W. L. Eury, the institution became interested in building a collection of Appalachian materials for the use of students and scholars who desire to study the local history, culture, and social problems of the region. This collection, already one of the most important in the region, is destined to grow.



W. L. Eury and Charlotte Ross at the dedication of the Eury Appalachian Collection, Appalachian State University, October 18, 1971. (Photo courtesy of the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection.)

Williams' acknowledging of fellow faculty and ballad collectors, Greer and Eury, foreshadowed the donation of their ballad transcriptions and field recordings to the archives of the growing Collection. The Eury Collection's early strength in music materials was further augmented by such donations as the recordings of Beech Mountain, North Carolina folk toy and music entrepreneur Jack Guy, the diaries and song repertoire of Kentucky ballad singer Virgil Sturgill, and the ballad collection of the James York family of Wilkes County, North Carolina. The Appalachian Oral History Project, funded through the then newly-founded Appalachian Consortium, also provided audio materials to the collection as well as recording equipment for researchers and students engaged in collecting oral histories.

After Charlotte Ross moved to another position within the University, Margaret Vannoy served as Acting Collection Librarian from spring 1976 until February 1978. In June of that year, Eric Olson, a trained librarian who had previously worked as a cataloger at Western Carolina University, was hired as Collection Librarian. Olson, who also moonlighted as the banjo player with the Chapel Hill-based Fuzzy Mountain String Band, continued to find materials that further built on the Collection's strength in documenting regional music traditions. The Collection was very much a mobile entity during Olson's tenure, making several moves before eventually settling into the second floor of University Hall, a building located a mile from Appalachian State University's campus, in 1990. At University Hall, the collection continued to grow while operating alongside the office of *Appalachian Journal* and the now-defunct Appalachian Cultural Museum. Among the notable donations during the Olson years were the papers of Senator James T. Broyhill, the records of the Appalachian Land Ownership Survey, and the papers of Cratis Williams. Unfortunately, Olson's time at the helm of the Collection was cut short by health issues which forced him to retire in 1993. Library Assistant Dean Williams served as Acting Collection Librarian in the period after Olson's retirement.

The Collection's current Librarian, Dr. Fred J. Hay, was appointed in August 1994. Hay, a native north Georgian with a Ph.D. in Anthropology, threw himself into

the role of the collector and actively sought out donors for materials and funds to help the Collection grow. Under Hay's tenure the Collection moved back to its old location in the Belk Library in 1996, before moving to its current location in the new Belk Library and Information Commons in 2005. Since the beginning of his time as Collection Librarian, Hay has pushed to expand both the size and the scope of the Eury Collection. The introduction to Hay's own Collection history hinted at his intention to continue to build a comprehensive repository on the mountain region:

The W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection is a repository for materials related to the Southern uplands. It is a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary library with special strengths in folklore, ethnography, music, religion, local history, genealogy, literature, cookery, and African and Native Appalachia.

This succinct description of the Collection belies the growth it has experienced within the span of Hay's time as its curator. Under Hay's leadership the collection has added, among hundreds of other accessions, the papers of Appalachian scholars such as Helen Lewis and John Gaventa, the records of the Highlander Center, and the papers and recordings of bluegrass festival pioneer Carlton Haney. Hay has also expanded the Collection's holdings on Native Americans and African American communities within the region and successfully petitioned the Library of Congress to change their subject heading on Appalachian people from "Mountain Whites" to "Appalachians (People)."

After 50 years of growth, the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection's stacks now hold nearly 60,000 volumes on the Appalachian Region, making it the largest collection of secondary sources on Appalachia in the world. The growth of its archival holdings also continues daily with a wide swath of materials ranging in subject from music to geology being accessioned on a regular basis. The Collection regularly hosts researchers from as far afield as Japan, Spain, and the United Kingdom, many of whom have returned on multiple research trips to use collection materials. With half a century to celebrate, the Eury Collection looks forward to continuing its mission to grow in size and scope, with a

depth and quality of resources that match the complexity of the Appalachian region and its people.

*Trevor McKenzie is Archival Assistant at the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection.
mckenziejtj@appstate.edu*

Thoughts on Instruction: Teaching Primary Sources

Marc Brodsky, Virginia Tech

What is the nature of Special Collections instruction for an archivist working at an institution in the Appalachian region? Certainly, it is not any single thing. There are a wide variety of responses based on the differences found at a range of institutions. Collections differ—materials on hand—as do the purposes or objectives of any given class we may be called on to teach. Most of us that offer this kind of instruction—I presume—provide one-shot sessions (occasionally, two; rarely, three) to courses that represent different subject areas, time periods, modes of inquiry; as do I. The opportunity to work with an Appalachian studies class occurs on occasion, but this is the exception rather than the rule. I work at Virginia Tech, a land-grant university in southwest Virginia, located approximately 25 miles from the West Virginia border. In what ways does the instruction that my colleagues and I offer differ substantially from that offered by archivists outside of the region?

An initial answer might be, “It doesn’t have to.” In many ways, the manner in which I teach primary source literacy and the “mysteries and intrigues” of Special Collections is probably not that different from how archivists teach in other settings. I usually teach undergraduates, though sometimes I see graduate classes and also do some K-12 work. Most of the students I see have never been to an archival repository and have limited experience with primary sources. Personally, my most immediate goals, regardless of the topical material of the class, are to discuss and offer instruction on the tools, skills, and methods required to identify and use our materials effectively and to introduce and emphasize the value of primary sources for research. By putting primary sources into the hands of each student whenever possible, each class also offers an opportunity to create enthusiasm for working with these kinds of materials, while opening a window on the range of materials available.

Does the choice of materials presented to demonstrate the use of finding aids or the challenges of reading handwriting, for example, become an element of the class session itself? Of course it does. At some level, these choices communicate to students something by their very selection: an appropriateness for the class, a desire on the part of the instructor to work with specific items, or, again, simply to demonstrate to students who are unfamiliar with Special Collections a range of materials that are available. Some collections in the region focus primarily, if not exclusively, on Appalachian materials, while others do not. Even though all of us who do this kind of work are “limited” by the materials we have, this “limitation” has—in my experience—more to do with requests for materials on specific topics than it does with the use of representative materials that serve in an instructional setting. As we know, repositories defined by a geographical collecting area are not necessarily limited in their ability to choose materials that represent a range of human inquiry and endeavor that are, therefore, appropriate to a wide range of classroom situations.

At Virginia Tech, one of our collecting areas is Local/Regional/Appalachian materials, but it is only one of several areas in which we collect, and it is neither our strongest nor largest area of concentration. Yet, our [LibGuide](#) for the university’s basic Appalachian studies class (produced by my colleague, Kira Dietz) lists materials under a wide range of topics that begin with Literature and Art and move through Crafts, Fiber Arts, Economics, Housing, Transportation, Food and Foodways, History and Culture—to name a few—before ending up with People, Social Life, Customs, and Community. We may not be able to delve as



Preparing to teach with primary materials

deeply into any given Appalachian topic as an institution whose collecting focus is this region, but for those who do collect primarily in this area, demonstrating their depth of material to students in an instructional setting is an important part of communicating the identity of their repository to folks who are new to them.

For the rest of us, there are a few things we can do. We certainly have the opportunity to instruct people on another aspect of Special Collections; that we do not have materials on all subjects, and that part of our task as archivists may be to point people to repositories that are more appropriate for a given research inquiry or interest. If someone comes to Gene Hyde at UNC-Asheville after a class and asks about Apollo 11, he might be wise to send that person to Virginia Tech. If I'm asked about what was being played at Galax in 1986, I'd have to recall whether I should send them to either Berea or the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum. Or, I might tell them to contact both.

For a more creative response, I like to include Appalachian materials in classroom presentations where they might not normally be expected. Perhaps most primary sources, when put into the hands of inexperienced students, already contain some element of the unexpected, and to add to that sense multiplies the possibility that those items will be more powerfully noticed by those students. It seems to me that whatever we can do to increase the chances that an item, a document, some part of a collection arouses interest and enthusiasm, then we've taken a big step towards one of the large goals that I mentioned earlier.

Recently, I had a graphic design class come to Special Collections that had never visited before. The course instructor wondered if Special Collections could show her students examples of visual or graphical displays of information and gave maps and diagrams as examples. Among the mix of material I planned for them, it was easy to include soil maps or railroad maps of the area. But in the end, I was able to begin the class with a display and discussion of Giovanni Battista Piranesi's [*Ichnographia*](#) from the 1762 *Campus Martius* (a large engraved plate that presents a plan/map of Rome that is part fact, part fantasy) and conclude with several hand drawn weaving patterns from

southwest Virginia that date from the 1830s and '40s. In both cases, we were able to discuss the context of these documents, as well as the details on the pages. (I did have to enlist the assistance of a friend of mine who is a weaver to help decipher the lines, numbers and other marks on the patterns, but that was part of what I enjoyed.) This was not a typical class for me, and I went into it not knowing what to expect. Students left wide-eyed about what they'd seen, with some interesting examples to consider for their classwork, and wanting to know more about what they might find in Special Collections on a subsequent visit. That's a successful class, as far as I'm concerned.

Why make a point of including materials that are specifically of this region in classes where they are appropriate, even if unexpected? In part, it's because doing so serves the purpose of the class, and because we can. Just as importantly, it shows that we are interested in serving the well-developed, recognized, earned, and established sense of place this region enjoys. And, it's where we live.

Marc Brodsky is Public Services and Reference Archivist in Special Collections at Virginia Tech marc9@vt.edu.

What's new in Appalachian Special Collections?

New collections in regional repositories

W. L. Eury Collection, Appalachian State University

Recently processed...

Munsey Webb collection on the Norfolk and Western Railway, 1887-1995 – Collection of Munsey Willard Webb (1927-2006), who worked as a depot agent and telegraph operator at various railway stations between Pulaski, Virginia and Galax, Virginia. Through photographs and documents, the collection is a window into the history of forgotten railroad communities and rail spurs along the Norfolk and Western Railway's Radford Division. The collection maintains the original order established by Webb which, logically, follows the rail line south and west from Pulaski to Galax, each folder representing a stop at a station and visit to a community.

Garrett Arwood Family recordings – Music from the Arwood Family of Pigeonroost, Mitchell County, North Carolina. These recordings were made by the family and prominently feature the playing and singing of Garrett (1904-1993) and Nora Arwood (1913-2009). Garrett was a noted fiddler and fiddle maker featured in the Foxfire book series. The collection audibly displays the wide swath of sounds which fall under the umbrella of “mountain music” with recordings of Garrett and Nora's son, Norman (1927-1973), showing the incorporation traditional sounds into honky-tonk and bluegrass. The Eury Collection is indebted to Patricia Arwood Kotowski for this donation of her family's musical legacy.

In process

William Boswell “Bosh” Rigsby papers – “Bosh” Rigsby (1899-1963) was a joke writer who supplied gags for popular comic strips across the United States. A native of Augusta, Georgia, Rigsby worked from his summer home in Blowing Rock, North Carolina, keeping a meticulous account of the gags he sold (and those that were rejected) through an intricate numbering system. Rigsby's files contain hundreds of note cards with joke ideas and rough sketches of scenes to guide illustrators.

Mary Elizabeth Lewis papers – Mary Elizabeth Lewis (1912-1972) was a writer, photographer, and nurse from Erwin, Unicoi County, Tennessee. Lewis lived an exciting life full of adventures that took her far away from the mountains of Tennessee. She used her experiences as a nurse as inspiration for a screenplay and moved to Hollywood during its Golden Era. The collection contains Lewis' writings as well as candid photographs of stars including Joan Crawford and Gary Cooper. Scrapbooks and photograph albums contain scenes of Lewis at home in the mountains, with shots of landscapes and communities in eastern Tennessee.

Berea College

WKXO radio station (Berea, KY) – Eight 7 inch audio reels documenting commercials and local new heard on Berea's WKXO during the late 1970s and early 1980s donated by former announcer Kyle Sowers. The station is no longer on the air and none of the advertisers are in business any longer.

MACED (Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (10 boxes) – Official records of MACED. Twenty years' worth of MACED documents, photographs, materials, etc. Documents are from the organization's founding; some of them are important to understanding the last 42 years of Appalachian economic development; others are very specific to MACED as an organization.

Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University

Delaware Valley Bluegrass Festival Recordings, 1972-2018, AppMs 868. Analog and born-digital recordings of the Delaware Valley Bluegrass Festival, one of the longest-running bluegrass festivals in the United States which has featured performers ranging from Ralph Stanley to Ola Belle Reed to Alison Krauss & Union Station. Donated by the Brandywine Friends of Old Time Music, Inc. In process, but open to researchers with advance notice.

The Enterprise (Johnson City, Tennessee) newspaper, 13 January 1887. Added to the Archives' Historical Newspapers Collection, AppMs 833. Donated by Jenny and David Lockmiller.

Carl Sauceman and the Green Valley Boys Recordings, 1960-1976, undated, AppMs 869. Analog recordings of radio show sets played by Carl Sauceman and the Green Valley Boys (Carl & J.P. Sauceman). Donated by Glen Rose. In process but open to researchers with advance notice.

Scopes Trial postcards, 1925. Eight real photo postcards of Joe Mendi the chimpanzee when he visited Dayton, Tennessee during the Tennessee v. Scopes trial. Donated by Sam Preston.

War in the Modern World Course Collection (accrual), 1985-2009, UnivRec 376. Audio and video student interviews of military veterans, most from or in Southern Appalachia. Unprocessed with full inventory and access available on request.

Marshall University

Carl Barnett Photograph Collection

Accession 2019/02.0853: Photographs and negatives taken by Carl Barnett, photographer and former teacher at Douglas High School, Huntington, West Virginia.

Photographs taken in the 1930s – 1940s. The images document the African American community in Huntington including photographic portraits, Douglas High School groups, churches, congregations, and businesses. His studio was named Notan Studio.

James E. Casto

Accession 2018/11.0852: This collection contains information of early Huntington, Charleston, Guyandotte, and surrounding area West Virginia businesses in the forms of advertisements, business letterhead, ink blotters, photographs, and publications. Items span from the mid-1880s to the mid-1980s.

Oley Elementary Time Capsule, 1888

Accession 2018/10/0850: This collection includes materials found in the Cornerstone Time Capsule from 1888 that was buried at Oley Elementary School. Included in this collection are the personal business cards of prominent people in the Huntington, West Virginia community who were members of secret society groups such as the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. Additionally, this collection contains business cards from local Huntington shops from the 1880s, some of which contain artwork or are featured in color. Further, this collection contains books and manuals, where the majority emphasize the Huntington, WV community either in education, city statistics, religion, and masonry. This collection also includes correspondence, which features an addressed letter to the Daily Paper in the 1970s, as well as lists of members in camanderies, and other business announcements. Finally, this collection features 11 different newspaper titles where community members may have gathered their information in the 1880s, ranging from religious to political.

Guyandotte Poetry Society Papers

Accession 2018/09.0849: This collection contains the professional documents of the Guyandotte Poetry Society. The contents in this collection span from 1989 to 2018. The collection includes correspondence, directions to meetings, directories of poets who participated in the Society, and poems that were submitted and workshopped. The materials in this collection document the various writers who either served as reviewers or submitted poetry for review. This list of writers is included following the list of folders and their contents.

Radford University

Papers of James Lewis Graham, Sr. – These materials (approx. 2 linear feet) document Mr. Graham's work at the Radford Iron Company, and include additions to our collection of that company's publication, *The Iron Worker*.

Letters of Katie V. Campbell – 4 letters from a former Radford student during her time at the school in the 1930s

An accrual to the Virginia Deal Lawrence Scrapbook Collection – This accrual (2.5 linear feet) documents Ms. Lawrence personal life, and her church involvement.

The Radford University Art Department transferred 25 audio tapes of various interviews with artist Dorothy Gillespie in the 1970s and 1980s.

The family of former professor Charles Baumer Swaney, PhD donated an unpublished manuscript on transportation history written during his time at Radford.

University of Kentucky

The Pauline Canterbury papers document Pauline Canterbury's and Mary Miller's work to defend Sylvester, West Virginia, from coal dust pollution caused by Massey Energy's Elk Run Facility.

The Ann Pancake collection on Pauline Canterbury consists of letters written by Pauline Canterbury to author Ann Pancake concerning coal mining and mountaintop removal in Sylvester, West Virginia.

University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) successfully completed work on its Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives grant, resulting in online access to the SCRC's largest group of post-War on Poverty Appalachian primary sources. Action in Appalachia: Revealing Public Health, Housing, and Community Development records in the UK Libraries Special Collections Research Center was a \$156,439 grant to fully preserve, organize, and make publicly available the records of seven community-driven organizations dedicated to improving quality of life for the Appalachian Region between 1965 and 1990. All inventories generated by the project are available on the University of Kentucky Libraries digital library, ExploreUK.

Collections made available through Action in Appalachia include:

- Appalachian Leadership and Community Outreach, Inc. (ALCOR) records
- Eastern Kentucky Health Services, Inc. (EKHS) records
- Commission on Religion in Appalachia (CORA) records
- Human/Economic Appalachian Development Corporation (HEAD) records
- Marketing Appalachia's Traditional Community Handcrafts (MATCH) records
- Eastern Kentucky Housing Development Corporation (EKHDC) records
- Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises (FAHE) records

University of North Carolina – Asheville

Bluff Mountain Papers -The Bluff Mountain Papers document efforts by the Western North Carolina Alliance and other citizen groups who opposed a US Forest Service plan

to log Bluff Mountain in 1996-97. Includes WNCA organizational documents, US Forest Service documents, newspaper clippings, and other materials related to the group's actions. The papers also include documents related to various staffing and personnel issues with WNCA during the 1990s.

Cut the Clearcutting Papers – Materials from the Western North Carolina Alliance documenting opposition to the Forest Service Plan for management of the Nantahala and Pisgah Forests, specifically even-aged management through clearcutting and shelter wood cutting. Includes correspondence, personal notes, newspaper clippings covering forestry activities, and petitions to increase public awareness.

John J. Keetch US Forest Service Collection – Items written or collected by John J. Keetch, a U.S. Forest Service employee who worked in Western North Carolina. In 1968, Keetch and George M. Byram published, "A Drought Index for Forest Fire Control," an index to calculate the fire danger in forests, and most of the materials in this collection reflect Keetch's long interest in fire danger and calculating its risk.

Morse Family Chimney Rock Park Collection – Materials from the Morse family who owned Chimney Rock for over 100 years prior to selling it to the state of North Carolina in 2007 when it became Chimney Rock State Park. Included are both items related to the family and materials related to Chimney Rock.

RiverLink Papers – Contains materials from RiverLink, an environmental non-profit organization that works to preserve and develop the French Broad River and its surrounding environment. A large part of the collection covers the organization's administrative files, including plans for various projects, involved groups, and actions for improving the river. It also includes documents relating to laws and regulations regarding river management.

University of Tennessee

Kelly Bennett Photograph Collection, MS.3892

Dr. Kelly E. Bennett (1890-1974) was born in Whittier, North Carolina, and moved with his family to Bryson City, North Carolina, as a young child. A pharmacist by profession, he began working in his father's store, Bennett's Drug Store, in the 1920s. He served in the state senate and as mayor of Bryson City. Bennett was also a skilled photographer whose work appeared in books, magazines, newspapers, and on postcards. The collection consists of Bennett's photographic slides, negatives, and prints taken of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Moonshine War Original Screenplay (MS. 3860) and Original Press Kit (MS. 3871)
Based on a novel of the same name by Elmore Leonard, the MGM film was directed by Richard Quine in 1969 and starred Alan Alda and Richard Widmark.

Four new standalone digital collections, with enhanced descriptive metadata, are more visible and discoverable.

- Knoxville Gardens Slides
- Anna Catherine Wiley Sketches
- Photographs of the Ruskin Cooperative Association
- Images of East Tennessee Buildings and Locations

Virginia Tech

Fries Textile Plant Records, 1900-1988, Ms1989-039, (Partial Inventory only) 80 boxes, 150 cu. ft – Materials include correspondence, ledgers, production records, employee records, and other items documenting the history of the town and plant. The Fries Civic League obtained the records of the Fries Textile Plant after the plant closed in 1988 and placed them on loan in a “bailment and preservation agreement” in 1989 with Special Collections. With the Fries Civic League dissolved, the Fries Town Council and Mayor of Fries assumed the functions of the League and donated the collection in 2016. A grant from NHPRC was awarded in 2018 to fund the full processing of the collection. That work is underway. The collection will include approximately 150 additional blueprints and architectural drawings dating from 1901 to the 1990s when completed.

Western Lunatic Asylum [Staunton, Virginia] Collection Ms-2016-021, 0.2 cu. ft. 1 box – Includes includes correspondence written to the Western Lunatic Asylum in Staunton, Virginia, dating from 1841 to 1878, as well as a final year report from 1903

Elizabeth Fine Papers, c.1983-2012, Ms2015-041, 6.2 cu. ft. 5 boxes; 1 oversize folder – Includes papers and materials collected by Fine during her tenure as a professor at Virginia Tech. The collection includes research and subject files on aspects of Appalachian culture and history; papers from her instruction, departmental, and administrative activities; and files on historic buildings on campus, particularly the history, renovation, and reopening of “Solitude.”

Adams Express Company Ledger, 1912, Ms2017-043, 0.1 cu. ft. 1 folder The collection consists of a ledger for the Adams Express Company recording shipments being moved from Hot Springs, Virginia, to Warm Springs, Virginia, between May and September of 1912.

Virginia Iron, Coal and Coke Company Pay Ledger, 1918, Ms2017-027, 0.3 cu. ft. 1 box – The Virginia Iron, Coal and Coke Company was organized in 1899, when it acquired several plants previously owned by the Carter Coal and Coke Company in Pulaski and Wythe counties, Virginia, as well as furnaces at Roanoke, Radford, Max Meadows, and operations in other parts of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The

ledger contains entries noting the names and occupations of individual employees, days and times worked, and amount owed.

Marvin H. Neel Papers, 1933-1988, Ms2016-022, 0.3 cu. ft. 1 box – Neel served as the Ceres postmaster beginning in 1930 and also as a rural carrier until he retired from the Postal Service in the late 1950s. Neel began the acquiring presses and established the Backwoods Press in Ceres, Virginia, in 1933. The press would run consistently until the late 1950s and produced a few publications from 1958 until about 1967, when Neel retired from the printing business. This collection includes biographical resources, ephemera, correspondence, and writings and woodcut prints by and related to Marvin H. Neel (1908-1978), created between 1933 and 1988.

Olivia Tutwiler Hill Diary, 1919, Ms2016-004, 0.1 cu. ft. 1 folder – Diary of Olivia Tutwiler (later Olivia Tutwiler Hill), a young teacher living in Blacksburg and Childress, Virginia, in 1919.

James and Rosa Evans Store Ledgers, 1919-1934, Ms2015-009, 0.2 cu. ft. 1 box – This collection consists of 2 ledgers, one from 1919-1920 and the other from 1932-1934. The ledgers contain purchases and payments from the patrons of a general store owned by James and Rosa Evans in the Pennington Gap–St. Charles area of Virginia.

Western Carolina University

John Parris Estate Collection

Papers and possessions from the estate of journalist and author John A. Parris (1914-1999). Parris served as a war correspondent during World War II and reported from the North African and European theaters. After the war he became noted for his “Roaming the Mountains” column that was a regular feature of the Asheville Citizen and Asheville Citizen-Times newspapers and which first appeared in February 1955.

Edgar Purdom Collection

Fifty six photographs documenting rural activities and scenery (drying pottery, churning putter, grinding meal, etc.) by Edgar J. Purdom. Born in 1900, Purdom opened a custom furniture shop in Wayah Valley, near Franklin, NC, in 1946. He was a hobby photographer and made these photographs in Western North Carolina. Purdom retired in 1968 and passed away in Lake County, Florida in 1987.

Veronica Nicholas Collection

This collection concerns Veronica Johnston Nicholas (1941-2016), chiefly during her service on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners (1980 to 1990), and during her community service and activism in the 1970’s in Jackson County, NC. She was involved in many social and political activities, but is perhaps best known for her advocacy of women’s issues (including the organization REACH), animal rights (including the

organization ARF), and her organization of Citizens Against the Airport, which opposed the construction of the Jackson County Airport on the Cullowhee site that was ultimately chosen for the airport's location.

Catch the Spirit of Appalachia Collection

Catch the Spirit of Appalachia (CSA) was established in 1989 with the mission of "Planting the seeds of heritage through the arts." CSA was cofounded by sisters Amy Ammons Garza and Doreyl Ammons Cain. Incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1991, CSA accomplishes their mission through the painting of historical regional murals, publishing local writers, bestowing Appalachian Studies scholarships, encouraging the youth to learn and play mountain music, and by recording oral history and storytelling through the Stories of Mountain Folk radio show and podcast. They have also published over 125 books by regional authors. This collection includes all titles published by CSA, minutes and administrative files, interviews, and various ephemera.