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## ABSTRACT

TROUBLESOME INVENTIONS:

THE RHETORIC OF THE HINDMAN SETTLEMENT SCHOOL, 1902-1927

**by Sarah Jordan Bowles**

In this dissertation I analyze the public writing produced at the Hindman Settlement School, a rural social settlement founded on the banks of Troublesome Creek in Appalachian Kentucky at the turn of the twentieth century. Modeled after urban settlement houses, the Hindman school was founded by two women who sought to redress the perceived poverty and illiteracy of Appalachia with classes on reading, writing, and domestic arts. Methodologically informed by both classical rhetorical analysis and feminist historiography, I reclaim the settlement women as savvy rhetoricians who deployed their arguments through the letters, pamphlets, and serialized novels mailed frequently to a nationwide donor base. In Ciceronian terms, the settlement founders would likely have claimed that these fundraising documents were meant to *move* readers—to exhort them to action. In so doing, however, the settlement women were also *instructing* a bourgeois Bluegrass, Midwestern, and Northeastern readership, defining eastern Kentucky (and, accordingly, the entire mountain region) for readers wholly unfamiliar with the land, people, and customs. In their rhetorical stances and methods of appeal, the settlement women construct a simultaneously compelling and troubling version of Appalachia for an audience removed from the mountains in nearly every imaginable way. The rhetoric of the Hindman Settlement School—which includes the invention of mountain *topoi*, the use of fiction as a rhetorical genre, and the manipulation of testimony as a rhetorical strategy—therefore constitutes an important chapter in the evolving history of "Appalachia" as a cultural invention.

# TROUBLESOME INVENTIONS:
# THE RHETORIC OF THE HINDMAN SETTLEMENT SCHOOL, 1902-1927

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# INTRODUCTION

## "To live among the people": The Settlement Ideal

> To live among the people, in as near a model home as we can get, to show them by example the advantages of cleanliness, neatness, order, study along both literary and industrial lines, and to inspire them to use pure language and to lead pure, Christian lives; these should be our efforts, if we wish to elevate and uplift them; and they stand ready, willing, and waiting to do their part, if we do ours.
>
> May Stone, 1899

When Katherine Pettit and May Stone settled on the banks of Troublesome Creek in Appalachian Kentucky at the turn of the twentieth century, their goal was simple: "to learn all we can and teach all we can." Dispatched to the mountains by the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs and Women's Christian Temperance Union, Pettit and Stone had spent the past three summers running a series of summer camps in mountain towns, where children and adults alike attended outdoor classes on everything from reading and writing to napkin-folding and sewing. Encouraged by enthusiastic community response, intrigued by the people and culture they had encountered, and inspired by the work of fellow Progressive-era reformers, the two women had come to believe that the best "cure" for the problems they perceived in this remote and curious corner of their home state—that is, poverty, illiteracy, religious fundamentalism, and a general backwardness—was an experimental school modeled after the settlement houses popping up in the Northeast and Midwest. Thus the Hindman Settlement School, one of the country's first and most successful rural social settlements, was born.[1] Since opening its doors in

[1] For the first thirteen years of the school's existence it was known simply as the WCTU Settlement. Upon incorporation in 1915, administrators changed the name to the Hindman Settlement School. For continuity

August of 1902, the still-operational school has grown from a few outdoor classes held in tents on hillsides to a vibrant community education center that now houses a writers' workshop for Appalachian authors, an summer cultural festival, an adult literacy program, and a full-time school for dyslexic children.

The Hindman Settlement School was one of the first of its kind in the southern mountains—and remains one of the only rural settlement schools still in existence. Its roots, however, lay not in Appalachia, but in the urban settlement houses of the Northeast and Midwest, which took their cue from Progressive Era philosophy and flourished during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The settlement movement encouraged socially minded members (often women) of the middle and upper classes to move into the poorest areas of a city, often those neighborhoods inhabited by new immigrants, with the goal of social uplift. "Progressive with a vengeance," according to social historian Allen Davis (xii), settlement workers sought reforms both large and small as they lived among their neighbors. Certainly they addressed local and specific needs, but the work of the settlement volunteers went beyond "doling out relief," as Walter Trattner points out in his history of social welfare in the United States (136). Rather than focusing on stop-gap measures alone, the goals of the settlement movement were much broader in scope: "to bridge the gap between the classes and races, to eliminate the sources of distress, and to improve urban living and working conditions" (Trattner 136-137). Davis says that while more traditional models of philanthropy and charity "emphasized the individual causes of poverty," the settlement model was unique in that it "stressed the social and economic conditions that made people poor" (18). The idea of the settlement was necessarily flexible—first and foremost volunteers

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purposes, I will refer to the school as the Hindman Settlement School throughout this project, even when discussing the years between 1902 and 1915.

considered the needs of their particular communities—but the overarching goals of uplift remained the same. What follows in the remainder of this introduction is a brief account of settlement history and philosophy, as a means of explaining the context out of which the Hindman Settlement School originated.

*Settlement Contexts and Histories*

The settlement movement was conceived in Great Britain and migrated to the U.S. in response to the human toll exacted by the Industrial Revolution, a toll which appeared in the form of crushing poverty, familial and communal fragmentation, and urban overpopulation. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, European and American economies began to shift from agrarian/subsistence to industrial/capitalist, divorcing production from consumption and driving large populations out of rural areas and into urban centers. Pre-industrial civilization allowed for a diffused population, where individual families could conceivably constitute entire economies by producing everything they consumed from food to clothing to shelter, but the massive shift in market forces increasingly pushed workers and their families into the cities. Long and often inhumane hours at the factory or sweatshop meant less time spent in the family unit. City dwelling meant living in close proximity to strangers, which likewise led to a fragmented sense of community. The rise of slums meant the rise of unsanitary living conditions and, consequently, the rise of disease. In America especially, the Industrial Revolution saw an influx of immigrants as well, as the jobs created by the booming economy represented the first step in realizing the promises of the American dream. Life for these huddled masses was especially taxing as immigrants not only had to navigate a new economic system, but a new culture and language as well. The urban population got another boost thanks to large numbers of African-Americans

fleeing Reconstruction in the post-bellum South. Thus, says Stephen Piott, the number of city dwellers "jumped from 20 percent of the total U.S. population to 40 percent between 1860 and 1900" (4). Crowded quarters, unsanitary conditions, lack of community, cultural fragmentation: such was life for the workers packing themselves into booming industrial centers. In the course of a few decades, the American city had rapidly morphed into an unfamiliar—and, for some, unsettling—place.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the problems wrought by the Industrial Revolution had sufficiently distressed many in the middle and upper classes—some of whom, of course, profited from the very conditions they had begun to lament. Nevertheless, change was in order. Concerns over inhumane working and living conditions and the overall "direction" of the country, coupled with new developments in scientific thought and social theory, ushered in an era of reform known as Progressivism. Among the new developments in science and sociology was the idea of Reform Darwinism, which countered earlier applications of Darwin's revolutionary theories, namely the Social Darwinsim espoused by Herbert Spencer in the 1870s and 1880s. In Spencer's view, Darwin's "natural selection" hypothesis could be superimposed on social contexts as well; he saw civilization as "an evolutionary progression…in the general direction of higher forms of structure, refinement, and organization" (Piott 18). Thus the individual was responsible for his or her destiny, and one's survival was tied directly to his or her immutable and inherent "nature." The future lay in the hands of the strongest or most "fit," and society "would approach its ideal stage as a result of changes in man's nature, not from changes in man's institutions" (Piott 18). So the growing cities simply provided another environment in which humans could test their "fitness." The strong would survive; the weak would not. By the late nineteenth century, however, social

theorists had begun to expose cracks in the Spencerian paradigm. Ultimately, they rejected his fatalistic appraisal of the social organism—an appraisal which encouraged laissez-faire economic systems, pre-empted any sort of governmental reform efforts, and offered, in the words of Louis Menand, "a rather unsubtle justification for existing hierarchies of wealth and power" (301)—by arguing that the natural world and the civilized world were far from analogous. Scientist-turned-sociologist Lester Ward, in fact, argued in 1883 that the "survivial of the fittest" model was what separated nature from society: "The survivial of the fittest is simply the survival of the strong, which…might as well be called, the destruction of the weak. And if nature progresses through the destruction of the weak, man progresses through the *protection* of the weak" (qtd. in Menand 303). Throughout his career, Ward continued to argue for the human potential to *direct*, rather than be directed by, "natural and social forces for the benefit of society" (Piott 18). In other words, human beings could not be understood in a purely scientific framework; other factors like human agency had to be taken into account.

Support for Ward's concerns came from economic theorist Thorstein Veblen, who also vociferously challenged the society-as-natural-organism metaphor. Veblen asserted that individuals should not be viewed "as passive reactors to stimuli, but as actors for ends," and his assertions coupled with Ward's made a convincing case for the potential of humans to overcome their purely individualistic impulses and change society for the better (Menand 306). And therein lay the crux of Progressive philosophy: the belief that humanity has the potential for *advancement*, if only we use our powers and capabilities purposefully and with communal concerns in mind. That reform impulse, coupled with the Darwinian focus on stimulus response, led Reform Darwinists to emphasize "the environment, as opposed to individual character defects, as

being at the root of social problems" (Tolanger 11), and to change the unsuitable environments they saw around them—especially in the evolving city, where the devastating influence of an inhumane environment was writ large.

Likewise, the philosophy of Social Christianity (also called Christian Socialism) took root in the soil of the Industrial Revolution and underscored the role of environment in the creation of societal ills. Originating alongside the Industrial Revolution nineteenth century England, Social Christianity maintained that it was a Christian's duty to not only help individuals in need, but to change the conditions that created need in the first place. In 1903, Arthur Woodward traced the history of Social Christianity to that point, admitting that the two systems—socialism and Christianity—might appear at first glance to be at odds: "There has been and still is a belief in the public mind that socialism puts the stress in human development on environment, while Christianity emphasizes the power of character. The one aim of all types of socialism is the perfect society. The purpose of Christianity in the last resort is the perfect individual" (17). But he goes on to argue that the two ideals, personal and communal, "are not essentially inconsistent" because individual and society are mutually dependent on each other:

> The fundamental command of Christianity is to love God, but the second is like unto it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And socialism, however its teaching may be distorted, has its real hold to-day in the open, public misery of individual suffering, which is both produced by and in turn reproduces degraded moral conditions. (Woodward 18)

The means might differ, but the end is the same: the full realization of human potential. Christian Socialism, then, sought to marry the biblical emphasis on individual worth with the socialist focus on institutional culpability. Like

Reform Darwinism, Social Christianity interrogated the role of environment—as in the urban slum, for example—in the role of human development.

So Progressive ideals such as the settlement were born out of an era that defined itself in terms of reform and, ultimately, hope. Practitioners of reform Darwinism and Social Christianity may have been dismayed by the havoc wreaked by industrialism, but they remained optimistic that their new philosophies would provide a way out of the destruction and fragmentation to which they had borne witness. Thus the drive toward progress that informed Darwinism and Social Christianity shaped the settlement movement, wherein members of the middle and upper classes would "live among the people," as May Stone would later put it, in order to combat poverty and its ills on a daily basis. The first known settlement was London's Toynbee Hall, founded by Samuel Barnett in 1884, and the first settlement in the United States was New York's Neighborhood House, founded by Stanton Coit in 1886. Coit had volunteered at Toynbee Hall for a few months and returned to the states with an idea to organize the population in lower-class neighborhoods into "guilds," comprised of about a hundred families each, which would advocate for change as a group (Barbuto 100). It was a hard sell, however—not to mention a huge logistical undertaking—and Coit soon abandoned his experiment. So though Dominica Barbuto admits that "it would not be inaccurate to say that Coit was the founder of the American Settlement Movement," she concedes that "he himself spent very little time as an active participant in the effort" (100). Coit's ties to the settlement movement, though profound, proved to be short-lived, and his influence negligible. It was not until Jane Addams opened Hull House in Chicago at the end of the decade that the American settlement movement began to gain steam.

Like Stanton Coit, Addams had visited Toynbee Hall in London and was encouraged by its exemplary approach to social work. Ignorant of Coit's earlier effort—Judith Trolander notes that Addams genuinely believed she was establishing the first American settlement as Neighborhood House had been so little publicized (10)—Addams was struck by the novelty of Toynbee Hall and aimed to bring the settlement model home. She admits that her trip in England exposed her to real poverty for the first time, though it also provided her with a model for counteracting such a distressing problem. After her visit, then, Addams began to mull the possibility of opening a social settlement herself:

> I gradually became convinced that it would be a good thing to rent a house in a part of the city where many primitive and actual needs are found, in which young women who had been given over too exclusively to study might restore a balance of activity along traditional lines and learn of life from life itself; where they might try out some of the things they had been taught and put truth to 'the ultimate test of the conduct it dictates or inspires.' (55)

Thus invoking William James's notion of pragmatism—the above quote references James's famous definition of the pragmatic "method," which emphasizes practice over theory—Addams, along with her friend Ellen Gates Starr, created her own settlement as "an experimental effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city" (83). Hull House opened in 1889 in order to provide cultural and educational opportunities for the residents of Chicago's nineteenth ward, a district populated mostly by poor immigrants and sweatshop workers. In *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Addams retrospectively narrates the

successes (and sometimes failures) of her "experimental effort," among them an art gallery, a musical school, a theater, a series of college extension lectures, vastly improved living conditions in the nineteenth ward of Chicago, a playground, an apartment house for working women, a gymnasium, several clubs, a coffeehouse, and a public kitchen.

When Addams began her settlement experiment, she was motivated by several factors, which she explains in a chapter from *Twenty Years at Hull House* titled "The Subjective Need for Social Settlements": "first, the desire to interpret democracy in social terms; secondly, the impulse beating at the very source of our lives, urging us to aid in the race progress; and, thirdly, the Christian movement toward humanitarianism" (83). The first of these factors—the desire to interpret democracy in social terms—reflects Addams's fervent opposition to the idea of philanthropy and her commitment instead to "affectionate interpretation," the idea that democracy must be interpreted not just politically, but socially, materially, and culturally as well. Through the lens of what Addams called "affectionate interpretation," work among the poverty-stricken residents of the nineteenth ward was undertaken not to alleviate upper-middle-class guilt, but to keep the promises of a purportedly democratic society; for democracy to work *at* all, Addams proposed, it had to work *for* all. Furthermore, Addams believed that work in social settlements was just as much to the benefit of the workers as it was to the residents of the nineteenth ward; she argued that "without the advance and improvement of the whole, no man can hope for any lasting improvement in his own moral or material individual condition" (85). In other words, Addams—along with her fellow Progressive educators—believed those in positions of power and privilege should aid those in less powerful and less privileged positions, not out of a sense of *noblesse oblige*, but because the advancement of humanity depended on the cooperation of all.

Such a philosophy was well suited to a particular growing population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: vibrant, socially minded young women fresh out of college or preparatory school, eager to make their mark on the world but frustrated by the lack of opportunities to do so. Though formal education was becoming more and more available to more and more women (especially of the middle and upper classes), job prospects were harder to come by. The result was a glut of highly educated, trained women looking for something to do. Addams herself pinpoints this conundrum as a driving force behind her social experiment, bemoaning the particular ennui of the educated woman with nowhere to go:

> I have seen young girls suffer and grow sensibly lowered in vitality in the first years after they leave school. In our attempt then to give a girl pleasure and freedom from care we succeed, for the most part, in making her life pitifully miserable. She finds 'life' so different from what she expected it to be. She is besotted with innocent little ambitions, and does not understand this apparent waste of herself, this elaborate preparation, if no work is provided for her. There is a heritage of noble obligation which young people accept and long to perpetuate. The desire for action, the wish to right wrong and alleviate suffering haunts them daily. (77-78)

The solution, as Addams sees it, lies in the social settlement—especially because the life of the unemployed young woman, "so sincere in its emotion and good phrase and yet so undirected, seems to me as pitiful as the other great mass of destitute lives" (80). That is, these women are equally as impoverished—metaphorically, of course—as the immigrants and sweatshop workers among whom they might live. Though we might balk at Addams's efforts to smooth over the differences between class and gender oppression, her approach is

nonetheless revolutionary in articulating the possibility that work across class lines could be mutually enriching. "One is supplementary to the other," Addams advises, "and some method of communication can surely be devised" (80). Indeed, "some method of communication" not only *can*, but *must* be devised for the classes to work together for the common good.

Addams's lament and subsequent solution dovetail with the nascent feminism of her era, which held that women were as valuable to society as men and should treat themselves (and be treated) accordingly, that they should command equal respect and seek equal opportunities in the public sphere. Accordingly, Frances Cogan delineates an ideal of "Real Womanhood" that took hold in the middle of the nineteenth century, an ideal that resisted the "true womanhood" of earlier decades. Whereas the "true woman" was defined in terms of her piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity (Welter 152), the Real Womanhood model, says Cogan, "advocated intelligence, physical fitness and health, self-sufficiency, economic self-reliance, and careful marriage" (4). Moreover, this new ideal "offered American women a vision of themselves as biologically equal (rationally as well as emotionally) and in many cases markedly superior in intellect to what passed for male business sense, scholarship, and theological understanding" (Cogan 5). Superior sensibilities notwithstanding, these women often encountered barriers as they sought to apply their new knowledge (and self-esteem) in realms of business, education, and religion. Instead of giving up, however, they simply created their own opportunities—cue Jane Addams and her settlement sisters. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, in an oft-cited study of gender in "Victorian America," offers settlement women specifically as an example of what she calls the "New Woman," a generation who went to work—either paid or volunteer—in the last decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. According to Smith-Rosenberg, New Women were

content to fade into the background so long as the work was getting done; the "New Woman did not have to be a star" (177). In any case, the new ideals of femininity that gripped the nineteenth century—"real," "new," or otherwise—afforded women of privilege unprecedented opportunities to shape the world around them. Settlement work was one such opportunity, and its appeal was unique and far-reaching.

*Settlement vs. Philanthropy*

The settlement model stood out from earlier ideals of civic engagement and social work because it was consciously Progressive. That is, in her commitment to democracy and social justice, Jane Addams resisted the easy and familiar patterns of earlier philanthropic models. According to historian Loyal Jones, the women who worked in social settlements "operated from the three Rs: Research, Residence (among those to be served), and Reform" (2). Though the idea of using one's privileged class position to help those in need was obviously nothing new, the primary difference between the Progressives' settlement work and earlier forms of charitable and philanthropic efforts lay in the second of Jones's Rs: residence. By living and working in the communities they sought to elevate, settlement volunteers became neighbors and allies as opposed to outsiders with suspicious or unclear motives. Walter Trattner, in fact, sets settlement work and philanthropic efforts in stark relief, positing the settlements as "examples of democracy, in principle and in action, while the organized charities were the very opposite—the embodiment of inequality in theory and in practice" (140). Charitable giving relies on the division between the haves and the have-nots, while settlement work—in theory, at least—seeks to erase the division entirely. The settlement workers were directly affected by the reforms they advocated because they lived in the communities they were trying to

change; thus, settlement volunteers worked *with* a population as friends and co-laborers, not *on* or *for* them as paternalistic overlords.

Indeed, in "Democracy and Social Ethics," Addams explicitly condemns the charity model. The entire essay is an indictment of the generic "daintily clad charitable visitor" (65), who embodies the philanthropic impulse of the day. This visitor is unable to help the poor in any practical way, by cooking or cleaning, for example—what Addams calls "industrial preaching" (65)—as her formal training has been in the college classroom instead of the home. But despite a rapidly changing economic and social structure, "we still keep on in the old methods, which could be applied when our consciences were in line with them, but which are daily becoming more difficult as we divide up into people who work with their hands and those who do not" (66). This visitor is unfamiliar with the neighborhood, unfamiliar with the cultural mores, unfamiliar with the type of work that must be done, unfamiliar with the environment as a whole. The result is judgment on the part of the visitor and resentment on the part of the visited:

> The neighborhood understands the selfish rich people who stay in their own part of town, where all their associates have shoes and other things. Such people don't bother themselves about the poor; they are like the rich landlords of the neighborhood experience. But this lady visitor, who pretends to be good to the poor, and certainly does talk as though she were kind-hearted, what does she come for, if she does not intend to give them things which are so plainly needed? (69)

The problem with philanthropy, says Addams, is that it approaches poverty with a fixed agenda. That is, the "charitable visitor" has already made up her mind about the causes and effects of the recipients' situation, and unprepared to help

in any material way, she can offer only lip service to those she purports to serve. The result, for both charitable visitor and recipient, is disappointing. The solution as Addams sees it is to discern actual needs, and to work together to meet them. "No 'advanced educator' can allow himself to be so absorbed in the question of what a child ought to be as to exclude the discovery of what he is," she says, "But in our charitable efforts we think much more of what a man ought to be than of what he is or of what he may become" (81-82). The cookie-cutter "solutions" served up by charitable outfits benefit no one.

But at the same time Addams refuses the image of herself as the delicate charitable visitor, she admits that "the very need and existence of charity, denies us the consolation and freedom which democracy will at last give" ("Democracy" 64). Philanthropy may be a faulty model, but that does not take away the need for reform. The only solution is to find an alternate paradigm, one steeped in the egalitarian principles of critical democracy. Addams therefore casts herself not as a charity worker, but as a *neighbor* and *interpreter*. By acting as both, settlement workers could respond to both immediate and long-term needs. Probably the most distinguishable feature of the settlement worker was her commitment to live in the community where she worked—to "settle," in other words. In Chicago's nineteenth ward, Addams could authentically relate to her neighbors because she was a part of their community and interacted with them on a daily basis. She partnered with them to entertain local children; collaborated with them to improve living conditions; delighted with them in music and theater and art; learned with them in community extension courses; mourned with them in the loss of a loved one; dined with them at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. By empathizing with their neighbors' needs, Addams and her fellow Hull House residents "aimed not so much at helping the poor as at understanding them" (Lasch xiii). Such neighborliness allowed settlement

workers to forgo "the traditional condescension of ordinary charity workers" and relate to residents in a more egalitarian and meaningful capacity (Trolander 14). Genuine investment in the community, on an individual level as well as institutional, yielded a genuine understanding of the people who comprised it.

Beyond her role as neighbor, Addams also saw the settlement worker as an interpreter. On a macro level, she argued that the duty of the settlement was to interpret democracy to the lower classes—that is, to apply democratic principles to those whom democracy had left behind. The full potential of democratic society could only be realized if everyone had access to its rewards. But interpretation could happen on a micro level as well. To the poverty-stricken residents of the nineteenth ward, the settlement resident could interpret bourgeois ideals of health, hygiene, education, and culture by modeling those ideals at all times; thus teaching could be carried out by deed rather than word. In "A Function of the Social Settlement," Addams offers the following anecdote as an exemplar of interpretation among a group of Italian immigrant women whose children had been weakened by malnutrition. Settlement workers were in time successful in persuading the women "to feed their children oatmeal instead of tea-soaked bread, but it has been done, not by statement at all but by a series of gay little Sunday morning breakfasts given to a group of them in the Hull House nursery. A nutritious diet was thus substituted for an inferior one by a social method" (198). By subtly interpreting dietetic principles for their neighbors and putting those principles into practice, Hull House residents were able to demonstrate the advantages of good nutrition without resorting to guilt, shame, or pedantry.

Similarly, Addams and her fellow settlement residents could "interpret" their neighbors for their peers in the middle and upper classes. As an educated, well-to-do woman, Jane Addams could effectively communicate with men and

women like herself—that is, those who were well suited to push for change. And because her experience was first-hand, she could legitimately—and some might say *objectively*—comment on the city slums and the people who lived there. As Judith Trolander points out, when settlement workers "did complain about social problems, their complaints had an added legitimacy" because they could offer such compelling personal evidence (14). Assuming the roles of neighbors and interpreters allowed settlement workers to assess the needs of their communities, while positioning them to do something about those needs in the context of larger society.

*Troubling the Settlement Ideal: Critiques of Hull House*

Understandably, the settlement worker's role as an intra-class interpreter has been met with some criticism. Regarding the settlement worker's role as interpreter, Trolander agrees that "it is tempting to ask if the poor couldn't interpret themselves," but she goes on to make a case for Addams' interpretive framework: "around 1900 the traditional attitude that poor people had something wrong with their character was quite strong. Without better-off allies, they were unlikely to be heard" (15). As a vocal and well respected ally, Addams could advocate for a population who might not otherwise receive any attention—though Trolander's point is well taken. As much as she endeavored to avoid condescension, and as much as she sought to work *with* rather than *for*, Addams still presumed to speak for large numbers of people whose lived experience would always differ from her own. Addams might live among poverty-stricken immigrants, but she would never be one. Her childhood, her education, her class privilege, and her social standing would always separate her from her neighbors.

Additional criticism of the settlement lies in the other type of interpretation Addams saw herself providing—interpretation of bourgeois American values for the poor. Again, for all a settlement worker's attempts to connect with her neighbors (and vice versa), she is always something of an outsider. Her elevated class position has, paradoxically, permitted her to live in extreme poverty—but she always has the option to leave. Such is not the case for other community members, who are *not* living in the slums by choice. The asymmetrical power relationship, then, has the potential to be manipulated into a form of social control. The aim of this social control, maintains Rivka Lissak, is the "Americanization" of populations who are seen as less-than-full citizens. In the case of urban settlements, the target was immigrants and African-Americans; in the case of rural Appalachian settlements like Hindman, the target population was the mountaineers. In either case, the ideal population for settlement work is somehow Othered. Barbuto calls the interpretive function of the settlement "double-edged" because interpretation could so quickly—and euphemistically—turn into Americanization. Though many settlement workers welcomed the opportunity to participate in a true cultural exchange with new immigrants (or those similarly othered), some "were less open to the possibilities. They were more concerned with the immigrants leaving their old ways behind in favor of the settlement workers' own white, middle-class values" (12). Hence Lissak problematizes Addams' legacy (and the legacy of the settlement movement as a whole) as largely fictional, what she calls the "myth" of Hull House: "Indeed, the myth of Jane Addams' saintly mission among the poverty-stricken immigrants seems to have assuaged the sense of guilt experienced by the American 'better element' when confronted by the ills of American society" (182). Because she lived among the people she aimed to help, Addams seemingly forestalls any accusations of paternalism or condescension. Her readers and supporters could

feel similarly, if vicariously, democratic. But despite packaging her mission in the language of democracy and social justice, says Lissak, Addams' goals were simply to bring the perceived riff-raff in line with the rest of polite society. So while her resultant views were "considered cosmopolitan by contemporaries and pluralist by some later scholars," Addams' assimilationist goals were ultimately driven by Americanization and racism (Lissak 184). Of course, a more affectionate read might view this asymmetrical cultural exchange as, simply, honest. After all, learning and teaching—indeed, relating with people in any sort of face-to-face manner—can be a messy business, and very often lopsided. The settlement did not attempt to gloss over the unbalance of power, but to use it as a starting point for actual human interaction.

In any case, the settlement was actually built to weather criticism since its particular goals and methodologies were always in flux. The overarching aim of the settlement was to foster collaboration and consensus-building, and out of that collaboration would come specific goals particular to a given settlement's context. In Chicago's nineteenth ward, for example, collaboration between settlement workers and community residents might yield improved trash collection. Says Daniel Levine, "Jane Addams had no precise ideas about what to expect when she moved into Hull House. She had, however, the kind of mind which could tolerate and even thrive on uncertainty and new experiences" (42). Lissak and others might be right to question the theoretical motivation of the settlement model, but because settlement philosophy was deployed so specifically and in relation to particular problems, it becomes difficult to critique settlement workers as a whole. Moreover, the flexibility mandated by the settlement model allowed workers like Jane Addams to adapt and respond to their individual contexts. When Addams opened Hull House, for example, she set an initial goal of bringing culture to the lower classes by introducing them to

opera, literature, and art. After moving into the community, however, she quickly realized that the "primitive and actual needs" of the Chicago's nineteenth ward differed from her original estimation. At first Addams felt that exposure to fine paintings, classic literature, and music lessons would help her working class neighbors somehow "catch up" to their wealthier counterparts in terms of taste and sensibility. That is, she felt that a focus on enculturation would help bridge the gap between the classes. But she soon found that neighborhood residents—herself included—would benefit more from sanitary trash collection than opera appreciation classes, so she altered the settlement's mission accordingly. Though Addams did not entirely abandon her goal of cultural education, she did allow for modifications in order to address more pressing needs. Such flexibility allowed for the settlement to work within existing power structures even as it endeavored to change them. By identifying what Trolander calls the "twin objectives" of immediate services and basic reform, "settlement houses have had the flexibility to survive conservative as well as reform periods" (1). The philosophy of the settlement allows it to grow and evolve so that it might meet community needs while adapting to societal demands.

*The Settlement Evolution*

In some ways, as it encourages community input and flexibility, the settlement works ultimately to make itself obsolete. Indeed, a truly successful settlement might integrate so seamlessly into its surroundings that it would be unrecognizable after time. To that end, it may be tempting to think of the settlement as an outmoded relic of a bygone era. Certainly, "settlement house prestige," as Judith Trolander calls it, peaked right before WWI, when around 400 settlement houses were on record; by 1980 that number had shrunken to

about 110 (4). But perhaps the settlement is "outmoded" only because it has evolved, because it has adapted so handily to community needs. Hull House as Jane Addams founded it no longer exists, that is, as a residential program for reform-minded individuals—but the Hull House Association continues to support grassroots community initiatives, cultural programs, and policy reform (hullhouse.org). Though the association's workers may not necessarily live next door to their constituents as they would have a century ago, "Jane Addams Hull House Association is still immersed in communities to determine what is needed where and when and how, why and by whom" (hullhouse.org). Likewise, the scope of Toynbee Hall's mission in London has expanded considerably, although it still accepts residential volunteers, over 400 each year, to provide "practical innovative programmes to meet the needs of local people, improve conditions and enable communities to fulfil their potential" (toynbeehall.org.uk). In every way, then, the settlement is transformative. If it succeeds in transforming the community, it transforms itself as well.

Even so, Hull House is today recognized as the most fully realized American settlement—and certainly the most famous. Addams' contemporaries "held her in reverence and her creation, Hull House, as the model institution where new comers were understood and helped" (Lissak 5); since then, Addams has been the settlement's most enduring icon. In the early 1970s, two generations after the end of the Progressive era, Daniel Levine could still call Addams "a symbol for goodness: a symbol, perhaps, for the way in which the best traditional Christian impulses could be relevantly interpreted for a modern industrial society" (ix). By the end of the twentieth century, Dominica Barbuto would echo Levine to claim that Hull House and its founder "came to symbolize what was best about the American Settlement Movement" (100). Today,

Addams remains one of the most recognizable figures associated not only with the settlement movement, but with Progressivism as a whole.

Addams' prodigious legacy both today and in her own time—she was known as "Saint Jane" by the mid-1890s (Lissak 5)—is due in large part to the fact that she so fully and publicly articulated her philosophy. A prolific writer and speaker, she published books, essays, and speeches with regularity. The most celebrated (and reprinted) of her books, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, came out in 1910, though it was preceded by *Hull House Maps and Papers* in 1893 and eventually followed by *The Second Twenty Years at Hull House* in 1930. Each of these texts outline in some way the philosophy and methodology that facilitated the settlement's success. Of course, Addams' legacy extends beyond her settlement work: in *The Long Road of Women's Memory*, for example, she offers a meditation on the potential of a collective women's "memory"; in *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil* she deconstructs the causes and effects of prostitution among working class American women; in *Newer Ideals of Peace* she argues that peace and social equality are inexorably linked. Indeed, it was this argument that would eventually merit her the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. But whether she was writing about the settlement, women's history, sexual exploitation, or the peace movement, Addams held firmly to ideals of social justice and its role in a democratic society—and Hull House was the testing ground for these ideals. Her settlement was, above all, a site for action: it stood, said Addams, "for application as opposed to research; for emotion as opposed to abstraction; for universal interest as opposed to specialization" ("Function" 187). At the heart of all of her writing and speaking, and at the heart of settlement philosophy as Addams defined it, was the idea of democracy in action. She saw the settlement as a way to respond to the needs of both individuals and society in a dignified and democratic manner.

But perhaps Addams' greatest success has been the degree to which others have imitated her settlement experiment and adapted it to their own ends. These like-minded reformers may not have articulated their goals and philosophies as thoroughly as Addams, but they nevertheless helped shape the movement she began. Indeed, many of them—like Addams—wrote prolifically about their settlements, though perhaps not quite as publicly. In this project, I offer the collective writing of one group of settlement workers, those of the Hindman Settlement School in rural Kentucky, as part of the settlement legacy. I claim these women as settlement rhetoricians—as *interpreters*, to use Addams' own terminology—as I analyze the writing they produced on behalf of their neighbors. Though none of these women produced anything akin to *Twenty Years at Hull House*, their body of work allows a glimpse into their application of settlement theory.

*Overview of Chapters*

In Chapter One, "Unsettling History: Constructing Troublesome Creek," I begin to trace the history of the Hindman Settlement School and position this project as a contribution to feminist historiography. Furthermore, I consider the role of the Hindman school in what sociologist Allan Batteau calls the "invention" of Appalachia as a fixed and discrete entity in the minds of the American people, and I consider some of the critiques of this rural settlement.

In Chapter Two, "'To go out into the world and tell of the needs here': Mountain *Topoi* and the Invention of Appalachia," I examine the fundraising materials published during the first twenty years of the school's existence and name three *topoi* created by the settlement women: mountain potential, mountain desire, and mountain gratitude. I pair these *topoi* with the rhetorical strategies of description, narration, and comparison—strategies with which the settlement

women would have been familiar as a result of their formal rhetorical education. I examine the role of these fundraising texts in the construction of Appalachia for an outside audience, specifically interrogating Pettit and Stone's use of pathetic appeals to construct Appalachia as an impoverished and neglected region in need of outside support.

In Chapter Three, "Troublesome Fiction: Lucy Furman's Mountain *Topoi*" I interrogate the rhetoric, specifically the *topoi*, inherent in the fiction of Hindman teacher Lucy Furman. Published in the 1910s and 1920s as part of the school's fundraising efforts, Furman's novels—like the letters and pamphlets before them—cultivate an idea of Appalachian otherness in the consciousness of her bourgeois readership. Through a series of four novels, Furman provides readers with a glimpse into the early days at the settlement school (*The Quare Women* and *The Glass Window*), chronicles her own experience as the housemother of the Hindman boys' residence (*Mothering on Perilous*), and delineates the genesis of the settlement's eye clinic (*Sight to the Blind*). In claiming fiction as an "extracurricular" site for composition and rhetoric research, I consider the rhetorical implications of fiction as propaganda and argue for a conscious blurring of the line between rhetoric and poetic.

In Chapter Four, "Who will speak a good word for our work": Conscripted Invention, Ventriloquized Testimony," I investigate the rhetoric deployed by the settlement women as they solicited testimonial evidence for their fundraising materials. While they certainly relied on their own linguistic training and prowess in their letters and pamphlets, the women also recognized the valuable rhetorical resources around them in volunteers, visitors, and VIP guests. Thus, much of the fundraising propaganda features the voices of notable outsiders used to triangulate the administration's claims about the school and the people of Appalachia. But even as they deferred to the ethos of these outsiders—

mostly men, and usually doctors or distinguished educators—the settlement women shrewdly dictated what and how they would write. I argue that in so doing, they used testimony, a rhetorical strategy Aristotle classifies as "inartistic," as an artistic means of invention.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Unsettling History: Constructing Troublesome Creek

> Aunt Ailsie first heard the news from her son's wife, Ruthena, who, returning from a trading trip to The Forks, reined in her nag to call—
>
> "Maw, there's a passel of quare women come in from furrin parts and sot 'em up some cloth houses there on the p'int above the courthouse, and carrying on some of the outlandishest doings ever you heard of. And folks a-pouring up that hill till no jury can't hardly be got to hold court this week."
>
> The thread of wool Aunt Ailsie was spinning snapped and flew, and she stepped down from porch to palings. "Hit's a show!" she exclaimed in an awed voice. "I heared of one down Jackson-way one time, where there was a elephant and a lion and all manner of varmints, and the women rid around bareback, without no clothes on 'em to speak of."
>
> "No, hit hain't no show, neither, folks claim; they allow them women is right women, and dresses theirselves plumb proper. Some says they come up from the level land. And some that Uncle Ephraim Kent fotched 'em in."
>
> Lucy Furman, *The Quare Women*

On the flyleaf of her 1923 novel *The Quare Women: A Story of the Kentucky Mountains*, author Lucy Furman acknowledges, "The atmosphere of this story, its background, and even many of its incidents, arise from the author's connection with the Hindman Settlement School, in Knott County, Kentucky." Indeed, much of the novel seems straight out of the journals of the "quare" women who founded the school at the turn of the twentieth century, Katherine Pettit and May Stone. Both were from the Bluegrass region of Kentucky—the "level land'' of the passage above—and both were met with suspicion and wonder, like that of Aunt

Ailsie, when they first arrived in Knott County. The author was herself one of these "fotched on" women, a young teacher from Lexington who moved to the mountains shortly after the Hindman Settlement School opened and stayed for over twenty years. In novels such as *The Quare Women* and *Mothering on Perilous*, Furman offers her account of this rural settlement tucked away in the southern mountains, a school which has remained operational for over a century.

Today, nearly all accounts of the Hindman Settlement's success point squarely back to the vision and dedication of the "quare women,"[2] as Pettit and Stone were initially dubbed by mountain neighbors perplexed by their unfamiliar customs and ideas—women who, despite a litany of trials, dedicated their lives in service to the Appalachian people.[3] To be sure, the legacies of Katherine Pettit and May Stone live on in the current iteration of the Hindman settlement, more than a hundred years after their first sojourn into the mountains: campus buildings bear their names, a conspicuous roadside plaque commemorates their work, and the school's website highlights the contributions of these beloved founders. Scholarly and critical reception, too, has remembered the quare women kindly; with a few notable exceptions, the handful of books and articles recounting the lives and work of the settlement founders has

[2] There is no evidence to suggest that this label—the "queer" women—refers to the sexuality of Pettit or Stone. In *The Songcatcher*, a 2001 movie that depicts the early years of a fictional rural settlement ostensibly modeled on the Hindman school, the founders are involved in a lesbian relationship which eventually becomes a source of conflict between the school and the community members. The real-life relationship between Pettit and Stone, however, does not appear to have been romantic. Deborah Blackwell explicitly addresses the possibility of same-sex relationships at the settlement, arguing, "Clearly the emotional ties between these women were strong and allowed them in many ways to support one another as they worked in largely foreign territory. Acknowledging the need for deep and abiding female relationships among women reformers is not the same thing, however, as calling them lesbians, particularly not in the modern sense of the term. None of the evidence on the settlement schools gives any sort of indication of homosexual behavior" (181). Furthermore, the OED traces the origin of modern-day understandings of "queer" (that is, homosexual) to the 1930s, decades after the people of eastern Kentucky used the word to describe Pettit and Stone.

[3] May Stone remained at the settlement for the majority of her life, occasionally dividing her time between Hindman and her hometown of Louisville. In 1915, Katherine Pettit left Hindman for nearby Pine Mountain, Kentucky, just a few miles away, where she founded the Pine Mountain Settlement School as an extension of her earlier work. Ruth Huntington assumed the administrative post left by Pettit at Hindman.

valorized their initiative, celebrated their perseverance, and marveled at their ingenuity. Indeed, when we consider the challenges these women faced—as novice administrators with little training and even less money, it seems almost miraculous that they could even get the school off the ground, let alone mold it into an exemplar of rural education—and their unflagging determination to overcome said challenges, they seem downright saintly.

Nevertheless, the history of this school on the banks of Troublesome Creek and the motives of the women who founded it are a bit, well, troublesome. Katherine Pettit's neatly articulated claim that she and her Progressive sisters were in Appalachia "to learn all we can and teach all we can" seems innocuous enough, but their goals were actually a bit more complicated. Educated, ambitious, and reform-minded, these two young daughters of the bluegrass—Pettit grew up on a prosperous farm outside of Lexington, while Stone hailed from a wealthy Louisville family—were intrigued by this remote and curious corner of their home state only lately "discovered" by outsiders. A phenomenon detailed by several scholars, notably Henry Shapiro and Allan Batteau, the "invention" of Appalachia as a discrete and fixed entity in the American consciousness came about in the decades following the Civil War, as a fractured nation faced an identity crisis of sorts. Shapiro explains that citizens of the (re)United States found solace in colloquial stories from around the nation, called "local color" literature at the time, which featured exotic settings and quirky characters to highlight some aspect of "American" values—often rugged individualism and a sense of adventure. Readers of popular magazines such as *Atlantic Monthly* and *Century* responded especially well to stories from Appalachia: eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, western North Carolina and

Virginia, and West Virginia.[4] As Shapiro sees it, the seemingly remote southern mountains were "not in fact separated from America by ethnic, geographic, or chronological distance," so the mountaineers therein were close enough in proximity to literary hubs such as New York and Charleston to seem familiar to most readers (17). Indeed, many authors pointed out—even celebrated—the racial and ethnic "purity" of the mountaineers, often classifying them as the oldest Anglo-Saxon "stock" in the country. At the same time, they were far enough away in terms of lifestyle and customs to sate reader thirst for the exotic. With their old-timey customs, individualist temperament, and ambivalence toward the "progress" being foisted upon the rest of the nation, the characters in these stories underscored the best of "traditional" American values while offering readers a primitive Other against which they could define themselves. Appalachia, as a result, came to represent a uniquely American region. Furthermore, notes Allan Batteau, the Appalachian mountains held the added Jacksonian allure of potential conquest over nature, which was especially appealing to a depleted nation still licking its self-inflicted wounds and looking to reassert its authority over something, anything. Finally, because the mountaineers did not readily identify with either North or South—living in Confederate states yet fighting, for the most part, with the Union—they proved an ideal focal point for a populace ready to forget past divisions and direct its attention to new definitions of Americanness.

As these "local color" stories persisted in popular literature and, eventually, newspaper accounts of the southern mountains, the Appalachian region became just that in American consciousness—a *region*, isolated, permanent, and distinct from the rest of the country. By 1899, when Berea

[4] While the Appalachian mountain chain stretches from New York to Mississippi, "Appalachia" as a sociopolitical term is most often used to denote this central portion of the chain; I adhere to such usage in this project.

College president William Goodell Frost proposed the naming of "Appalachian America" in an *Atlantic Monthly* article titled "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains," readers would have had no trouble viewing "the mountains and mountaineers…as a coherent region inhabited by an homogeneous population" (H. Shapiro 116). But as theoretical geographer Benedict Anderson argues, the idea of any region as discrete, unchanging, and—above all—"real" is an illusion. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson explains that communities must be "*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (15). Such imagining paves the way for nationalism, the idea that members of a particular nation share an essential set of values, beliefs, or customs—something fundamental and particular that separates citizens of one country (or community) from citizens of another. Anderson fixes his thesis around nation-states, but it applies to any geopolitical entity which defines itself by its borders rather than its centers. Thus, says Anderson, the process by which nations are imagined applies to smaller communities as well: "all communities larger than primordial villages (and perhaps even these) are imagined" (15). That is, within nations, citizens can imagine themselves in communion with fellow inhabitants of their particular city, town, or region and thus conceive of essential differences between themselves and everyone else outside of that city, town, or region; in Anderson's parlance, they conceive of a "deep, horizontal comradeship" between themselves and their fellow inhabitants (16). Places and individual identities become bound up with one another as community residents strive to define themselves against outsiders.

The regional identity of Appalachia, however, came about in a slightly different way; the construction and naming of this region has not occurred in the

same way or for the same reasons that, say, the construction of "The United States" or "New York City" has. In those cases, the act of naming has drawn a border around a group of *subjects*—a group of people within that border who identify with each other affirmatively, who imagine amongst themselves Anderson's "deep, horizontal comradeship." In the case of Appalachia, however, that "deep, horizontal comradeship" has been imposed from the outside. The act of naming by those on the outside has worked to draw a border around a group of *objects*—a group not affirmed from within, but defined from without. So by naming the southern mountain region "Appalachia," by drawing a border around it, Frost "did not so much 'discover' Appalachia as invent it" for the rest of the nation (Shapiro 121).

But at the same time this naming occurred—that is, as this idea of "Appalachia" began to take hold in American consciousness—the authors and journalists lavishing attention on the southern mountains began to characterize the region as less a uniquely American oddity and more a threat to American progress and civility. As the country rushed headlong into the twentieth century with "progress" as the watchword, charming stories of old-fashioned mountaineers lost their foothold in the canon of popular literature. In their stead were unsettling tales of mountain violence, lawlessness, incivility. The new Appalachia—at least, according to *The Atlantic Monthly* and its ilk—was a menacing place, full of danger and lacking refinement of any sort. It was, in short, "a problem to be solved" (H. Shapiro 63). In some ways, this process of naming Appalachia from outside closely aligns with the epistemology of Edward Said's Orientalism, a discourse of resisting, defining, and thus dominating the "Other." But the metaphor of the Other is not a perfect fit for Appalachia. Because it is a region *within* the US, both physically and ideologically, it has been something of a dilemma for Americans as it often serves as a site of *identification*

as well as resistance. So even as Appalachia became a doppelganger, a foil, a photographic negative for the rest of America to use in defining itself, who could forget the uniquely "American" values found therein? Who could dismiss the individualism, the natural wonder, the racial "purity"? Thus Appalachia became a both/and space: a region perceived as both *un*-American (poor, ignorant, uncivilized) and *ultra*-American (folksy, natural, individualistic, "pure"), a region that provided—and continues to provide—America with a circumscribed discourse for defining itself. Regarded with a mix of admiration, fascination, and disdain, the southern mountains became a sort of cultural obsession as they "provided American society with colorful characters for its fiction, perfect innocents for its philanthropy, and an undeveloped wilderness in which to prove its pioneering blood" (Batteau 1). Efforts to "save" Appalachia from itself, therefore, commenced accordingly and have continued apace for the past hundred years.

Katherine Pettit and May Stone would have carried these perceptions with them when they set off for the mountains at the end of the nineteenth century. Pettit especially had been influenced by local media reports of rampant feud violence in the hill country, so much so that she organized a three-week sightseeing trip in 1895 for herself and six friends. Primarily motivated by curiosity and a sense of adventure, the group traveled to Hazard, purportedly the "seat of the French-Eversole feud" that had been diligently (and sensationally) covered in *The Lexington Herald* (Stone 1945). During their stay the party met a local woman who "asked them to explain some things to her and when they seemed in a hurry to get away, she turned and said, 'I 'lowed that you-uns as knowed how had come to show us as don't'" (Stone 1945). Thus chastened, the group began talking with the locals, and "before long the people were begging the visitors to stay with them and start a school for young people"

(Stone 1945). Pettit found the request hard to shake, and a year later she returned to the mountains with Kentucky WCTU President Frances Beauchamp. When the issue of mountain education was raised during a WCTU meeting in the fall of 1896, "it was decided that [a social settlement] would be helpful in the mountains as well as in the cities. Katherine Pettit then said if such work were started she would like to have a part in it" (Stone 1945) Though the club's interest in the region bore little fruit initially, the WCTU, along with the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs, did soon send a traveling library to several mountain towns—such as Hindman—as a form of outreach. The traveling library caught on quickly and held for several years; three years after it started, Federation minutes note a list of books "requested by mountain people" and club librarians, among them *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Ben Hur*, *Swiss Family Robinson*, *Robinson Crusoe*, books "opposing Mormonism," books on U.S. history, and assorted works by authors such as Louisa May Alcott, J.M. Barrie, and Charles Dickens (Kentucky Federation).

But despite—or perhaps because of—the success of the Federation's traveling library, Pettit continued to lobby for greater involvement in the mountains. In February of 1899, she gave a report to the Federation titled "Kentucky Mountain Folk," expounding on Appalachian life as she had perceived it during her visits. Her report emphasized the mountaineers' primitive living conditions, problematic gender politics, impoverished education, and bizarre religious customs. Ultimately, Pettit argued, a school would solve all these problems since the Appalachian people "are as susceptible of development as any people on earth; as is shown by their ambition and achievement when avenues of improvement are open to them" (Pettit 1899). Lengthy and punctuated with anecdotes from her own travels, Pettit's report offers a bleak assessment of life in the Southern Highlands; she is clearly hopeful, though, that

education is the way out. To that end, she concludes by requesting $3000 from the Federation of Women's Clubs to start a school.

Around the same time, the Federation received a request Reverend J.T. Mitchell of Hazard, one of their contacts from the traveling library program. As a minister in a mountain town, Mitchell allowed that "the books had done much good, but that he wished the Federation could send some woman into the mountains to help the women and girls, to teach them sewing, cooking and the things every woman should know in the care of a home and children" (Stone 1945). The text of his letter is transcribed below:

> Can not the State Federation send us a woman—a gentle, womanly woman, a dear old-fashioned woman, young or old, who can win woman's true rights in that conquest that in itself is simply being a woman? Without ever making any assertion of the truth through her lips, my mother taught me that one of the grand truths of womankind is that 'It is grand to be a woman.' But the contrast of negative testimony was necessary to enable me to see the true grandeur of gentle, wifely, motherly, sisterly woman—woman that is man's truest, purest friend, as I see her in my maturer life. Well, what do I want of the woman? I imagine you ask. I want her a few weeks of the coming summer to assist in conduct of meetings of wives, mothers, housekeepers, young ladies, and little girls. Lectures and lessons on cookery and homemaking should be made particularly enthusiastic, and then the intellectual and moral features can be made interesting. (Kentucky Federation)

Between Pettit's report and Mitchell's letter, club members became sufficiently convinced of the need for their presence in the region. Though Pettit's supplication focused on education in general while Reverend Mitchell's honed in

on gendered domestic instruction specifically, the separate requests were compelling enough together to move the club members to action. The Federation minutes note the following decision: "In response to this appeal Miss Katherine Pettet [sic] and Miss McCartney were sent to the Mountains by the Kentucky Federation for the summer of 1899. (Miss McCartney could not go. Miss May Stone took her place.)" (Kentucky Federation).

So it was that the following summer Katherine Pettit and May Stone—along a few other volunteer teachers—held summer camps in the eastern Kentucky towns of Hazard, Hindman, and Sassafras. Though Reverend Mitchell's initial request specified instruction in the domestic arts, Pettit and Stone also offered classes on literacy instruction, and they accepted students of all ages and both genders in their reading, sewing, cooking, singing, and kindergarten classes. According to Stoddart, these initial camps taught the founders of the school that "above all, people desired better educational opportunities for themselves and their children;" as a result, Pettit and Stone "viewed all of their subsequent efforts within the broad context of education" (*CC* 2). May Stone had this to say after one summer camp:

> We feel after three month's work at Hindman, that the settlement plan is the best way of reaching and helping these people. But instead of a few month's work each summer, we hope to see before long a well established, permanent Social Settlement and Industrial School, located in one of these mountain towns.
>
> To live among the people, in as near a model home as we can get, to show them by example the advantages of cleanliness, neatness, order, study along both literary and industrial lines, and to inspire them to use pure language and to lead pure, Christian lives; these should be our efforts, if we wish to elevate and uplift

> them; and they stand ready, willing, and waiting to do their part, if we do ours.
>
> The cry of the mountaineer is, "I have not had a chance. I would be so glad if my children could have a chance." (qtd. in Stoddart *QWJ* 94)

The immense and immediate popularity of the camps led to the establishment of the year-round Hindman Settlement School—created, according to the roadside marker at the site of the still-functioning institution, "to provide educational and service opportunities for the people of the mountains while keeping them mindful of their heritage."

With little training and even less money, the quare women faced remarkable odds as they began their mountain experiment. Neither Pettit nor Stone was formally trained educators, though they had done quite a bit of research prior to opening their school at Hindman by embarking on an extensive research tour of well known settlements and schools: Neighborhood House in Louisville, Berea College, Hampton Institute, and Battle Creek Sanitarium (Stoddart 49). The settlement women were further aided by their adherence to Progressive educator John Dewey's philosophy of "learning by doing"—and fortunately, they learned quickly. Following the precedent they set during the camp summers, they adapted their work to meet the growing needs of the community. In 1902, the first year of the its existence, the school included a kindergarten, a "Domestic Science" class, and a "Normal Department" for teacher education; by 1904, the school had expanded to include the "common school branches," as well as "classes in basketry, sewing, cooking, gardening and carpentry" (Pettit and Stone 1902, 1904). And from the beginning, the school employed trained teachers, many of whom were part of Pettit and Stone's coterie of well educated friends. The settlement founders seemingly did all they could

to prepare themselves for the difficult task of running a school, despite the fact that their formal preparation was less than ideal.

Aside from the founders' lack of formal training, another problem facing the school was the setting. Though several schoolhouses dotted the mountain landscape already, they often sat empty as students and teachers faced difficulties navigating the treacherous hills and hollows during the winter and early spring months. Students fell behind in school quickly, and many eventually dropped out altogether. In order to circumvent the problem of perilous terrain, the Hindman settlement fashioned itself into a boarding school, and children from the hills and hollows outside the town limits were given the option to live on site. Thus, the settlement's material needs exceeded those of a typical school: in addition to books, supplies, salaries, and the like, the administration would also need to supply food and lodging for students and teachers. They would need not just a model home, as in an urban settlement, or schoolhouse, as in a traditional school, but an entire campus for living, teaching, and learning. In short, they would need money. The WCTU had pledged a few thousand dollars to get the school up and running, but their contribution was far exceeded by the settlement's eventual operating budget. While the initial settlement consisted of a small cottage and an old schoolhouse purchased from a local teacher, plans for expansion were always in the works.

Pettit and Stone, then, became fundraisers. At first, they undertook a fundraising tour in 1901, primarily visiting women's clubs, civic groups, and settlements across the country (Stoddart 19); as more of their time was demanded at the settlement, however, they switched to written appeals. Beginning in 1902, the same year as the school's founding, the settlement began sending letters to current and potential supporters. In that first letter, supporters learn that "Thirty-five Hundred Dollars ($3,500) additional is needed now to

erect the building for the settlement, purchase the lot, and meet present necessities" (Pettit and Stone AL 1902). Though the letters throughout the years rarely fail to mention the "present necessities" beleaguering the school, the writers did become a bit more elegant in their requests. Often including student voices, visitor anecdotes, and endorsements from respected community members, the letters began to paint a picture of the school, its students, and its surroundings for a steadily growing national readership.

*Neighbors and Interpreters: Adapting the Settlement Model*

Pettit and Stone were clearly intrigued by the settlement houses of the Northeast and Midwest, and their impulse to use the settlement model was well advised. As the settlement idea began to migrate in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it became clear that each settlement was unique to its environment. Luckily, the settlement model allowed for such flexibility. Indeed, as settlements continued to pop up in new settings, the very idea of a "settlement" evolved from a fixed entity to a sort of theory, a portable set of governing principles that facilitated the mixing together of diverse populations. Nowhere was this malleability of settlement theory more evident than in the settlements that began to appear in the southern mountains, a region which brought about a new set of challenges for volunteers. It should come as no surprise that Appalachia became a popular destination for settlement workers; if, as Jane Addams advocated, social settlements should address the "primitive and actual needs" of those living in poverty (*Twenty* 55), Appalachia provided a perfect backdrop. Indeed, throughout the twentieth century, Appalachia was a veritable promised land for literacy educators, philanthropists, corporations, social activists, politicians, government-funded uplift programs, missionaries—and settlement workers. In the years between 1875 and 1920, over 200 settlement

schools were founded in Appalachia, initially modeled after urban settlement houses but adapted to a rural setting. Whereas urban settlements took the form of houses in the population-dense neighborhoods of large cities, rural settlements appeared as schools—often residential—where students and community members could meet congregate away from their far-flung homes up hills and hollows. Rural settlements enjoyed quite a bit of popularity during the Progressive era, but only a few remain in operation. Among those still in existence—including the Berry Schools of Rome, GA; the Pi Beta Phi School of Gatlinburg, TN; and the Penland School of Spruce Pine, NC—the Hindman Settlement School has been, and continues to be, the most influential.

The success of the Hindman school has been due in part to the extreme flexibility of the administration over the years. One hallmark of the settlement model is the ability to adapt quickly to new challenges as they are articulated by community members, to rely on neighborhood consensus in revising goals and approaching problems. Jane Addams may have opened Hull House with visions of opera appreciation seminars, but her goals quickly shifted to address community needs like sanitation and nutrition. Katherine Pettit and May Stone experienced a similar learning curve at the Hindman school. Sent to the mountains to inculcate mountain women and girls with an appreciation for domesticity and feminine "virtue," the quare women quickly responded to the requests of their neighbors and revised their curriculum to include basic instruction in reading and writing alongside their sewing and cooking classes, as town residents communicated their desire for literacy education. After a few years, they widened their scope even further, building a hospital and opening a clinic to treat trachoma, a widespread eye affliction unique to the mountaineers. By becoming a part of the Hindman community, settlement administrators were

able to discern problems and propose solutions as friends rather than missionaries or bureaucrats.

Indeed, such an emphasis on flexible, communal goal-setting has long defined Hindman's mission. The students and community members in the town of Hindman have consistently set the agenda for the school—not the other way around. Almost every major initiative undertaken by the school has had its genesis in community need and desire rather than a board meeting, a practice that originated with the quare women and has continued since. For example, two of the school's current projects are a school for dyslexic children and a two-week summer writer's workshop. The first, a program for dyslexic students, began nearly thirty years ago when a mother from the town of Hindman became frustrated with the lack of resources for her dyslexic son and approached the school administration for help. With the help of Hindman faculty, she began an after-school tutoring program on the school campus, which eventually morphed into a summer-long program, the success of which led to a full-time school—the only of its kind in the region (Stoddart 189). Now the program is housed in the James Still Learning Center at the settlement and includes an after school program, a summer tutorial, and a full-time school (hindmansettlement.org). The second project, the Appalachian Writer's Workshop, began at the suggestion of Hindman alumnus Albert Stewart. A writer himself, Stewart recognized the importance of a community for aspiring authors, and he saw the Hindman school as an ideal meeting place. After organizing the first event, he turned the reins over to the school; the workshop celebrates its thirtieth anniversary in 2008 and now attracts writers from across the country for the two-week summer program. Admission is competitive, and the program accepts between seventy-five and eighty writers each year (hindmansettlement.org). By encouraging past and present students as well as community members to direct the school's focus,

administrators at the Hindman school have truly shared the responsibilities—and rewards—of leadership with their neighbors. Based on power-sharing rather than power-preserving, Hindman's mission has been flexible enough to empower neighborhood residents to make change themselves. It is a philosophy based on both actuality and possibility, both of which are rooted in the realities of community life.

The Hindman settlement, too, has clung to Jane Addams' notion of the settlement worker as *interpreter* as well as *neighbor*. In the quare women's story we find many examples of interpretation, hopeful cultural exchange dashed with a problematic dose of social control. Certainly Katherine Pettit and May Stone were interested more than a one-way transfer of knowledge and skills in the mountains—hence Pettit's initial hope "to learn all we can and teach all we can." Truly, the settlement women were eager to learn as much as possible about mountain life. Katherine Pettit, for instance, was particularly interested in mountain folk music and its roots in Old English ballads; her early journals devote significant space to the recording of ballad lyrics. She clearly recognized these songs as valuable cultural artifacts and endeavored to preserve them to the best of her ability. Furthermore, both Pettit and Stone were fascinated by the custom of cloth-weaving and solicited the help of women in the community to learn the intricate art during their first summers in the mountains.

Other instances of interpretation are slightly more troubling, however. Beginning with her first trips to the mountains, May Stone had frequently shown interest in the traditional quiltmaking practices of mountain women, and she eventually encouraged these women to sell their wares outside the region, through the auspices of the Hindman school, to supplement their family income. It seemed like a natural partnership, and one in which mountain women were eager to participate. However, Stone discouraged these women from using

artificial dyes—a relatively new practice to which many had already become accustomed. Such a shortcut, she argued, tainted the "purity" of such an a traditional craft. In fact, Stone came to *insist* that weavers and quilters return to the older, more time-consuming methods of their mothers and grandmothers, using plant-based dyes. So the quilts being packed, sold, and shipped all over the country in the name of 'traditional' Appalachian craftsmanship did not, in fact, reflect the bare realities of mountain life, but instead the proclivities of May Stone. In this example, cultural exchange ran to social control fairly quickly; the quare women did not so much participate in an equal teaching-and-learning partnership as they dictated the parameters of certain cultural practices to suit their own tastes. Of course, we might easily call this cultural exchange an example, however convoluted, of *hybridity* rather than manipulation. In the case of mountain quilt-making and plant-based versus manufactured dyes, the intra-cultural contact resulted in a more "traditional" (rather than apparently modern) end product than we might expect from Progressive-era reform policies, but it is nevertheless an example of cultural interpretation.

*Critiques of the Hindman Settlement School*

Indeed, some have found the Hindman Settlement School to be more generally troublesome than anything else. Despite the seemingly innocuous and even noble goals of the settlement model—namely, flexible progressive education with a nod to community and tradition—a few scholars have accused the settlement workers of complicity in cultural and class oppression. Indeed, most of the scholarly criticism surrounding the Hindman Settlement School (and other settlements like it) stems from a righteous indignation that settlement workers, cultural and geographic outsiders of their adopted cultures, would impose their bourgeois values and aesthetics on an unsuspecting audience.

These critics, that is, indict the settlement women for the manipulation and exploitation of their "exotic" neighbors. This was David Whisnant's charge in 1983, when he wrote in *All That is Native and Fine* that the settlement women did more harm than good in their new mountain context by manipulating mountain culture to their own ends. By intervening in specific Appalachian cultural traditions such as quilt making and ballad collecting, argues Whisnant, the settlement women polluted the very culture they claimed to respect by choosing which elements of mountain culture to embrace and which to reject: "the professed (and at some levels, real) veneration of the settlement women for local culture was *selective*, and the mechanism of selectivity was the colored lens of their own culture, which was for all practical purposes the genteel popular culture of the turn of the century" (Whisnant 51). Despite their stated goal of keeping mountain children "mindful of their heritage," the settlement women replaced what Whisnant calls the "indigenous culture" of the mountains with "genteel turn-of-the-century mass culture: light bread, pump organs, 'socials,' Fletcherized food, and napkins on the left, please" (48). Though Whisnant has gone on to temper his original thesis in the twenty-five years since its publication, his original charge of "systematic cultural intervention"—that is, the act of "consciously and programmatically tak[ing] action within a culture with the intent of affecting it in some specific way that the intervenor thinks desirable" (13)—remains one of the most trenchant and influential criticisms of the Hindman school.

To be sure, the blending of bluegrass and mountain cultures was not always seamless for the quare women. Despite community enthusiasm for the presence of the settlement and its founders, some Hindman residents found themselves at odds with the ideas espoused by the school. Whisnant points to the settlement's Christmas celebration as one such thorny site of "cultural

intervention." Soon after coming to the mountains for their summer camps, Pettit and Stone learned that the mountaineers celebrated Christmas differently than in the Bluegrass, as this early journal entry attests:

> When we were telling them what we do at Christmas time, they asked us if it was new Christmas or old Christmas. We asked what they meant by old and new Christmas, and we were told that the old Christmas, January 6th, was Christ's birthday and the old people observed that and the young people had their frolics on new Christmas, December 25th. There is no giving presents or any religious celebration, but much drinking of moonshine, fighting and general carousing. (qtd. in Stoddart *QWJ* 248)

More time in the mountains did nothing to allay the settlement women's uneasiness over mountain Christmas customs. A few years later horrified teacher Lucy Furman recounted a student who "when five years old was given a lot of whiskey by the men of his family on Christmas, and then a loaded pistol was put in his hand, he was told to point it at his brother who was seven" (Furman 1908). Scandalized by the thought of a Christmas passed in drunken revelry, the settlement women took up the cause of "New Christmas," exhorting the mountaineers to transfer the solemnity of Old Christmas to December 25th. And instead of "encouraging local practice," Whisnant says, the quare women "reinforced the drift toward a new style of celebration" by starting new holiday traditions among their neighbors (49). Specifically, they decorated Christmas trees, distributed presents (eventually each child would receive a small doll and an orange), and exhorted community residents to observe the holiday minus typical "frolics" such as moonshining and fighting. And to hear the settlement women tell it, the new Christmas traditions went over swimmingly; "[n]o bickerings, no comparing to see who got most, no envy, no greed, no pushing,

only pathetic patience" (Pettit and Stone 1908). By all newsletter accounts, the children at the settlement—and the community members generally—seemed to enjoy the quare women's new Christmas traditions.

Other firsthand accounts, however, belie cracks in the rosy narrative. Mary Stacy, a Hindman resident who had become a special friend and helper to the settlement women, distributed the first batch of presents to area children in December of 1901. Though Pettit and Stone were back home in the Bluegrass—they would not move to the mountains until the founding of the permanent settlement the next August—they had sent along gifts for the children they had worked with the previous summer during the camps. The problem, however, was that they sent along presents *only* for the children they had already met; they did not account for other children in the community who had not attended the camps. So when demand exceeded supply on that first Christmas, Mary Stacy found herself mobbed: "they was all around the pile of things we had layed aside…just grabbing, wading, stirring, and hunting for their things" (qtd. in Stoddart *CC* 59). Though New Christmas had come to the mountains in the form of trinkets from the level land, it seemed to undermine the sort peace on earth Pettit and Stone were hoping for. To add insult to injury, town residents who had earlier offered to chip in for the delivery of the gifts from the train station refused to pay after the distribution debacle. The settlement's Christmas celebration may have eventually assumed the glow of a Currier and Ives painting, but the first years comprised something of a transition period.

But the Christmas consternation was mild compared to the fire of 1905. Town and gown tensions came to a head on November 10 of that year, when a local moonshiner, having lost business thanks to the settlement's insistence on

temperance, set the newly completed main settlement building ablaze[5]. All students and teachers escaped unscathed after one teacher was awakened by smoke in the middle of the night, but the log building quickly burned to the ground. Stoddart tells us that a year before the fire, the alleged arsonist had bribed some local boys to vandalize the settlement in an attempt to scare the women away; when that strategy failed, the moonshiner apparently took matters into his own hands (*CC* 63). The fire, obviously, was a major blow in terms of both logistics and morale—all the time, money, and energy that had been poured into the erection of the brand-new settlement house was lost in one night. Teachers and students were lucky to get out with their lives; clothing, toiletries, books, and school supplies were impossible to salvage. Almost immediately, however, the town rallied around the displaced fire victims, volunteering food, clothing, and shelter. The prevailing community sentiment was one of solidarity. But despite such widespread displays of support, it is obvious that not *all* community residents embraced the settlement or its philosophy—and community resistance took different forms, some more extreme than others. Critics of the Hindman school are right to point out the cultural conflict that arose as the quare women took up residence in the mountains.

Indeed, many of the scholarly pieces that focus on (or even briefly mention) the Hindman school do so through the "critique of intervention" trope that has become commonplace in Appalachian studies: rather than focus on the history or pedagogy of the school, many of these studies treat Hindman as yet another example of the invasion of outside interests into Appalachia[6]. True, a

[5] Though there is no concrete evidence to back up this theory, it is vetted by Stoddart in Chapter Two of *Challenge and Change in Appalachia* (63).

[6] The tension between cultural insiders and outsiders is a common theme in Appalachian studies, and it is one with which I am familiar both theoretically and personally. I grew up in central Kentucky, approximately ten miles from the "official" border of Appalachia, but my parents and grandparents all came from eastern Kentucky and West Virginia. Indeed, my family tree has been rooted in Appalachia for

handful of scholarly accounts are rather glowing—Jess Stoddart's two books, *The Quare Women's Journals* and *Challenge and Change in Appalachia* are the only book-length treatments of the settlement's history, and both are overwhelmingly positive. And a few dissertations in education and history cast the Hindman Settlement School in a flattering light.[7] But critical attention has been infrequent outside of the social sciences, despite important implications for rhetorical and literacy studies. When it is mentioned in secondary texts, the Hindman Settlement School is most often characterized as one of many literacy/education/social uplift initiatives to pepper Appalachia in the past century and a half: in Henry Shapiro's *Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920*, P. David Searles's *A College for Appalachia: Alice Lloyd on Caney Creek*, Richard Drake's *A History of Appalachia*, and John Alexander Williams's *Appalachia: A History*, authors offer brief accounts of the school's history and its role in the social fabric of Appalachia. These treatments are relatively benign, neither praising nor damning the settlement women for their presence in the region. But the most robust analyses of the Hindman Settlement School and its role in the invention of Appalachia are the most critical—like Whisnant's argument outlined above. Many scholars who have looked at Hindman in the twenty or so years since the publication of *All That is Native and Fine* have argued along his same lines. For example, in one of composition and rhetoric's only examinations of the Hindman settlement, Peter Mortensen takes up the mantle of "systemic cultural intervention" and argues that "rather than impugning the cultural traditions

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the past 300 years. Though my own "Appalachian-ness" may be a bit tenuous, my place on the fringes of Appalachian culture has positioned me as both insider and outsider.

[7] See Deborah Blackwell, "The Ability 'To Do Much Larger Work': Gender and Reform in Appalachia, 1890-1935" (University of Kentucky, 1999) and Rhonda England, "Voices from the History of Teaching: Katherine Pettit, May Stone, and Elizabeth Watts at the Hindman Settlement School" (University of Kentucky, 1990).

imposed at Hindman, critique should center on the very act of imposition, of intervention. Necessarily, then, attention must also be paid to the enabling role of literacy in such cultural intervention" (110). Some have even gone so far as to call Appalachia a "colony," oppressed by business, government, and philanthropic interests, citing the cultural intrusion of the Hindman settlement workers as evidence of such colonization.

To be sure, these are important arguments to consider. However, it's not enough to stop at criticism; indeed, I'm afraid that some of these critiques of outside intervention are just as dangerous as the act they are condemning. That is, many of these studies often characterize Appalachian culture as a pure, virginal wonderland spoiled only by outside penetration. The imagery of and neat division into victim and victimizer serves only to reify the process of mediation that is being critiqued, stripping Appalachian people of any potential agency. By ignoring the voices of Appalachian people (such as the students at the Hindman school), and in so easily narrating the 'victimhood' of an entire region, these representations oversimplify the complex processes of cultural negotiation that have long been a part of Appalachia, subtly reinforcing the belief that this region—and its people—are in need of a savior. Cloaking condescension in scholarship, no matter how well intentioned, makes it no less insidious. Instead of dismissing Hindman (and other sites like it) as a tainted site of cultural cross-pollination, I suggest that, by reimagining Hindman's history and the rhetorical facility of its founders, we examine it in terms of its very hybridity, as a site of negotiation, a troublesome space, a place from which we can learn something.

Thus the Hindman story is bound up with issues of class, gender, enculturation, and representation. As such, it is an ideal site of inquiry for those of us interested in rhetoric and its power to construct reality. The overall project

of this dissertation is to challenge a number of received histories—of composition and rhetoric, critical pedagogy, and women's history—as it examines the rhetorical practices of the settlement women. Fraught with class politics and cultural prejudice, the rhetoric and pedagogy of the Hindman founders is, no doubt, troubling from a twenty-first century perspective. But it has also been wildly successful: over the past hundred years, the school has evolved from a series of summer camps held in tents on hillsides to a thriving community literacy and community action center that, even today, remains influential in the region. Of the hundreds of rural social settlements founded during the Progressive era, the Hindman school is among the few still in operation. But despite the rich textual and pedagogical legacies to be found at Hindman, critical attention has been infrequent outside the social sciences. By investigating a site heretofore neglected by rhetorical history and critical pedagogy, this dissertation responds to the call of revisionist historians, who argue that we must reimagine the past by including as many voices and sites of research as possible in order to render a more comprehensive history for ourselves.

*Unsettled Histories, Disrupted Narratives*

As a field, composition and rhetoric has generally told its own history in one of two ways: in terms of the very elite (the beginnings of composition at Harvard as documented by James Berlin, Robert Connors, and James Murphy, for example), or in terms of the very radical (the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, and others—though, to be fair, even these "radical" pedagogies comprise something of an elite in our narrative history). These accounts, while plentiful, are somewhat anemic: they exist as two poles on a continuum packed with other, less familiar, often ignored—but just as rich—locations for research into literacy instruction. It was this neglect of such fruitful

sites of inquiry that led Anne Ruggles Gere in her 1994 CCCC chair's address to rebuke the "uncritical narrative of professionalization" that had gripped the field, and urge members to "acknowledge the extracurriculum as a legitimate and autonomous cultural formation that undertakes its own projects" (284). And this "extracurriculum" of composition—the spaces outside of the formal classroom where literacy instruction takes place—has proven to be fertile ground in composition studies, as scholars have begun to investigate literacy education in community centers, writing groups, workplaces, prisons, and a host of other locations. In some ways, though, this impetus to look outside the walls of the classroom has set up yet another binary, another set of poles: composition in the school vs. composition in the extracurriculum. More recently, however, scholars have begun to explore the spaces between, the both/and sites, the neither/nor sites. In *The Formation of College English*, for example, Thomas Miller argues for a reconsideration of 'marginal' sites *within* the academy, maintaining that "the formation of college English was a product of 'transculturation,' and that such dialectical processes make what gets taught and learned in marginal courses and institutions central to the ongoing development of the discipline" (29). Indeed, recent *College English* and *CCC* articles acknowledge a "desire to render a more comprehensive story of composition's intellectual and social traditions," hopeful that "work is just beginning on alternative sites of formal education" (Fitzgerald 225). And our professional conferences seem to be following suit; the 2006 CCCC theme, for example, was "Composition in the Center Spaces," with program chair Akua Duku Anyoke encouraging presentations that redefined and challenged the idea of center and margin in writing research. Such a focus on neglected sites is heartening, as it seems to evidence a shift in research trends, away from poles and into the blurry, muddy, and messy in-betweens.

The Hindman Settlement School is one such messy—or we might say troublesome—space that deserves our attention in composition and rhetoric. In both its history and its pedagogical tradition, Hindman holds valuable lessons. Few of us who teach writing today work in either of the extremes—in very elite institutions or very radical ones. Rather, we find ourselves caught somewhere in the middle, negotiating institutional pressure, personal convictions, student ability, and disciplinary politics. By offering the Hindman Settlement School as an historical model of problematic yet hopeful rhetoric and pedagogy, this project heeds the call of Susan Kates: "those of us committed to making the university a place that honors the increasingly diverse student population of the country must invoke history to do that work" (xiv).

In an effort to construct a history of progressivism and the settlement movement, scholars have paid considerable critical attention to Jane Addams and Hull House, partially because she was such a pioneer, but also because she wrote extensively about her settlement experiment. My contention in this dissertation is that we have a responsibility to look at other, equally instructive, though perhaps less visible, sites. In the classic "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens," Alice Walker exhorts African-American women to search for the creative inheritance left by their foremothers, cautioning that this inheritance may not necessarily be found in the traditional creative sites of high art, music, and literature. Rather, Walker argues, "The answer is so simple that many of us have spent years discovering it. We have constantly looked high, when we should have looked high—and low" (319). In other words, the clues Walker looks for lie in the everyday: the recipe book, the garden, the quilt, the lullaby. Jacqueline Jones Royster offers a similar argument in *Traces of a Stream*, presenting a "stream" of African-American women essayists as "evidence of the sea [of African-American women intellectuals] that until now has passed

unnoticed" (5). Though their studies differ from this one in demographic focus, Walker's advice to look high *and low*, along with Royster's notion of an unnoticed sea of women's intellectual activity, offer important insight for those interested in expanding the rhetorical canon to include heretofore "silent" voices. While I hesitate to co-opt their methodology, it has led me to search for women such as Katherine Pettit and May Stone—women who were publicly exerting their rhetorical prowess in a time when women were supposedly "silent" and powerless—and to add their voices to the growing catalog of women speaking throughout history.

This public speaking and rhetorical action took different forms in the early years of the Hindman settlement. Because the school was so immediately popular with the people of Knott County, it grew rapidly in its first few years of existence to keep up with community demands—so much so, in fact, that the administration faced almost constant financial trouble. Because it was originally sponsored by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, settlement administrators were limited in the type of outside support they could seek, so the founders eventually decided to sever ties with the WCTU and incorporate in order to cast a wider net when courting private donors. Pettit and Stone therefore spent much of their time traveling to speaking engagements throughout Kentucky, the Midwest, and New England to raise funds; additionally, the school periodically mailed self-published pamphlets and other ephemera to past supporters in an effort to keep the school in the black. The efforts were successful in that the settlement was able to stay afloat (though teachers and students did face a few lean months), but the school got its biggest financial lift not from the overt fundraising of Pettit and Stone, but from the novels of Lucy Furman, a passage from which anchors this chapter. Through her fiction, Furman introduced a sizeable bourgeois readership to the founders and

early teachers at the settlement school through thinly-veiled fictional accounts: she changed Stone's first name from May to Amy, for example, and changed the name of the school's location from Troublesome Creek to Perilous Creek. The novels presented *Atlantic Monthly* subscribers with saintly settlement school teachers, exotic and bewitching (if ignorant and unrefined) Appalachian students, and intriguing plotlines, thus generating significant donations from all over the United States. Historian Jess Stoddart declares that Furman's role in "helping to create a nationwide support network for the Settlement cannot be overestimated" (66). Furman's novels, then—along with the other fundraising propaganda—comprise a rich and relatively unexplored textual legacy left by the Hindman Settlement School founders. By giving these texts the critical attention they deserve, this project not only seeks to write a more complicated (if troublesome) history of the Hindman Settlement School, but of the settlement movement, critical pedagogy, and women's history as well.

*Listening Hard: Historiography and a Methodology of Imagination*

My overarching method in this dissertation is that of feminist historiography. Guided by the work of feminist rhetoricians Susan Jarratt, Andrea Lunsford, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and others—and eager to disrupt the grand narrative of rhetorical history—I am mindful of Gerda Lerner's admonition: "We are not going to have an integrated history by being additive" (143). That is, I do not want to simply *add* the Hindman Settlement School story to the history of composition and rhetoric; rather, I want to use Hindman to think about composition and rhetoric differently and to offer an alternative to the history we already know. In *Rereading the Sophists*, Susan Jarratt argues that the point of historiography is "to expose an increasing *complexity* of evidence or data,

to resist the simplification which covers over subtleties, to exploit complexity toward the goal of greater explanatory power"—that is, to find the inevitable ruptures in supposedly seamless narratives (19). By focusing on Hindman as one of these ruptures, a complicated rhetorical and pedagogical site, I hope to follow Jarratt's example by reveling in messiness.

Furthermore, this dissertation seeks to engage in what Andrea Lunsford calls "*listening*—and listening hard—to and for the voices of women in the history of rhetoric" (6). Throughout history, rhetoric has been understood as a public art. Robert Connors has gone so far as to argue that writing and speaking not carried out in public do not—cannot—be defined as rhetoric, but something else entirely. Following such logic, it would be easy to assume that rhetorical history as it now stands is reasonably complete: what we have is what has been made public; rhetorical history generally ignores women because, for the most part, women have not spoken or written for public audiences. But this is simply not true. As Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald argue in their introduction to *Available Means*, a recent anthology of women's rhetoric from antiquity to the present, women *have* been publicly speaking and writing for thousands of years—the problem is that we have only begun to recognize this speaking and writing as important to the history of rhetoric and composition. Our responsibility, Ritchie and Ronald assert, is to look and look again at the writers and writing we have ignored in the past. By paying attention to the public writing and speaking carried out by the Hindman settlement women, this project contributes to the larger effort among historians of women's rhetoric to point out what has been there all along.

Many feminist historians of rhetoric, of course, differ from Connors (and those who offer similar arguments) on the issue of rhetoric as an entirely public

practice in the first place: in *Gender and Rhetorical Space*, Nan Johnson argues for the rhetoricity of the domestic sphere; in *Intimate Practices*, Anne Ruggles Gere examines nineteenth century women's clubs as rhetorical spaces; in *Well-Tempered Women*, Carol Mattingly analyzes the rhetorical conventions of WCTU women. These studies operate from the assumption that rhetoric can be found anywhere, not only in Arisotelean sites of public discourse. Moreover, these studies endorse the idea that history, as Gerda Lerner says, is "a creative enterprise" (107)—that cultural and disciplinary histories are constructed, mutable, and therefore open to revision.

To tell these histories accurately, then, we need to employ the methodology of imagination modeled by Jacqueline Jones Royster in *Traces of a Stream*, a methodology which leads us to new and different kinds of texts. To that end, this project privileges texts that lie outside the realm of traditional rhetorical analysis by specifically exploring the private writing of the settlement founders, the fundraising propaganda from the first decades of the school's existence, and the fiction of settlement teacher Lucy Furman. Nan Johnson and Anne Ruggles Gere have demonstrated the richness of archival research in their studies of nineteenth century women's letters, diaries, and club records, and their works proved invaluable as I traveled to the archives of the Hindman Settlement School to investigate the letters, journals, and fundraising materials authored by the settlement women. Further, just as Carol Mattingly uses the fiction of WCTU members in her investigation of temperance rhetoric, I examine the rhetorical functions of Lucy Furman's novels (which are out of print but generally accessible) in the representation of both the Hindman school and Appalachia as a whole. Guided by the work of Johnson, Gere, and Mattingly, I reclaim the neglected rhetorical sites of private discourse, propaganda, and

fiction as I endeavor to reconceive both the history and methodology of research in composition and rhetoric.

## CHAPTER TWO

### "To go out into the world and tell of the needs here": Settlement Rhetoric and Mountain *Topoi*

> "We see the great need," said Amy, with feeling, "and should love to give our lives to filling it, if we could see the way clear. One thing you fail to realize is that such a school would require, not only the land and the timber and labor and food so generously offered, but a considerable amount of money to keep it running. The only way for us to get this would be to go out into the world and tell of the needs here. Would you, and the people of the county, be willing that we should?"
>
> Lucy Furman, *The Quare Women*

From the day it opened its doors on August 2, 1902, the Hindman Settlement School was an immediate hit among the people of Knott County, Kentucky. As the above epigraph from *The Quare Women* suggests, settlement founders Katherine Pettit and May Stone—the titular "quare women" in Lucy Furman's fictionalized account of the school's genesis, so named for their unfamiliar bourgeois customs—had been besieged with requests from community members to settle along Troublesome Creek and start a school for mountain children. Initially dispatched to the mountains under the auspices of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Pettit and Stone had spent their past three summers facilitating educational summer camps for adults and children in the Appalachian region of their home state, and the town of Hindman had captured their special attention. The esteem was mutual, and Hindman residents eagerly donated land, materials, and labor for the construction and upkeep of a permanent settlement school. Such obvious enthusiasm was heartening to the women who had already devoted so much time and energy to their settlement project, but community interest became in some ways a double-edged sword.

Simultaneously under-funded and overextended, settlement administrators found themselves facing difficult decisions as public demands dramatically outpaced the ability of the school to meet them. Almost from the very beginning, the school was unable to accommodate all the students who wanted to attend; at one point during the school's first decade, the waiting list for fifteen open spots was 700 students deep (Stoddart *CC* 69). The campus expanded rapidly, as first the main settlement house went up, then a workshop, a cottage for the little boys, a cottage for the little girls, and a hospital—the building of one was hardly completed before plans for the next were drawn up. But planning for new buildings proved much easier than paying for them, especially since the settlement suffered floods, ice storms, two devastating fires, and a typhoid epidemic in its first decade. Despite these setbacks, however, historian Jess Stoddart maintains in her recent history of the Hindman school that "the Settlement's biggest problem was its own success" (*CC* 67). When disasters struck, the quare women faced them with pluck and determination. Harder to face, however, was the constant realization that they simply could not accommodate all the children who desired a settlement education.

Support from Hindman residents, though generous, supplied only a fraction of the school's necessities. Besides land and labor, the settlement required an operating budget of several thousand dollars for maintenance, teacher salaries, books, school supplies, and general day-to-day living expenses. WCTU support, furthermore, proved to be nominal at best[8]. Stoddart, in fact, argues that financial trouble was "the constant motif" of the school's early decades, affecting "everything the Settlement did and did not do" (*CC* 146). Ultimately, of course, the school was able to stay afloat (though students and

[8] In letters to supporters on the occasion of the school's incorporation in 1915, the executive committee notes that the WCTU had thus far furnished only 4½% of the school's annual income.

teachers did face more than a few lean months) but not without tremendous effort on the part of founders Katherine Pettit and May Stone.

Pettit and Stone realized early on that they would have to court outside donors in order to keep their school in the black. Novice administrators already, neither had particular experience with fundraising, but they were committed "to go out into the world and tell of the needs here," as Furman's epigraph indicates. Thus, the women traveled away from the school in early years to secure funds through speaking engagements with church and civic groups, and they relied heavily on their connections to women's clubs in Bluegrass Kentucky, the Midwest, and New England. While these appearances undoubtedly contributed to the school's fiscal viability, the settlement's primary means of communication with past and potential supporters—and the greatest boon to their financial saliency—came courtesy of frequent letters and pamphlets mailed to a cadre of far-flung supporters. The administration sent annual letters detailing the school's successes, growth, activities, and needs, and they periodically mailed self-published pamphlets, postcards, and subscription notices to past contributors in an effort to drum up future support[9]. The earliest fundraising letter is dated 1902, the year of the school's founding. Regular annual letters began in 1904, and pamphlets were sent out as early as 1908. Though Jess Stoddart points out that the first organized fundraising campaign did not take place at the Hindman Settlement School until 1928, it is clear that the task of fundraising was always an important part of the administration's work.

In Ciceronian terms, Pettit and Stone would likely have said that these fundraising documents were meant to *move* readers—to exhort them to action. In so doing, however, the settlement women were also *instructing* a bourgeois

[9] These records remain remarkably intact—annual letters dating from 1902 are archived at the Hindman Settlement School, with reproductions housed at Berea College. Fundraising pamphlets, postcards, and brochures are slightly less organized but still generally accessible in the Hindman archives as well.

Bluegrass, Midwestern, and Northeastern readership, defining eastern Kentucky (and, accordingly, the entire mountain region) for readers wholly unfamiliar with the land, people, and customs. In their rhetorical stance and methods of appeal, the settlement women construct a compelling and problematic version of Appalachia for an audience removed from the mountains in nearly every imaginable way. Because these letters were the primary means of communication between the school and its large base of donors—progressive supporters who took seriously their role in reforming the country—they constitute an important chapter in the evolving history of "Appalachia" as a cultural invention, a history delineated by Henry Shapiro, Allen Batteau, and J.W. Williamson, among others. The language, images, and tropes employed by the settlement women construct a particular version of Appalachian life that has been reified and embedded in our cultural imagination. From their writings emerge a set of *topoi*—that is, generative topics—which have become canonized in American discourses about Appalachia over the past hundred years.

In his translator's notes for *On Rhetoric*, George Kennedy explains the Aristotelian *topos* as "metaphorically that location or space in an art where a speaker can look for 'available means of persuasion'" (45). Also called "commonplaces," *topoi* work heuristically to help a speaker locate topics appropriate for a given rhetorical situation. Aristotle did not himself invent the concept of commonplaces; the Sophists before him had long used spatial metaphors as they taught their students how to invent arguments. He did, however, codify *topoi*, dividing them into two categories—those general to all persuasive speech (*koina*) and those specific to particular arts (*idia*). In Book Two of *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle lists twenty-eight general *topoi*, among them the topics of precedent, cause and effect, and "the more and less" (e.g. if a crime requires punishment, then a great crime must require great punishment). Earlier,

however, he notes that most arguments "are derived from these species that are particular and specific [that is, *idia*], fewer from the common [that is, *koina*]" (46-47). In other words, while general topics may certainly be applied to particular fields of study, most arguments originate in specific and local rhetorical situations.

The idea of *topos* as place takes on a double meaning, both spatial and metaphorical, for the settlement women of Troublesome Creek. Certainly these women literally located their arguments in the actual, physical space of the southern mountains; that is, all of their arguments and evidence stem from their specific topographic and cultural context. On a metaphorical level, though, the women locate their arguments for and about the mountain people in three separate and specific (though undoubtedly related) loci: mountain *potential*, mountain *desire*, and mountain *gratitude*. I do not mean to suggest that the creation of these *topoi* was in any way premeditated, that is, that the settlement women set out to focus their frequent pleas on behalf of their neighbors around the ideas of potential, desire, and gratitude. However, such a pattern emerges early on in the fundraising material. Of the arguments and pleas for support put forth by the settlement women, those originating from these *topoi* are the most compelling.

In his landmark study *Appalachia On Our Mind*, Henry Shapiro argues that bourgeois America first became acquainted with the southern mountain region through postbellum and early twentieth century "local color" (now called regional) fiction—fiction that would inform all subsequent understandings of Appalachian America. According to Shapiro, while writers in the postbellum period presented Appalachia as an oddity, a "strange land inhabited by a peculiar people," authors of the 1880s and 1890s seemed much more vexed by Appalachia's very existence and presented the region as "a problem to be

solved" (63). Jess Stoddart concurs, pointing out that by the time Pettit and Stone began writing about their fundraising letters, "views about mountaineers and their culture had moved from depicting them as merely 'different' and 'exotic' to seeing them as degenerate and the mountain lifestyle as a 'problem'….Thus, disparate images of the mountaineers were at work" (*CC* 21-22). These disparate images certainly appear in the settlement's early fundraising literature, providing a wide base of supporters with a sustained and complex discourse on life in Appalachian America. Though these letters and pamphlets may have been less celebrated than the regional fiction Shapiro analyzes, they serve a similar purpose, and they would have reached a similar audience. Furthermore, because these documents came cloaked in the veil of authenticity—their authors, after all, having taken up residence in the mountains—readers might have responded with even more interest. Thus, their role in the construction of a place called "Appalachia" should not be underestimated.

Unfortunately, it has been. This is not the first study to examine these newsletters; certainly, Jess Stoddart used the documents to piece together her history of the school as she mined them for specific information about the settlement's early years—daily activities, lists of teachers and board members, anecdotes. In two separate articles, Nancy Forderhase relies on the letters as evidence of the settlement women's reform efforts. Dissertations by Karen Blackwell (in history) and Rhonda England (in education) frequently cite the writing of the quare women, including their fundraising letters. But no one has rhetorically analyzed these texts. Karen Tice has examined the early newsletters for their "interplay of maternalism and cultural politics," classifying the texts as "educational narratives" (191). My focus, however, is on their *rhetorical*, rather than historical, significance. In other words, I am interested in the ways these

documents showcase the settlement women representing themselves, their work, and—most importantly—their neighbors for a public audience.

Scholars continue to debate whether the settlement women's assessment of their mountain neighbors was perceptive and nuanced, problematic and naïve, or a little of both—but the one point no one can debate is that it has been tenacious. The anecdotes, images, and pictures included in the settlement's fundraising literature forecast modern-day depictions of life in Appalachia, even in the twenty-first century: stories abound of rampant illiteracy, crude living conditions, and lawlessness tempered by rugged natural beauty, folksy mountain wisdom, and "authentic" (albeit primitive) culture. There is no denying that the fundraising propaganda put out by the school was, indeed, propaganda—that is, overtly persuasive with the specific goal of eliciting donations from Progressive peers. As such, it often reduces the problems and purported solutions of Appalachian America to ignorance due to isolation, thereby demonstrating the settlement's *raison d'etre* and justifying the need for money in one fell swoop.

Because the letters and pamphlets were authored not by a single person but by a small group—Pettit and Stone, of course, but also other teachers at the school such as Lucy Furman and Ann E. Cobb, as well as WCTU leaders and visitors to the settlement—it becomes difficult to generalize about strategic syntax and diction. Particular stylistic quirks such as word choice and sentence construction tend to be idiosyncratic to individual writers. On the other hand, few of the writers in the group (with the possible exception of Lucy Furman, a published author) seem to consciously draw attention to their style; diction and syntax on the whole seem relatively simple and unremarkable. Similarly, the authors of these documents rarely position themselves as individuals, except when circumstances require such posturing (e.g. one-time visitors and notable

guests). Indeed, some of the letters bear no signature at all. The writers deliberately, it seems, speak as one, their disembodied writing style certainly contributing to a unified "voice" coming from the settlement proper.

Like the syntax and diction, the larger rhetorical strategies in the letters are fairly straightforward. Because they are introducing their audience to, borrowing Henry Shapiro's refrain, "a strange land inhabited by a peculiar people," the fundraising authors make copious use of strategies such as description, narration, and comparison[10]. The early letters, especially, invite readers into this "strange land" via vivid tableaux, short character sketches, and simple stories. Though there is the occasional use of overblown rhetoric—most often employed in early, thrilling descriptions of the mountain landscape, or during the lean months when the need for money was more dire than usual—the collective style is for the most part fairly "objective." Such a style certainly fits the rhetoric of the day. As upper-middle-class white women who came of age in the later decades of the nineteenth century, Pettit and Stone were among the first generation of American women to receive formal rhetorical education en masse. Students of elite preparatory schools (Katherine Pettit attended the Sayre Institute in Lexington) and women's colleges (May Stone was Wellesley Class of 1884, and many subsequent Hindman teachers were Seven Sisters alumnae), the settlement women were some of the first in the country to receive the same rhetorical instruction as their male counterparts. As Kathryn Conway writes, rhetoric courses "heretofore reserved exclusively for men…encouraged women to explore, develop, and articulately express their own ideas on many subjects, particularly public policy topics" (204). And besides basic instruction in "general punctuation, bibliographies…exposition, argument, description, narration, and

[10] Though these terms—description, narration, and comparison—might bring to mind the current-traditional "modes of discourse" delineated by Richard Fulkerson, Robert Connors, et al., I am not using them as prescriptive rhetorical *modes*, but rather as descriptive rhetorical *strategies*.

letter writing," Joanne Wagner demonstrates, the curriculum at institutions such as Wellesley focused on "rhetorical theories that integrated the rules of public discourse with ways to fulfill the need for personal expression" (187, 195). In the realm of "public discourse," explains Wagner, rhetoric courses at women's colleges relied on Herbert Spencer's *Philosophy of Style* and emphasized "the principle of economy"—that is, the idea that the most effective rhetoric was delivered plainly and correctly (187). In their private writing, however, these women were encouraged to "express their personalities and their thoughts distinctively" by emulating the popular *belles lettres* (191). The fundraising literature authored by the quare women, then, typifies the "practical rhetoric" they would have learned at Wellesley, Sayre, and the like—a rhetoric marked by "unadorned, clear speech and writing that would pass muster in any group of educated people" (Wagner 191). At the same time, their occasional stylistic flourishes and baroque turns of phrase can be traced to the belletristic models they would have studied alongside Spencer.

The rhetorical education of Pettit, Stone, and their cohorts put them on par with the Progressive (that is, educated upper-middle-class) audience they were trying to reach, and the genres and modes they employed would have been familiar to both male and female readers[11]. In their mountain missives, the *facilitas* of the Hindman fundraisers was—and is—on full display. And their rhetorical savvy, for better or worse, allowed them to locate and circulate arguments that characterize the mountain people in specific and enduring ways. Like any local rhetorical practice, the strategies and stances of the settlement women were context-bound. But because larger cultural discourses are always constructed by local practices, the *topoi* they generated via their fundraising

[11] For a discussion of rhetorical instruction at men's institutions, see James Berlin's *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* and Robert Connors's *Composition-Rhetoric*.

literature from the Hindman School—the *topoi* of mountain potential, mountain desire, and mountain gratitude—have shaped contemporary discourses for and about Appalachian America.

### *"They take on polish with surprising ease": Description and the* Topos *of Mountain Potential*

One of the initial challenges for the settlement women came in describing an unfamiliar landscape and people to a bourgeois audience. Writing to a group already assailed with requests for donations to philanthropies, charities, and mission work, the settlement founders knew they would have to present their project as unique, exciting, and worthwhile. Though many of their eventual supporters would have read of the southern mountains in popular fiction or newspapers, few outsiders had actually visited the region; thus, the settlement women had an opportunity to capitalize on its novelty and mystery. Accordingly, the earliest letters are rife with romantic portrayals of the Appalachian landscape: the lush scenery, the peculiar inhabitants, the unfamiliar social customs, the—to borrow a refrain from the literature—"picturesqueness" of it all. By using these early letters and pamphlets to romanticize the land, people, and customs, the settlement women made Appalachia a place of wonder for a faraway audience.

As Joanne Wagner points out, the settlement women would have been well versed in descriptive writing thanks to their rhetorical training. Though they might not have characterized it as such, the early authors of the fundraising material were especially fond of *enargeia*, especially *topographia* and *characterismus*—that is, descriptions of land and people (Lanham 153, 33). In their descriptions, the focus of the settlement women is always trained on the innate loveliness of the Appalachian subject, whatever it may be: autumnal

mountain ridge, stalk of goldenrod, tow-headed child. Every scene seems bursting with natural beauty, which translates, for the settlement women at least, into proof of potential. And when that beauty is compromised—for example, in the care-worn face of an old-beyond-her-years mountain matriarch or an unkempt home seen as "unworthy" of its breathtaking setting—there is always the promise of redemption. The purported natural beauty of both the mountains and the mountaineers provides the settlement women with all the evidence they need that they are, in fact, surrounded by diamonds in the rough. The potential of the mountaineers as fully realized members of American society (to say nothing of their potential as a fully realized human beings) is as boundless as the mountain vistas which serve as their backdrop.

In their topographic descriptions of the eastern Kentucky landscape, the letter writers often focus simultaneously on its isolation and its lushness. Much of the early literature fixates on the fact that the school is a full day's journey from the nearest railroad: in their very first letter to supporters, Pettit and Stone describe the school's setting "in a County 40 to 50 miles from the nearest Railroad, reached only over rough mountain roads" (1902). In one of the earliest pamphlets, the school's location is depicted similarly: "At the Forks of Troublesome Creek, 45 miles across the mountains and up narrow, rough streams, from the railroad, is the village of Hindman in Knott Co., Ky." (HSS 1908). As the phrase "45 Miles from Railroad" eventually made its way onto the header of the settlement's official stationery, letter writers rarely failed to make mention of the school's location somewhere in their first few paragraphs. Such repetition of the school's distance from the railroad—essentially, any contact with the outside world—serves to reinforce the idea of the mountains' remoteness and mystery.

But the trade-off for this remoteness and isolation, readers are to believe, is the incredible richness of the mountains' natural beauty. A 1913 pamphlet features two photographs of the wagon that transported visitors to the settlement from the rail station, with this accompanying vivid (and melodramatic) text:

> The journey to Hindman is an achievement and a romantic event. Forty-five miles away, at the nearest railroad town, the road calls to one to follow it, across the mountains, through the rhododendron thickets, and along the creek bottoms. Its charm lies in its very waywardness, for from the beginning it makes no effort to deceive. Muddy beyond belief, full of treacherous holes, now about to run over precipices, now rocky, now slipping off a bank, it openly discloses itself as "an awful bad road." Yet it bewitches one to follow it, perhaps by an alluring turn yon side of the creek, perhaps by an over-hanging rock house, beautiful with ferns and moss, or a grove of beech and hemlock trees, lovely in the sunlight. And when you have abandoned itself to its wiles, suddenly it loses itself in the creek. You look to the right and left for it—the banks rise steep. Before you, disappearing around a bend in the hill, is only the creek. You are caught in the fastnesses of the hills, and have no choice but to go on, through the water, into the thicket of laurel and rhododendron…Your course, like the true lovers', cannot possibly run smooth but because of its uncertainty and picturesqueness, you love it. (HSS 1913)

The early twentieth century readers of this pamphlet, many of them living insulated lives of gentility and propriety, must have felt a thrill at such a dramatic depiction—indeed, this sketch perfectly embodies *enargeic* description as that which creates an image "before your very eyes" (Lanham 64). Visitor

Belle Breck, in a 1908 letter, crafts a similarly detailed account of her trip to the school. Though she admits her initial surprise at "how long forty-five miles can be in a jolt wagon drawn by four mules, when the roads are stream-beds with rock bottoms," she concedes that the beauty of the setting makes up for any discomfort: "Glorious autumn foliage, ferns, laurel, rhododendron, English holly, real forests, mountain streams, ridge after ridge of mountains and a perfect October day were alleviations" (Breck). On the occasion of another trip on mountain roads, she rhapsodizes, "A whiff of snow lingered upon the brilliantly-colored autumn leaves—bright sunshine, exquisite holly trees full of great red berries, thickets of rhododendron bushes meeting over our heads, even on horseback, wild canons with moss and ferns and great boulders made this ride a wonderful one—but it is far away over there!" (Breck). Like the other settlement women before her, Breck twines the unfortunate isolation of the southern mountain region with its redemptive beauty. Likewise, when the author of an unattributed 1908 report titled "A Funeral Meeting in the Kentucky Mountains" describes a journey on "an ordinary farm wagon, guiltless of springs," she tempers what must have been a long and uncomfortable ride with observances of "the golden rod and clematis in their grey old age made beautiful by the sparkling frost; the forests glorious in their autumn coloring, with the sturdy grey tree trunks for balance in the picture" (HSS "Funeral" 1908). The writer goes on to recount the mountain homes that "nestle picturesquely by the water, with the hills rising around them, and these hills are corn fields on end, until the cliffs preclude even goats, and on these ridges and shaggy cliffs the forests are undisturbed, as a rule, so the sky line is a beautiful timbered one" (HSS "Funeral" 1908). Widening her lens and layering detail upon detail, the author crescendos with a soaring description of "a panorama—ridge after ridge in all the glory of autumn coloring and brilliant sunshine," finally concluding, "It

would be hard in the old world to find a more picturesque scene or one more vivid in coloring" (HSS "Funeral" 1908). Bursting with brilliant imagery and dramatic prose, descriptions such as this one—frequent in these early letters and pamphlets—render the southern mountain region a veritable Eden, a rare natural wonderland, a magical paradise unsullied by modern life.

The mountain people, too, are presented as exceptional and striking, objectified every bit as much as their surroundings. Again, the isolation of the mountain region captures the attention of the quare women. One early annual letter rather paternalistically describes the settlement's neighbors as possessing "the same shy confidence that the birds have in the Canadian Rockies, where for generations they have never been disturbed" (Pettit and Stone 1908). The same letter also implicitly blames a perceived lack of creativity among mountain children on their isolation from the rest of the country and world:

> They are not an imaginative set of children; one day the teacher had been taking them a trip through foreign lands, descanting upon the delights of various cities. "Now children, if you could go any where in the world you want to, where would you go?" "Home," shouted one forlorn child from the country; from the rest there was a unanimous cry of "Jackson". (The nearest Railroad Station, forty-five miles away). (Pettit and Stone 1908)

As with the landscape, however, such isolation seems only to have enhanced the (we are to believe) 'natural' beauty of the mountaineer, and many letter writers are quick to praise their physical splendor. The unnamed author of a 1908 report tells us, "I have only to close my eyes to see one lovely little girl, with golden, clustering curls and great wide-open violet eyes, in pink calico dress to her ankles" (HSS "Report" 1908). In the annual letter from January 1910, teacher Lucy Furman describes several children in terms of their beauty, remembering a

"handsome" young male student, an "especially pretty" older girl, a "graceful" boy, and a "pretty and gentle mannered" child from a nearby town; she finally concludes, "But I could go on indefinitely about our children. The hard thing is that we must turn away so many attractive and promising ones" (Furman 1910). Belle Breck, who earlier waxed lyrical about the beauty of the mountain region, further admires the appearance of the mountaineers themselves: "The people are fine-looking….There are many pretty girls and young children and handsome young boys" (Breck). Though she does amend her praise for "the women over thirty, who are by that age worn out" by pronouncing them "sad and patient and hopeless looking," she quickly concedes that, whatever their perceived deficiencies, the mountain women "have in abundance a picturesqueness and a sense of humor—two saving graces" (Breck). Once again, picturesqueness covers all manner of supposed sins.

But whereas the land and people of the mountains are treated as absolute natural wonders, the customs and living conditions do not fare so well when described in the settlement's fundraising literature. When Pettit, Stone, and the other letter writers describe mountain religion, social customs, food, and home life, they often do so with disgust and disdain. To be sure, some features of mountain life do, according to the settlement women, fall into the realm of the "picturesque" as remnants of days gone by. In a 1912 newsletter, teacher Katherine Hurxthal sketches life in eastern Kentucky for those readers who "do not know very much about our settlement back here in the mountains, 45 miles from the railroad, except as a place where some one you know is teaching" (Hurxthal). She explains:

> Yet women still card wool by the winter fire, and ply the wheel on the log cabin porch in many little "coves" in the hills. In many homes they point to great piles of homespun blankets and

> coverlids, with old fashioned pride. Some people still "bile their coffee-water" over the hearth fire, and light their way at night with a bundle of faggots….To work here is to live in two centuries, for side by side with the quaint and old is the new, which makes some of our children ashamed to sing Barbara Allen or wear homespun. (Hurxthal)

Customs such as carding wool and cooking over a hearth are apparently acceptable, if a bit outmoded, as they invoke an idyllic shared past. Lucy Furman extends this concept of living in "two centuries" as she simultaneously (albeit anachronistically) references pioneer, Elizabethan, and medieval eras: "In many ways we are living a hundred years ago. Our children come to us from pioneer homes, where the language of Shakespeare is spoken, and customs and sentiments of medieval days still survive….It is as if some spell had preserved all-complete the life of a past century, and we were admitted into the society of our forefathers" (Furman 1910). Apparently, insofar as these old-fashioned customs comprise a rosy—if jumbled— tableau of early-American, Shakespearean, and medieval life, we in the modern world can tolerate them.

But the concessions end there. For the founders of the Hindman settlement, it is one thing to embrace the spinning of wool and the weaving of blankets and the singing of ballads as holdovers from a past century; it is another thing entirely to accept those features of mountain life which fly in the face of such deep-seated bourgeois sensibilities as healthfulness, hygiene, and propriety. While from a distance the pretty mountain cabins may "nestle picturesquely by the water" (HSS "Funeral" 1908), upon closer inspection they positively horrify the settlement women:

> Most of the homes are one-room log cabins, having the great chinks between the logs stopped with the yellow mud out of the creek

> bed. The chimneys are built either of sticks or stones held together with this same yellow mud. There are no windows, but the doors of the cabins stand open, and you can see as you ride past that the room contains scarcely any furniture, and what is there is of the poorest kind; a home-made bed fastened together with ropes; an old-table with a few broken dishes on it; and perhaps two or three old chairs—nothing more. In the better houses, those of two rooms, you will likely find a cooking stove, more beds and more chairs, but that is all. (HSS "Christmas" 1908)

Homes built of sticks and mud, rickety furniture, cracked dishes—such conditions reveal not only mountain poverty but also, the writer seems to imply, the absence of any desire to make the home at all presentable. Indeed, the women say as much in their early camp reports to the WCTU, which the above account mirrors closely; they are particularly distressed by the "unattractive rooms and the quantity of dirt. The floors are bare; the furniture consists usually of a bed in each corner, a few chairs, a table and a stove. In rare cases the beds are made up, but they are generally left just as the family got out of them and present anything but an inviting appearance" (qtd. in Stoddart *QWJ* 62). The crime here seems to be not the poverty of the Appalachian people, but their failure to make the most of their situation, the failure to live up to their potential. Similarly, Pettit and Stone lament a typical mountain dinner "of heavy corn bread, fat bacon, and greasy cold beans," explaining that they hope to eventually provide students with "a cooking stove and dishes of their own so they may be taught to cook their lunch and sit down at a table to eat it. Then they will have not only one wholesome nourishing meal a day, but lessons in cooking, setting the table, washing the dishes and putting the kitchen in order" (Pettit and Stone 1904). The annual letter from the next year alludes again to the mountain diet,

describing the home of a recently matriculated student: "They lived in one room with a little 'lean-to' kitchen. In one corner of the room stood the uncovered meal and flour barrels, a piece of greasy dripping bacon hanging over them" (Pettit and Stone 1905). The *idea* of cooking over a hearth fire may be acceptable as a picturesque throwback to days of yore, but the reality of eating greasy fatback and shucky beans out of that hearth kettle is, evidently, less tolerable. The problem, once again, is located not in a lack of resources—the mountain people, after all, know how to grow food, build furniture, construct houses, cook—but a lack of decorum and bourgeois sensibility.

All is not lost, however, as the settlement women console their readers (and themselves) with the thought that the raw potential of the mountaineers surely outweighs any bad habits they may have picked up from decades of isolation. All they *really* need, according to the Hindman women, is some proper training. Certainly, the quare women's earliest writing, their camp journals, illustrates a fervent desire to showcase the joys of homemaking and entertaining, in the form of Friday-night socials, flowers on the table, pictures on the wall, and clean sheets on the bed for guests. This attitude persists in the fundraising literature, as Lucy Furman explains that the settlement, unlike the mountain culture at large, provides ample opportunities "where our children learn the graceful arts of entertaining and of making others happy" (Furman 1910). Luckily, continues Furman, "social graces come naturally to them. They have soft voices, gentle manners, and old-fashioned dignity to begin with, and take on polish with surprising ease" (Furman 1910). The implication is that the mountain people have all the basic materials they need—"soft voices, gentle manners, and old-fashioned dignity"—requiring only proper care and cultivation to achieve their true potential.

This sentiment, in fact, seems to be the ever-present subtext in the letter writers' descriptions of the mountains and mountaineers: the land and people are intrinsically good, with an abundance of natural beauty and ability that simply needs nourishment, polish, encouragement. Their way of life may be substandard, these letters and pamphlets suggest, but remediation—that which the settlement might provide—is still possible. In the words of teacher Katherine Hurxthal, "It is a golden moment for settlement work, while there is still the chance to shape new ideals" (Hurxthal). In describing the mountain people as both deprived *and* deserving of the help they have come to provide, the settlement women present to their audience an enchanting cast of characters set against a remote and romantic backdrop—a shrewd rhetorical move sure to captivate readers, soften their hearts, and loosen their purse strings.

*"I hope I can go. Don't you?": Narration and the Topos of Mountain Desire*

If the *topos* of mountain potential invented an Appalachia full of deprived and deserving people, the *topos* of mountain desire depicted those people as practically crying out for polish and refinement. To hear the settlement women tell it, their mountain neighbors were not only ready but willing to accept outside assistance. Conveniently, this allowed settlement women to cast themselves not as aggressive initiators but benevolent responders. Nowhere is this more evident than in the narrative of settlement history, where mountain desire figures prominently.

Almost from the very beginning, the students and teachers at the Hindman Settlement School seemed preoccupied with the history of their institution, their own originary narrative—understandable given the novelty of the settlement, its standing in the community, and its growing impact on the people of eastern Kentucky. Indeed, Gerda Lerner points out the necessity of

articulating a collective history in *Why History Matters*, arguing, "It is history, the known and ordered past, that enables us to delineate goals and visions for a communal future" (128). A sense of history—certainly for an individual, but for institutions and communities as well—is necessary in the process of identity formation. So when a story began circulating about the school's founding at the behest of an elderly Hindman resident named Uncle Solomon Everidge, students, teachers, and supporters were eager to believe it, not necessarily because it was true, but because it gave them a common (and, naturally, picturesque) foundation. The apochryphal tale, according to one of the many letters and pamphlets that repeat it, dates back to the first summer camp and includes Uncle Sol's barefoot journey over the mountains to beseech the quare women to start a school for his great-grandchildren:

> Uncle Solomon had walked twenty miles to their camp, although he was at that time a very old man…
>
> He told the "wimmin" that he had heard that they were teaching their "quar ways" in Hazard, and he had come to beg them to come to Hindman, to teach the children there. He said that when he was a young man, a stranger had come ridin' by and had stopped with him all night. As they sat around the big log fire, the stranger had told him wonderful tales of the level country and ever after that as Uncle Solomon plowed his field on the steep hillside, when he got to the end of the row, he looked up the creek and down the creek, watching for that stranger to come back. But he never came, "and," continued Uncle Solomon, "I never got no chance to larn nothing. Neither did my children. But I have as smart grandchildren and great grandchildren as any one ever had and I want them to have a chanct." (Rue 1913)

Jess Stoddart notes that no evidence of such a conversation exists in the camp journals, though Pettit and Stone do record meeting Uncle Sol—"a very unique character"—and visiting his home during their second summer in the mountains (Stoddart *QWJ* 91). True or not, however, the story has become entrenched in the settlement's historical narrative, and the many fundraising letters and pamphlets that repeat the anecdote serve only to strengthen its validity. One pamphlet from 1919, for example, includes a lengthy chronology of the school's history and lists 1899 as the year Pettit and Stone received an "[a]ppeal from 'Uncle Solomon' Everidge, a mountain Patriarch and Seer" (HSS 1919). Some of the fundraising literature even includes a picture of Uncle Sol; white-haired, barefoot, and sitting in the doorway of his cabin, he is the very picture of the wizened old man of the hills. Such a story speaks to the legitimacy of the school in the eyes of the mountaineers. That is, the message from this oft-repeated tale is that the settlement women came to Hindman not to impose the customs and values of their native "level land," but to start a school at the fervent request of an auspicious "mountain Patriarch and Seer." The settlement founders, then, become reactive rather than proactive, helpers rather than overseers.

But Uncle Sol was not the only mountaineer to lobby for a school. Indeed, this motif of mountain desire appears elsewhere in the narrative of Hindman's history. Another poignant story retold in the fundraising material is that of the old mountain woman who came to see the settlement women during their first summer camp, just as they set out for a day trip over the hills. She had made her journey after hearing of new cooking techniques being taught at the camp, but was told that the quare women "were going away, and would have no time that day. She watched them in silence again and then remarked, as she rose to depart: 'I 'lowed that you'uns that knowed how had come to show us as don't, but you haint'" (Rue 1913). The visitors, touched by her insight and resolve, had

an epiphany: "the young women realized that these mountain women always would live as the early settlers had lived in their log houses, never progressing if some one did not come into the hills and teach them" (Rue 1913). May Stone, many years later, would cite this young woman as the impetus for Katherine Pettit's initial commitment to the mountain people (Stone 1945).[12] Taken together with the tale of Uncle Sol, the figure of this woman embodies the desire of the mountain people to learn what the settlement women had come to teach.

The settlement's first fundraising pamphlet, printed in 1908, also directs attention to the mountaineers' own desire for a school as it includes the following paragraph detailing the settlement's origins: "In August, 1902, the Kentucky Woman's [sic] Christian Temperance Union established in Hindman a social settlement and school. The original property consisted of three acres of ground (*the men of the County paid $700 for two acres of this land and gave it as an inducement to have the school at Hindman*) and a convenient school building of five rooms" (HSS "WCTU" 1908, emphasis added). A paragraph to this effect appears in many of the subsequent pamphlets, always including a sentence about the Hindman residents' donation of land "as an inducement" to locate the school in their community. Again, by framing the school's history in terms of community requests, the authors of these pamphlets highlight the role of Hindman residents in the founding of the settlement—a tack that seems entirely appropriate for an institution rooted in the Progressive ideals of cooperation and collaboration. According to Gerda Lerner, "Our self-representation, the way we define who we are, also takes the shape of the life story we tell. What we remember, what we stress as significant, and what we omit of our past defines

[12] In Helen Rue's account of this meeting, the conversation between the visitors and the mountain woman took place during Katherine Pettit's initial sightseeing trip to the mountains in 1895 (Rue 1913). In May Stone's account above, the conversation took place during one of the first summer camps. Such inconsistency only serves to further illustrate the importance of sentiment over fact in the construction of the settlement's originary narrative.

our present" (199), and this is true of institutions as well as individuals. As with a person, the way an institution chooses to narrate its history reflects that institution's present situation and course for the future. Thus, the old chestnuts of the settlement's history—the story of an eighty-year-old mountain man traipsing barefoot for twenty miles and the heroic efforts of Hindman residents who so desired a good school in their town that they paid for the land themselves—become emblematic of the school's mission to work not only *in*, but *with* the community to educate the youth of the mountains. These stories cast the settlement women as respondents rather than initiators, and this version of the settlement's history—the version most often recreated in the fundraising literature—allows readers to reflect on the nobility of the cause they are supporting, the desire and merit of the people they are helping. The Appalachian people are asking—begging—for our help, the letters and pamphlets seem to say. How can we ignore them?

Unfortunately, the settlement women were unable to fulfill every request, and some had to go unanswered. Thus the fundraising literature abounds with stories of the hopeful and deserving children who must be turned away. This theme of denial appears early on, as settlement administrators were almost immediately beset with more students than they could take in. The annual letter from 1904 attests to this problem: "We have a great many more applicants than we can take and the hardest thing we ever have to do is say to them, 'We have no room' after they have walked in from far in the country feeling so certain that 'you uns <u>would</u> give me a chance to earn my way through school'" (Pettit and Stone 1904). Similarly, the annual letter from 1908 shares the following account of a teenager eager to enroll at Hindman: "When we told an eighteen year old girl who had come twenty miles, that there was no bed, that one girl was already sleeping on a box, she quickly replied, 'I could sleep on another box'" (Pettit and

Stone 1908). A pamphlet from 1910 includes two pictures of "Little Bertha," a girl from the country who has come to the school. The first picture shows Bertha facing the camera with a suitcase and a smile, and the caption reads, "Little Bertha, when grandpaw brought her to ask if she could stay at the Hindman Settlement School." But the next picture shows Bertha turned from the camera crying, and the caption explains, "As she started home when she could not stay" (HSS 1910). The second page of the pamphlet spells out the problem for readers:

> Scarcely a day passes without some appeal to us to 'give a child a chance.' Perhaps it comes in a letter—occasionally we are bombarded by four or five a week from some persistent boy;—perhaps a mother rides thirty miles through the mud with 'two gals that've sot under a shade tree an' larned the best way they could by theirselves.' Perhaps a grown boy, whose lips tremble as we tell him we have no room for him, and who says: ''Pears like they aint no chance for a boy in this country,' has walked from far away; or a father has 'brung all his young 'uns fifty miles for to see an' larn.' We have more than a thousand children on our waiting list to-day. There could be no greater inspiration for work than the touching faith of the mountain people in the school, as the one hope of the country for its children. (HSS 1910)

Like Uncle Sol before them, the mountain children tirelessly pursue the promise of an education—and the settlement women tirelessly publicize their efforts. If settlement administrators cannot provide an education for all who seek one, they can at least use the hard-luck stories to exhort would-be supporters to action.

Another pamphlet, this one from 1913 and printed as a postcard, takes its a cue from Little Bertha as it features a photograph of another little girl staring directly at the camera. The accompanying text voices her desire:

> When I was five years old, I walked forty-five miles to the Hindman School. There was no room for me, so I walked home again. The next year my brothers tried to get me in. The next year my father wrote for a place for me. The next year I walked over there again but the Little Girls' house had burned down and of course there was no room for me. Now a new Little Girls' House is to be built and I hope I can go. Don't you? There are over 600 other little and big girls and boys who want to go. Won't you help us? (HSS 1913)

Meant to represent the hundreds of willing students clamoring at the door of the settlement, this little girl personifies the, we are to believe, fervent desire of the mountaineers to be fully educated, fully productive, fully American citizens. And if readers were left in any doubt as to how they might give her story a happy ending, they need only turn the postcard over to discover a subscription form to fill out and return to the school.

### *"The people at Hindman ought to be so thankful": Comparison and the* Topos *of Mountain Gratitude*

The happy inverse of the rejection story—all the better to demonstrate mountain desire—is the story of the student who comes to the settlement, changes her life for the better, and acknowledges the school as the reason for her success. A favorite narrative frame for the *topos* of mountain gratitude is the comparative before-and-after story, both individual and collective. If the Uncle Sol myth illustrates the desire of mountaineers, these before-and-after stories of the people and the town demonstrate the mountaineers' appreciation for the work begun by the settlement women. One early letter from the quare women notes the difference in the annual Fourth of July celebration since their first year

in town: "the speaking at our Fourth of July picnic in 1902 was interrupted three times by drinking, shooting and fighting. We were advised that 'it would be dangerous to attempt any thing like that again.' But a year later we did have a quiet, orderly Fourth of July picnic with plenty of speaking, singing and a wholesome holiday spirit" (Pettit and Stone 1905). Though Pettit and Stone do not directly attribute the shift in behavior to the school, the implication is clear: having been exposed to a gentler, more decorous way of life, the mountain people have responded in kind and reformed themselves. The annual letter from 1908 similarly cites specific changes in the town at large: "Hindman has improved in many ways; new houses have been built, old ones painted, a new bank organized and a newspaper started. The townspeople take great pride in the electric lights, furnished by the school and the money received from them pays the engineer" (Pettit and Stone 1908). Here the school administration does begin to take some credit for improvements—if only because of the electric lights. But the townspeople themselves are quick to credit the quare women for the dramatic changes in their town. A letter reflecting on the ten-year anniversary of the school quotes a former naysayer who admits, "Ten years ago, when I met you women and you told me you had decided to have a school at Hindman I thought to myself, 'A failure. What can those women do with eight stills in a circle of eight miles of Hindman.' In five years you could not get whiskey in Hindman for anything and no violence was used; people saw something better and took advantage of it" (Pettit and Stone 1912). As one of their initial goals for the settlement was the fostering of community within the mountains, Pettit and Stone agree, noting that "the people have seen a better way. There has been little change in material conditions, the railroad is as yet no nearer, but the school has been able to help the people to make the best of themselves" (Pettit and Stone 1912). These broad sketches of life in Hindman

attest to the school's positive influence over mountain lives and the fact that the school is, in fact making a difference—proving to supporters that their money has been well spent.

Personal histories are mined for the same purpose, that is, demonstrating the mountaineers' gratitude through their changes in behavior. Some accounts are rather general, such as the annual letter from 1904 which notes, "We find the manual training has had a great influence for good over the boys. Last year they were so often drunk and in jail. Now they spend all of their spare time in the workshop and not one of the school boys has been in jail this year" (Pettit and Stone 1904). More powerful, however, are the stories that go into specific detail about individual students. The following anecdote from the 1905 letter relates the tale of a reformed rabble-rouser, once the "terror of the village" who attempted to run the quare women out of town by throwing rocks into their windows in the middle of the night, in exchange for liquor from a local moonshiner. The settlement women refused to prosecute him, however, and instead invited him to study at the school:

> Our boy was in school bright and early next morning. After this he studied very hard, occasionally drinking on Saturday and Sunday but always coming to say that he was sorry, and would try not to do it again. He has not tasted a drop of liquor for nearly a year now, and when he started to the city to work his way through college he was tall and straight, his face full of determination and ambition. As the word has come to us from his college professor that he is doing the best work in his class of twenty-eight, this and many such things made us feel that the school and settlement at Hindman are worth while. We are indeed grateful to you for

> giving us this opportunity to help our mountain people. (Pettit and Stone 1905)

A perfect analogue for the settlement's goals, this narrative of redemption conveniently weaves temperance ideals with education to offer readers—those who have given the women "this opportunity to help our mountain people"—a heartwarming image of a student who has turned his life around and is now reaping the rewards. The young man, grateful for the opportunities provided by the settlement, allows the quare women in turn to express their appreciation to supporters. Jess Stoddart explains that according to settlement records, these "stories of students overcoming obstacles and making notable progress…brought the greatest response" in terms of financial support (*CC* 67)—which is to be expected, given their emotional impact.

Similarly gratifying accounts of student success frequently surface in the settlement's fundraising literature, as if to convince supporters of a return on their investment. A 1913 letter written by Pettit and Stone's assistant Helen Rue insists that "more wonderful" than all the changes on the settlement's campus is "the change that has taken place in each individual child that has come to our school" (1913). She recalls the progress of a boy named Fitzhugh, "who came to us at sixteen, an orphan boy, who had taken care of his family since his father was shot eight years before, and who could neither read nor write" (Rue 1913). Rue fondly remembers his determination, though she confesses, "But we never dreamed he could work so hard that in four years he could go through [all the lower] grades and first year of the High School. We sent him away to study electricity, but after a few years of work he…has gone to Berea College" (1913). From illiterate orphan to college student in four years—how could readers help but swell with pride for their contribution to Fitzhugh's triumphant metamorphosis? The next paragraph brings news of Minerva Collins, a girl who

came to the settlement "from a crowded one-room log house at the head of a 'holler'" and who eventually graduated from college with "the honors of her class, and has continually had honors since then" (Rue 1913). Once more readers are invited to bask in the glow of a settlement success story, one they helped fund. All the Fitzhughs and Minervas featured in the fundraising literature—and they are many—stand as evidence of the Hindman school's transformative power. Throughout their letters and pamphlets, settlement administrators are quick to point out that the mountain people do not rest on the laurels of desire and potential. When given the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their children, they seize it with gratitude for those who made it possible.

These individual before-and-after narratives are among the most dramatic, of course, and they are all but starred with a disclaimer: "Results not typical." Pettit and Stone often acknowledge that "the majority of our former pupils are now homemakers, and we feel that the best result of our ten years' work is the farms here and there through the mountains where the father and mother are trying to make good Christian homes" (Pettit and Stone 1912). Of course, preceding this sentence is a description of recent graduates who have left the mountains to pursue further education: "The five pupils who were graduated from our school last spring are every one away at college, taking further training, while seven others of our former pupils are doing advanced study" (Pettit and Stone 1912). Most of the settlement's alumni might be homemakers—indeed, this was one of the oft-repeated goals of the school, to educate children "back to their homes instead of away from them"—but the college graduates get the most attention in the fundraising literature as they seem to most vividly illustrate the settlement's ability to influence the community and individuals for good.

Indeed, perhaps the most dramatic testament to the gratitude of the mountaineer comes from the glowing letters written by alumni and reprinted in

the annual letter from 1910. Subject matter in the twelve-page missive—one of the longest in the archive of correspondence from the settlement—runs the gamut from student profiles to teacher anecdotes to social commentary on Appalachia as a whole. Early in the letter, however, author Lucy Furman argues for the superiority of a settlement education and offers "these extracts from letters written by three of the former pupils who are now away studying" (Furman 1910). In the first extract, Mary Everidge reflects on her good old days at the settlement:

> I am so interested in the school here, it is fine, but I have found out how much more I ought to appreciate our school at Hindman….I now know what it means to have such a school for beginners, and the people at Hindman ought to be so thankful for having such advantages. I was proud when I got the best grades in some of my classes, and all the teachers compliment me on my neatness in my notebooks. (qtd. in Furman 1910)

Minerva Cook similarly appreciates the way the Hindman school prepared her for further study at Berea College: "I shall always be glad that I could be in school at Hindman before coming here….Our Literary Club at Hindman has been a great help to me here. The cooking and sewing, too, have been very helpful, but I did not realize it until I came here and began taking them" (qtd. in Furman 1910). Finally, Josiah Combs—one of the settlement's most celebrated early graduates—writes from a university in Lexington, "When I came to Transylvania I entered without examinations, and with but few credentials of any kind. The fact that I had been a student at the WCTU School at Hindman served as the necessary recommendation for the authorities here" (qtd. in Furman 1910). As he continues, he specifically notes the role of the settlement in his literacy training: "My work in English at Hindman gave me full credit for the

three preparatory years here, and it is by reason of the excellent training received at Hindman that I have been enabled to do such good work in literature here in Transylvania, besides being elected editor-in-chief of our literary magazine" (qtd. in Furman 1910). Such categorical praise of the settlement, straight from its biggest success stories, proves the administration's point that the mountain people wholeheartedly appreciate—and approve of—their work. It also casts the settlement women and their supporters as the stars of their very own hero narratives, though many would have surely resisted this construction. Nevertheless, a focus on the good work of the settlement (and, by implication, the people who made it possible) leaves readers patting themselves on the back for their commitment to such worthwhile reform efforts.

In going "out into the world to tell of the needs here," Hindman founders were doing more than fundraising work—they were doing cultural work. As they focused their fundraising efforts around the three interrelated *topoi* of mountain potential, mountain desire, and mountain gratitude, the authors of the school's fundraising propaganda constructed the Appalachian people as deserving, needy, and oh-so-grateful for any assistance. Likewise, fundraising authors constructed themselves and their mission (and, by extension, their supporters) as sensitive, responsive, and heroic. Simultaneously painting their neighbors in broad strokes while honing in on three characteristics that would directly appeal to their audience's sense of charity, the quare women's rhetoric contributed to the overall exoticization and classification of Appalachia as a region "in but not of" America, as Henry Shapiro might say, at the turn of the twentieth century.

## CHAPTER THREE

Troublesome Fiction:
Lucy Furman's Mountain *Topoi*

At the end of every fundraising letter sent out to early supporters of the Hindman Settlement School, an urgent postscript asserts itself in all caps, regardless of the letter's author or subject matter: "PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS GET INTO PRINT." At first glance, the earnestness with which readers are implored to keep the letters' contents out of public view seems a bit ironic—after all, the fundraising letters were themselves semi-public documents mailed regularly to far-flung supporters in the Northeast and Midwest, some of whom were only tangentially connected to this school tucked away in the Kentucky mountains. To be sure, several letters contain sensitive information—unflattering depictions of mountain life, for example, or personal stories of settlement students—but most of the fundraising material is relatively mundane. Reports of settlement activities, tales of student and alumni success, lists of material needs…hardly the stuff of classified documents, yet the boldface caveat remains, imprinted into readers' minds over the course of decades. In time the settlement women explained the reasoning behind their fervent plea: "One of the most important and difficult problems that confront the school at Hindman, next to getting the money for the support—and getting the right people to help us carry out our ideals—is that of letting our friends on the outside know more of what is being done," Pettit and Stone begin in the Annual Letter from 1909. They continue, "The people in the Mountains are proud and sensitive *and do not like being brought before the public as a peculiar people*. For that reason we have found it unwise to publish the very things that would be of most interest, consequently the work has suffered" (AL 1909, emphasis added). From the very beginning,

apparently, the school's administration was aware of their opportunity to shape public perception of the "peculiar" region they now called home—even in their unexciting depictions of domestic life at a small, privately-funded experimental school located in an unfamiliar corner of the countryside—and the implications of this opportunity were lost on neither the settlement women nor their mountain neighbors. Given Henry Shapiro's argument seventy years later that, in fact, popular perceptions of Appalachia as a "strange land inhabited by a peculiar people" can be traced to they bevy of post-bellum and turn-of-the-century writers bent on mining the region for its "local color," the restraint exercised by Pettit and Stone seems remarkably prescient.[13]

Longtime readers of Hindman fundraising letters must have been slightly surprised, then, that scarcely a year after the settlement women issued their call to discretion, detailed stories about life at the settlement authored by new teacher Lucy Furman began to appear in national literary magazines. Raised in central Kentucky, Furman had been a classmate of Katherine Pettit at the Sayre Institute, and she came to the Hindman School in 1907. Though she did not intend to stay long, she quickly found herself captivated by the new environment and intriguing people. Furthermore, she was able to indulge her literary tendencies, as she became a regular writer of fundraising letters and reports in 1908. Soon enough, Furman moved from non-fiction to fiction, and her stories were picked up by the likes of *Century* and *Atlantic Monthly*. Her first set of serialized tales was published in *Century* magazine in 1910 and 1911 and comprises *Mothering on Perilous*, one of four novels written about the settlement. Chronicling the experience of a young housemother in the boys' residence (Furman's initial position at the school), *Mothering on Perilous* introduces readers to the

[13] In fact, Pettit and Stone did engineer a bit of settlement news getting "into print," through articles submitted to *The Lexington Herald*, as well as *Good Health* and *Jr. Red Cross* magazines. Most of these articles, however, contain basic information about the settlement and generic stories of life at the school.

Appalachian people and landscape. Furman's next work, the novella *Sight to the Blind*, was published in *Century* in 1912 and reprinted with an introduction by Ida Tarbell and an afterword by Furman herself in 1914; the story explores the home nursing efforts of the settlement's extension service. *The Quare Women* (serialized in *The Atlantic Monthly* then published whole-cloth in 1923) and its sequel *The Glass Window* (published 1927) narrate the first few years of the school's existence—the early summer camps and the construction of the permanent settlement.

In depicting various phases of the school's first decade, each of these novels paints a rich and vivid picture of life at Hindman, borrowing from the author's own experiences as a house mother and teacher, the earliest journals of the school's founders, and the fundraising letters themselves, some of which Furman wrote—the very same letters that beseech readers to keep the settlement's affairs out of public view. Indeed, Furman's novels lift some characters, plot points, and dialogue directly from their non-fiction counterparts in the settlement's archive. And her portrayal of Appalachian culture is not entirely flattering: feud violence, moonshining, illiteracy, primitive religious customs, oppressive patriarchy, and crushing poverty all appear in Furman's fiction as facts of mountain life. Though presented in the context of stunning natural beauty (the mountain region and its people, Furman would have us believe, are unparalleled in their physical splendor), a supposed "native" intelligence, and a uniquely "American" spirit, the mountaineers in these novels are nevertheless "brought before the public as a peculiar people." As they attracted the attention of a large bourgeois audience, Furman's novels introduced readers not only to the school, but the Appalachian region in general.

Such widespread airing of the settlement's linen does not seem to have bothered Pettit or Stone, despite their apparent anxiety over settlement business

getting "into print." On the contrary, the settlement administration celebrated Furman's literary efforts, mailing out advertisements for each novel upon its publication, sending supporters excerpts from the novels, and trumpeting her success in fundraising letters. In the annual letter from 1914—two years after the publication of *Mothering on Perilous* and a year after *Sight to the Blind*—the administration alludes to Furman's ability to juggle her school work and her writing, as they note, "Miss Furman not only does 'Mothering on Perilous' for her household of eighteen boys with the success and to the amusement and the edification of a great audience, but she mothers the stock and competes with Ceres in bringing forth a wonderful harvest" (Stone and Huntington 1914). They continue, "We are eager, indeed, to have a farmer this year so that Miss Furman may devote more time to her very valuable literary work" (Stone and Huntington 1914). Clearly, Furman's efforts to "get into print" were encouraged by school leaders, so much so that they were willing to sacrifice her day-to-day contributions to campus life.

So why the incongruity? Why did the settlement women explicitly *discourage*, on one hand, the potential publication of mass mailings for fear of objectifying Appalachia as an exotic region full of peculiar people, while they simultaneously and just as explicitly *encouraged*, on the other hand, the publication of novels that not only include but rely on said intrigue and peculiarity? Certainly the income generated by the novels may have softened their hearts a bit. The novels proved a financial boon to the school's fundraising campaign, generating significant income over the years; in fact, settlement historian Jess Stoddart argues that Furman's contribution to the school's financial success "cannot be overestimated" (65)[14]. But another, more problematic, answer

[14] Stoddart specifically attributes the Henry Evans Trust—the largest single financial gift in Hindman's history—to Furman's serialized fiction (*CC* 66).

may lie in a hard and fast belief—then as well as now—in the division between the rhetorical/persuasive and the literary/artistic. However thin the veil of fiction covering Furman's stories, it nonetheless afforded her a measure of candor denied the letter writers, thus shielding her from any criticism that she may be unfairly spotlighting the mountain people and their purported oddities. Though Furman admits on the flyleaf of *The Quare Women* that "The atmosphere of this story, its background, and even many of its incidents, arise from the author's connection with the Hindman Settlement School, in Knott County, Kentucky," she is clearly counting on the supposed fictionality of the story to absolve her sin of publication. Lucy Furman and her settlement sisters apparently clung to the notion that because *her* stories—unlike the stories in the letters and pamphlets—were not "real," they were fit for public consumption.

The purpose of Furman's novels is almost identical to that of the fundraising literature: to convince readers of the important work being carried out at the Hindman Settlement School, and to exhort them to act (that is, donate money) accordingly. Stripped bare, the novels and the fundraising material alike are little more than propaganda, yet only the letters and pamphlets come appended with a gag order. In contrast, the novels intentionally find a much larger, much more diverse audience. Marketed as fiction (albeit of the "inspired by true events" ilk), Furman's novels consciously blur the line between fiction and reality as she makes her case for the efficacy of the Hindman school and invents her own set of mountain *topoi* that draw from and complement those found in the fundraising letters. Furman's fiction is, in a word, *rhetorical*. Such discord, then, perhaps calls into question the supposed rift between rhetoric and poetic and points to the as-yet untapped resource of fiction in the recovery of women's rhetoric. As a result, those of us committed to remapping the rhetorical canon to include heretofore unrecognized women's voices ought to look beyond

non-fiction treatises, speeches, letters, and diaries to women's fictional writing as a site of rhetorical invention.

*Rhetorics, Poetics, Genders, Genres*

In their introduction to *Available Means*, a recent anthology of women's rhetorics, Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald point out that "excluding any form of 'literary' text was [their] conscious choice" as they compiled a collection of women's writing and speaking from the past two millenia (xxi). Placing classical speeches by Aspasia and Hortensia in conversation with contemporary works by the likes of Andrea Dworkin and Gloria Steinem, the editors undertake the indispensable work of "gathering"—one of the project's governing metaphors, according to the introduction—in order illustrate the longstanding tradition of women's rhetoric. Though the collection is intended for rhetorical study, many of the women whose words grace the pages of *Available Means* are familiar to students of literature as well: for example, Christine de Pizan, Margery Kempe, Queen Elizabeth I, Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. More recent authors included in the collection—Adrienne Rich, Toni Morrison, Dorothy Allison—are likewise recognized for their literary efforts. But Ritchie and Ronald intentionally eschew these authors' overtly literary texts in favor of works whose purpose is "most often to persuade or inform," although they concede that "many works blur the boundaries between 'teaching' and 'delighting'" (xxi). In other words, the editors of *Available Means* sought out blatantly *rhetorical* texts, though they explain that they "do not mean to suggest that we can draw a clear line between literature and rhetoric" and "rather arbitrarily define rhetoric by form, excluding poetry and story and concentrating on nonfiction prose" (xxi). Arbitrary or not, however, the line is drawn, and such exclusions underscore the extent to which rhetoric and literature persist as co-

existing yet still relatively discrete traditions in our intellectual history. And while the omission of literary forms in a text devoted to rhetorical practice is understandable—it is, in fact, a decision backed up by centuries of discursive, disciplinary, and departmental practice—it illustrates a potential wrinkle to be ironed out in the recovery of women's rhetoric. What follows in this section is a brief discussion of the rhetoric/poetic binary, its genesis, and its evolution. It is a division, I argue, that masks potentially fruitful sites of inquiry, a division that has shaped and, to some extent, stunted the construction of a women's rhetorical tradition.

The gap between literary and rhetorical theory has alternately narrowed and widened in the 2500 years since Aristotle articulated the differences (and similarities) between the two fields of study. The disciplines have always been "explicitly connected in discussions of discourse," according to James Berlin, but their relationship has been a complicated one, a sort of back-and-forth power struggle in which rhetoric and poetic battle it out for equal prominence in the scholarly canon (7). According to Berlin, "At some historical moments—perhaps most—rhetoric has been the larger category, including poetry as one of its subdivisions…. At other times, poetic has been the master paradigm, including rhetoric as a minor subcategory within it" (*Rhetoric* 3). Indeed, the relationship has been fraught, and it can be traced to two Aristotelian texts: the *Poetics* (350 BCE) and *On Rhetoric* (333 BCE). Perhaps the central text of the Western rhetorical tradition, *On Rhetoric* defines rhetoric as the counterpart to dialectic, outlines the types and functions of persuasive oratory, and offers practical instruction on the effective presentation of arguments. Aristotle classifies rhetoric as an art and suggests that as such, it can be systematically studied and taught, with the ultimate goal being the "ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (36). Though popular definitions and

opinions of rhetoric have vacillated over time, it might be generally understood as the use of language to persuade.

Though the older *Poetics* is perhaps less significant to the rhetorical canon, it works alongside *On Rhetoric* to present a more comprehensive picture of Aristotle's views on language and communication. If in *On Rhetoric* his concern is the types and means of persuasion, in the *Poetics*, Aristotle is concerned with the rhythm, language, and harmony of mimetic (that is, imitative or representational) literature. More specifically, he identifies his subject as "not only of the art [of poetry] in general but also of its species and their capacities; of the structure of plot required for a good poem; of the number and nature of the constituent parts of a poem; and likewise any other matters in the same line of inquiry" (223). Like much of his extant work, Aristotle's *Poetics* is fragmentary and incomplete—both *On Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* have been handed down as essentially glorified lecture notes—but it is complete enough to codify poetry in the same way *On Rhetoric* codifies argument. Stephen Halliwell classifies the *Poetics* as a response to Plato's earlier denigration of mimetic literature in *The Republic*, a "defence of poetry" that argues "for poetry's intellectual and moral status, and hence for its potential place in the conception of the good life which is a common premise of all Plato's and Aristotle's thought" (2). In fact, Aristotle does affirm poetry as a noble art, arguing that *mimesis* is both natural ("[man] is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation") and aesthetically pleasing ("it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation…though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representations of them in art") (227). But the text does not stop with defense. It is an attempt to understand the general appeal of mimetic literature and separate it from other types of discourse—namely rhetoric, history, and logic.

The focus of the *Poetics* is obviously poetry, but over time the theories espoused therein have been applied across literary genres. Though ancient notions of literature differed markedly from our own—"literature," from the Greek word for "letters," in fourth century Athens would have referred to all written (as opposed to oral) discourse regardless of its artistic and aesthetic aims—there was still, according to George Kennedy, a "tacit assumption that the traditional literary genres…had special prestige" (*Classical* 127). That is, epics and tragic poems would have been exalted over more pedestrian spoken or written forms, but they would not have been named literature as we understand it today. Our contemporary application of "literature" as a term denoting the "special prestige" Kennedy mentions above was born several centuries later, out of the belletristic tradition of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The coincidental rise of the novel as a genre redefined the literary landscape even further and constitutes another difference between classical and contemporary notions of literature. Nevertheless, we can now understand Aristotle's *Poetics* as a treatise on literary theory in general, one that addresses not only poetry, but drama and narrative fiction as well. Indeed, in his introduction to the *Poetics* Edward P. J. Corbett situates the text broadly as a treatise on "imaginative literature or, more specifically, the art of fiction—that is, made up or invented narratives" (xx). A theory of poetics, then—and the clear distinction drawn between poetics and rhetoric—applies broadly to all forms of literature.

While Aristotle's dichotomization of rhetoric and poetics can best be understood in the context of his entire oeuvre, his work is remarkable precisely because he does so decidedly classify different fields of study and types of meaning-making. After all, as George Kennedy explains, Aristotle was the first person in the history of Western thought to "give serious consideration to drawing a map of learning and to defining the relationship between the various

disciplines of the arts and sciences" (*Classical* 12), and the divisions and demarcations he set forth comprise the foundation of the Western academic tradition. The particular relationship between rhetoric and poetic has captured the special attention of scholars from Aristotle on, partially because the two fields constitute something of a binary and can be appreciated in relation to each other: rhetoric is context-bound, while literature is universal. Rhetoric is concerned with expression, while poetics is concerned with impression. Rhetoric is practical, poetics ethereal. Rhetoric is extrinsic, poetics intrinsic. Rhetoric is interested, poetics disinterested…and so on. Such pithy comparisons are too easy, of course, and gloss over the complexities of both disciplines. To begin with, they are based on the fallacious assumption that the two fields share similar ends of producing concrete texts. Steven Weiss points out that Aristotle "does not distinguish between rhetoric and any other art on the basis of a literary notion. Rhetoric for Aristotle is not a type of literature; it is "a faculty, a power" (26). In other words, while poetics is the study of *product*, rhetoric is the study of *process*. One cannot produce "a rhetoric" just as one might produce "a poem." Still, the distinctions remain, both theoretically and practically, and have influenced the study of persuasive and poetic writing throughout scholarly history. Rhetoric and poetic have occupied, in Corbett's parlance, "separate provinces," and for that we can thank Aristotle's "lifelong passion for taxonomies" and his commitment to articulating epistemological divisions (vi).

Despite the relegation to "separate provinces," those distinctions have actually been somewhat fluid for the past two millennia—at times murky and at times acute. As the study of rhetoric alternately expanded and contracted through antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment, so too did its relationship with poetic. By the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the demarcation was again clear. Poetics had emerged as the "master

paradigm," in Berlin's parlance, a shift predicated on two factors: first, the prevailing Romantic sentiment that exalted the poet/artist as the epitome of genius and inspiration, and second, the rise of the first-year composition course in the university. Both phenomena have been explored extensively and need not be recapitulated here in great detail, except to point out that they coincided with—indeed, shaped—the development of the English departments cropping up in colleges and universities across the country.[15] At the same time poetics began to enjoy a special prominence in the evolving academy, rhetoric took a hit in terms of prestige and scholarly esteem. The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1892 meant that more and more colleges admitted more and more students, necessitating significant revisions to rhetorical curricula. The focus of rhetorical study soon shifted from oral to written forms as instructors struggled to accommodate larger classes full of students at various levels of ability and preparation. More students plus inadequate preparation necessitated a bit of institutional scrambling, and the modern composition classroom was born out of a literacy crisis of sorts. Composition—and, by extension, rhetoric—is therefore always already marginalized, having emerged out of and into a deficit-based curriculum. The result, says Berlin, is that "for English studies, all that is important and central in the study of discourse falls within the domain of literary texts and all that is unimportant and marginal falls within the realm of rhetoric" (*Rhetorics* 3). Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the rhetoric/poetic divide became reified in the departmental practice of nearly every English department in the U.S., as rhetoric took a backseat to literary study.

But the rehabilitation of rhetorical study in the 1960s brought a fresh set of questions to the familiar binary. While most responses to Aristotle's

[15] See James Berlin, *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures* and *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges*; Robert Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric*; and Thomas Miller, *The Formation of College English*.

rhetoric/poetic distinction throughout history have hastened to point out the overlap between the two fields, the argument really began to gain steam during the mid-century revival of classical rhetoric. Hoyt Hudson, writing in 1953, anticipates later attitudes when he acknowledges that despite the distinction between rhetoric and poetic, "which seems to me of primary importance…we should not fail to take into account all possible qualifications of it" (372). The purportedly disinterested author of a literary text, Hudson points out, "does not always do as we have described him doing: he does at times consider his audience" (373). Likewise, though the rhetor's ultimate "end is persuasion, it is not hard to believe that there are moments in his discourse when this end is forgotten in his delight or wonder before some image which fills his inner eye" (378). Though Hudson's thesis ultimately clings to the division between persuasive and literary texts, it nevertheless foreshadows the scholarly climate of the next decade: if Hudson sought to destabilize the rhetoric/poetic binary, Wayne Booth and Kenneth Burke would endeavor to dismantle it completely.

Published in 1961, Wayne Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* argues that all narrative is at its core rhetorical. Using classic novels (*Emma*, *Tom Jones*, *Tristram Shandy*) as examples, Booth renounces the "general rules" of literature that have kept readers from recognizing the rhetorical elements of fiction—authors should be objective, true art ignores the audience, and so forth. No matter its claims to purity or objectivity, says Booth, writing literature is rhetorical act because it involves choices:

> The novelist who chooses to tell *this* story cannot at the same time tell *that* story; in centering our interests, sympathy, or affection on one character, he inevitably excludes from our interest, sympathy or affection some other character. Art imitates life in this respect as in so many others; just as in real life I am inevitably unfair to

> everyone but myself or, at best, my immediate loved ones, so in literature complete impartiality is impossible. (79)

So long as authors rely on their own experience in the texts they produce—and so long as readers bring their own experiences to bear on the texts they consume—literature cannot be separated from rhetorical concerns about the author/text/reader relationship. As Booth would later put it, a rhetoric of fiction requires us to "think of the poem not primarily as *meaning* or *being* but as *doing*," that is, as communicating a specific message from a specific author to a specific audience ("Rhetoric" 113). Kenneth Burke similarly mines the overlapping territory of rhetoric and poetic in *Language as Symbolic Action*, suggesting as Booth does that the dichotomy is false. Conceding that in "extreme cases, we can distinguish between the Poetic and the Rhetorical here when we think of 'Art for Art's Sake' in contrast with deliberative and forensic oratory," Burke goes on to ask, "does not epideictic readily become transformed into a display art, pure and simple?" (295). In other words, rhetoric and poetic exist in a mutually informative rather than mutually exclusive relationship. If, then, the rhetorical nature of literature and the literary nature of rhetoric are so readily apparent, why not allow the existing connections between the two fields to inform the way we experience their discursive traditions? Why not break the binary apart once and for all to explore "the full resources of Poetics and *Rhetorica docens*" (Burke 307)? Why not allow rhetoric and poetic to coexist—rather than compete—in a symbiotic relationship?

Unfortunately, the perceived rift between intellectual traditions has influenced the scholarship in each. The disciplinary tension Berlin articulates has been reproduced in English studies research, as the relatively marginalized position of rhetoric within English departments has led rhetorical scholars to carve out a discursive niche separate from the literary tradition. Such an impulse

is certainly understandable; in the fifty or so years since its mid-century "recovery," rhetorical study has required a good bit of strict delineation. By identifying a locus of inquiry outside the literary canon, scholars of rhetoric established their own theoretical and practical tradition—a tradition rooted in persuasive, hortatory discourse. But the hard and fast borders that were once necessary to the still burgeoning field of composition and rhetoric have become restrictive, especially when applied to the recovery of "marginalized" rhetorics, in which rhetors may have been denied access to conventional rhetorical forums. In the case of nineteenth and early twentieth century women writers, for instance, fiction may have been a more "available means" of persuasion than, say, forensic or deliberative discourse.[16] For that reason, those of us committed to the "recovery" of women's rhetorics should focus on softening the discursive borders a bit and reading across received disciplinary boundaries to include less "rhetorical"—but no less public or persuasive—voices in the women's rhetorical tradition.

But of course the implications of this divide extend beyond English departments, insofar as rhetoric (read: persuasive writing and speaking) and literature (read: artistic writing and speaking) have been regarded generally as distinct forms of meaning-making. The example here from the Hindman Settlement School—published novels telling the same stories deemed too private for overtly rhetorical fundraising letters—reflects the popular assumption that rhetoric is interested and situated while poetics remains disinterested and universal. The corollary, for the settlement women at least, seems to be that even the barest literary pretense protects a subject from (or at least pays lip service to)

[16] This is not to say that women were not working in more "purely" rhetorical forms during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, as Ritchie and Ronald demonstrate in *Available Means*, and as Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg begin to demonstrate in *The Rhetorical Tradition*, women such as Margaret Fuller, the Grimke sisters, and Mary Augusta Jordan were writing and speaking publicly during this time.

the harsh light that may accompany an "interested" rhetorical treatment. Hence, they advocate discretion on the part of their letter reading audience, while the novels are widely publicized. Clearly the two types of discourse worked to similar ends at the Hindman Settlement School, and the disconnect between the administration's advice and actions stands as just one example of a deep-seated adherence—personally, institutionally, and culturally—to the rhetoric/poetic dichotomy, troublesome as it may be.

*Inventing (Women's) Fiction*

I offer Lucy Furman's rhetorical work on behalf of the Hindman Settlement School as evidence of the growing need for scholars of rhetoric to pay more attention to fiction as a site of rhetorical action. In particular, those of us committed to the project of feminist historiography—that is, the reconception of the rhetorical canon to include the contributions of women from classical times to the present—should reclaim the locus of women's fiction for the ongoing recovery of women's rhetoric. Though women's discourse, literary or otherwise, has been circumscribed throughout history, Mary Poovey argues that, specifically in the nineteenth century, literature was the "discourse in which women participated in the greatest numbers and arguably with the least cultural restraint" (38). Nineteenth and early twentieth century women may have been denied access to the pulpit, the courtroom, the legislature, and the voting booth, but popular literature was a sphere of public expression they were allowed to enter—and enter they did[17]. In fact, according to Susan Coultrap-McQuin, women writers gained so much ground in nineteenth century America that "by

[17] Of course, many nineteenth century women writers were already privileged in a number of ways, especially in terms of race and class. Fiction writing was more than just a hobby, however, for ladies of leisure. Ann Shapiro explains that, though many of these novelists came from upper-middle-class backgrounds, "they wrote mainly out of economic need" (121).

1877 women wrote nearly three-quarters of all the novels published"—up nearly fifty percent from the early part of the century (2). Subject matter ranged from home, family, and romance, to temperance, abolition, and suffrage, as women staked a claim in the literary marketplace. Ann Douglas goes so far as to argue that though women "lacked power of any crudely tangible kind…*they exerted their 'influence' chiefly through literature* which was just in the process of becoming a mass medium" (9, emphasis added). Not that this unprecedented influence was uncontested—after all, Nathaniel Hawthorne must not have been the only man to fret over the mob of scribbling women. But despite the fact that they wrote in a world that "often rendered them invisible" by dismissing the merits of their work out of hand (Coultrap-McQuin 7), record numbers of women made their voices heard through their fiction in the nineteenth century.

Alas, much women's fiction from the nineteenth century has been disregarded for most of the twentieth, denigrated as "simply" sentimental, domestic, or regional. Indeed, the phrase "women's fiction" is something of a misnomer, implying that all the fiction written by women over the course of a century shares essential characteristics. This is obviously not the case. But since, as Lora Romero argues, "women novelists have been excluded *as a class*, feminist literary histories must include them *as a class*" (111). Feminist literary histories have done just that, beginning with Elaine Showalter, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, and Jane Tompkins in the 1970s.[18] Work has continued apace since then, with more critical attention paid to sentimental, domestic, and regional fiction as historical outlets for women's creative expression.

Indeed, much of the reclamation work in literary studies anticipates the feminist recovery efforts that began in rhetoric in the late 1980s and early 1990s

[18] See Showalter, *A Literature of One's Own*; Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*; and Tompkins, *Sentimental Designs*.

with Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Andrea Lunsford, Cheryl Glenn, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and others. Curiously, however, the two traditions—literary and rhetorical—have remained separate for the most part, even as they have undertaken similar projects: the recovery of a women's intellectual tradition. And this recovery work, this "gathering," to again borrow Ritchie and Ronald's metaphor, has been invaluable to scholars invested not only in the history of women's rhetoric, but the history of rhetoric as a whole. But now that such boundaries have been drawn, it is time to test them. These borders have done nothing to facilitate the recovery of a comprehensive women's intellectual tradition, which has been the project of feminist scholars in both disciplines for the past decades. Moreover, as Burke and Booth point out, such boundaries are permeable, if not entirely imaginary. Insofar as Furman's novels are doing the same ideological work as their non-fiction counterparts in the Hindman archives, they expose a rupture in the long-venerated division between rhetoric and poetic, and point to a fruitful site of inquiry for scholars dedicated to the recovery of women's persuasive praxis throughout history.

*Othering on Perilous: Lucy Furman's Appalachia*

Like the overt fundraising propaganda frequently mailed to supporters of the Hindman Settlement School, the novels of teacher Lucy Furman often cultivate an image of otherness as they construct Appalachia for a faraway audience and represent mountaineers in paradoxical terms of depravity and worthiness. In *Mothering on Perilous*, *Sight to the Blind*, *The Quare Women*, and *The Glass Window*, the early twentieth century American bourgeoisie read of mountaineers who are poor, violent, isolated, ignorant—but also proud, loyal, charming, and "worthy" of outside assistance. As she constructs Appalachia as

other, Furman draws on the conventions of so-called "local color"[19] fiction, a genre that enjoyed widespread popularity immediately after the Civil War and into the early twentieth century. Furman's novels might have been written a bit late to fit neatly into this movement, but its influence is everywhere in her fiction. The hallmark of local color writing, according to Josephine Donovan, is "authentic regional detail"—that is, "authentic dialect, authentic local characters, real geographical settings, authentic local customs and dress" (7)—all of which figure prominently in Furman's work as she defines Appalachia for middle America. Though not often esteemed for its artistic merit, local color fiction is nonetheless notable in terms of place and identity construction, as exoticization of the other is a touchstone of the genre. In the words of Stephanie Foote, "Because it is a form that works to preserve local customs, local accents, and local communities, regional writing is a form *about* the representation of difference" (4). That representation of difference did not exist for its own sake, however. By representing the populations of remote corners of the country, local colorists were contributing to a nationwide discourse on American identity. In trolling little-known corners of the U.S. to produce belletristic short stories, and in publishing those stories in genteel literary periodicals, local colorists were actually, says Amy Kaplan, engaging in a process of nationalization by inventing a shared past and "solidifying national centrality by reimagining a distended industrial nation as an extended clan sharing a 'common inheritance' in its imagined rural origins" (250-251). Stories of the American "exotic," however fanciful or eclectic, offered readers a shared (if entirely invented) inheritance while reminding them how far they had progressed.

[19] The term "local color" has rightly come under criticism for its racist overtones and has been replaced by the phrase "regional literature" or "regional fiction" in contemporary critical treatments. I occasionally reference the older usage in this project, partially to highlight the subtly racialized discourse that Furman invokes in her descriptions of the mountaineers.

Any locale was fair game for the local colorists so long as it was sufficiently obscure to the bourgeois reader: the north woods of New England, the swamps of Florida, the outposts of the American west. The southern highlands provided a particularly appealing location for this type of fiction because "unlike most of the areas described by the local colorists, Appalachia was not in fact separated from America by ethnic, geographic, or chronological distance" (H. Shapiro 17). The people 'discovered' by the local colorists as they traveled to Appalachia at the turn of the twentieth century were suitably exotic in their primitive lifestyles and quaint customs, but because this was a people (assumed to be) largely white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant, readers could simultaneously exoticize them (as they would have the Native Americans in James Fenimore Cooper's fiction or the Louisiana Creoles in George Washington Cable's stories, for example) *and* empathize with them. For bourgeois American readers of *Harper's*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and the like, mountaineers were close enough in terms of race and religion to be recognizable, but still distant enough to be interesting.[20]

Shapiro points to Mary Murfree and John Fox, Jr. as exemplars of Appalachian local colorists, authors who came to Appalachia specifically to fictionalize it. Many of these authors, like Murfree and Fox, had visited the southern mountains but were not residents; Murfree, for example, lived near Nashville but vacationed frequently at a resort in eastern Tennessee. In their novels and short stories, Murfree, Fox, and others latched on to the ruggedness, ignorance, and primitive conditions they saw in their visits to the mountains—but also the beauty and purity of the settings. These Appalachian 'characteristics' were most often typified, says Shapiro, in the free-spirited and

[20] For a discussion of the role of local color fiction in the invention of Appalachia as a discrete and knowable region, see Chapter One.

nature-loving mountain girls with whom the male protagonists (for they are almost always male) fall in love. Shapiro posits Murfree's "The Star in the Valley" as "the classic love story" of this genre, focusing as it does on the doomed relationship between city-dweller Reginald Chevis and mountain girl Celia Shaw, star-crossed lovers from different spheres (22). Struck by Shaw's simple beauty, Chevis nevertheless recognizes that the two are from different worlds: his cultured and orderly and hers coarse and archaic. Shapiro explains that Chevis realizes too late—only after Celia lies dying—that his pride has blinded him from the true nobility of Celia's spirit. Similar stories abound in turn-of-the-century local color fiction: an urbane (and perhaps a bit proud) gentleman stumbles upon the apparent wonder of a beautiful, simple mountain woman but recognizes to his dismay that the gulf between them is too great. She is desirable, but ultimately he cannot have her, either because he rejects her outright or, more often, because she dies. In any case, the union is ultimately thwarted, though not without a final moment of regret, a fleeting glimpse at what might have been. According to Shapiro, this trope of the doomed relationship between sophisticated urban hero and simple mountain girl is omnipresent in Appalachian local color writing because it highlights the concurrent wonder and revulsion felt by American readers as they experienced this place called Appalachia for the first time. Here was a region of natural beauty, quaint customs, and simple charm, yes, but there was dirt and poverty and incivility as well. Appalachia as manifest in the character of Celia is fascinating, to be sure, but it/she is ultimately incompatible with Reginald Chevis and, likewise, the readers of *Harper's*. In this story (and others like it) Appalachia equals beauty, simplicity, coarseness, ignorance—suitable for an exotic tryst in the wilderness, but too much in need of civility and refinement to bring home to the family. Thus local color fiction works to construct a caricature of Appalachia

for the bourgeois American reading public, an image that misrepresented and at times severely distorted Appalachian reality.

Following in this tradition, Lucy Furman constructs an Appalachia that would have been disconcerting to her readers due to its violence, coarseness, and ignorance. Whereas the overtly rhetorical fundraising letters rely on a set of *topoi* that are overwhelmingly positive and optimistic—namely, the desire, potential, and gratitude of the mountain people—the *topoi* to which Furman consistently returns in her depictions of mountain life are more sinister. In her so-called "fictional" treatment of Appalachia, mountain violence and ignorance figure prominently, and Furman invents an Appalachia chock full of "a peculiar people."

### *"A man haint nobody till he's kilt off a few!": Furman's* Topos *of Mountain Violence*

In Lucy Furman's Appalachia, the violence of the mountaineers is taken as a matter of course. Beginning with her first novel, Furman constructs an Appalachia full of fighting and lawlessness—an attribute that particularly seems to affect mountain men, even from a young age. The first pages of *Mothering on Perilous* allow the author to regale the reader with stories of mountain feuds, even as her protagonists uses them to distance herself culturally from her new charges. Though this narrative focuses primarily on young settlement teacher Cecilia Loring's domestic duties as housemother of the little boys' cottage on Perilous Creek (Furman uses a pseudonym in this novel for the real-life Troublesome Creek, but in later novels she reverts to the actual place name) the entire narrative is set against a backdrop of a bloody mountain "war." Written in the style of a diary—short, dated entries make up the entirety of the narrative—the novel traces the involvement of settlement student (and particular favorite of Miss Loring) Nucky Marrs in the "Marrs-Cheever War" on Trigger Branch. Tales

of the feud pepper the narrative from its opening pages, though Miss Loring, the epitome of gentility and feminine virtue, decries the glorification of violence. Her young charges, however, seem to thrive on it, and they listen reverentially as Nucky recounts the history of the land war—started over the location of a fence—one night after study-hour in the cottage:

> "…first one side and then t'other has been setting back the fence, and gen'ally a few gets kilt and a lot wounded. Six year gone, paw got his three brothers kilt and a leg shot off and a couple of bullets in his lung, in a battle, and haint been able to do a lick of work sence. Blant, my big brother, wa'n't but fifteen then, and he's had to make the living ever sence, with me to help him. And for five year' before he got good-grown, the Cheevers they helt our land, and Blant he laid low and put in all his spare time at gun practice. Then last fall, on the day Blant was twenty, he rounded up Rich Tarrant and some more of his friends, and Uncle Billy's boys and me, and we tore up the fence, and sot it down on the old line where it ought to be; and the Cheevers, Israel and his ten boys, got wind of it, and come up, and there was the terriblest battle you ever seed….[Blant] killed two of 'em dead that day, and wounded five or six more pretty bad" (25-26).

The boys in the audience find themselves alternately awestruck and envious; the chapter ends with one listener sighing, "Gee, I wisht I had a war in my family!" (27). Miss Loring, we know from the opening pages of the novel, is "sad enough to know such [feuds] exist" (3), but she is powerless to steer the boys' attention away from the bloodshed. She tries channeling their appetite for adventure into an interest in literature, reading aloud from *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Odyssey*, to no avail. To hear Furman (via Miss Loring) tell it, young mountain boys have an

unnatural thirst for violence—one they eventually quench with a "war" of their own. In a bit of obvious irony, the figurative storm breaks as the group listens to a Sunday School lesson: "Nucky kicked Killis on the shin; Killis called him a smotch-eyed polecat; the two grappled; Philip flew to Nucky's assistance, Joab to Killis's; Keats, Hen, and Moses rushed in on the Marrs side, Taulbee, Zachariah and Iry on the Blair, little Jason joyously into the fray, impartially attacking both sides" (39-40). Once the fight is started, no one wants to be left out. Even the youngest and smallest, "little Jason," finds himself right at home in the midst of violence. But even hand-to-hand combat becomes too tame for these boys, and before long they take to arms: "I saw Killis grab the shovel, Nucky the poker, and Keats the tongs, while Philip wrested off a table-leg, and Taulbee and others either smashed chairs to pieces for weapons, or seized remaining table-legs" (40). Though all parties emerge from the fight unscathed, Miss Loring is distressed by the boys' willing disregard for order—and readers of *Century* magazine would have found the boys' thirst for violence equally disorienting. Furman continues to drive the point home later in the chapter, as a still distraught Miss Loring tries to guilt Nucky into apologizing a few days after the fight, asking how he would have felt if he had hurt or killed her or one of the other boys in the fight: "'I'd hate right smart to kill a woman,' replied Nucky Marrs; 'but gee, I would'nt mind laying out a few boys. I got to begin somewheres,—a man haint nobody till he's kilt off a few!'" (44). Indeed, in Lucy Furman's Appalachia, the young mountaineers seem consumed by a love of violence, and they are impervious to any attempts at distraction. Classic literature, Sunday School lessons, even personal guilt trips fail to capture their attention as much as any fight, real or imagined.

The violence soon escalates in the story, as eventually Nucky leaves the settlement to fight alongside his brother (and sate his bloodlust) in the escalating

family feud. Before long he is gravely injured in his attempt to "lay out" a few members of the rival Cheever clan, but Miss Loring sends for a surgeon from the Bluegrass who eventually saves the boy's life. Thus chastened, Marrs and Cheever families alike renounce their involvement in the war and vow to live peaceably henceforth. Thus, we are to believe, modernity triumphs (albeit narrowly) over senseless clan violence. Lessons are learned, wrongs righted, transgressions forgiven; nevertheless, the reader is left with a disturbing overall impression of bloody disregard for the law and common sense. The message might be a bit obvious and clunky—the crude mountain boy is saved from a life of savagery by the thoroughly modern teacher—but it comes through loud and clear.

This impression carries over into *The Quare Women*, in which Furman once again sets a happy tale of settlement life in relief against images of individual and clan violence. While the story primarily belongs to settlement founders Amy Scott and Virginia Preston (representing May Stone and Katherine Pettit, respectively), a subplot involving singing teacher Isabel Gwynne surfaces early on. Having traveled to the mountains from her genteel home on a horse farm, Isabel is anxious to hear first-hand about the feuds she has read about in the newspaper—just like her real-life counterparts, who first traveled to the mountains to see the feuds. Her first question to Uncle Adam, the man sent to the railroad from the settlement to retrieve her and her belongings, is "How is the feud coming on now?" (65). But Uncle Adam shushes her, warning, "Hit hain't safe to talk about the war in public. Walls, and even lumber-piles, has years, and trees has tongues, and a man that aims to live peacable can't see, hear, nor tell nothing" (65). Isabel's disappointment is brief, however, for once they cross out of "Bloody Breathitt" county, Uncle Adam appears more willing to apprise her of feud matters. He tells of a local war—"'Oh, do you actually mean

there is a war where Cousin Amy and the tents are?' cried Isabel, delightedly" (70)—as his passenger listens breathlessly:

> "Right thar at the Forks of Troublesome," replied Uncle Adam; "Fallons and Kents, they both live thar, and for nigh thirty year thar's been a sight of hate and bloodshed betwixt 'em. But they have fit in the open, and done their own killing, mostly—not hired hit done, like they foller doing in Breathitt; and so a man has more respects for 'em. Sense the two main heads, Fighting Fult Fallon and Red Rafe Kent, got kilt off things hain't been quite so bad. You see, Red Rafe he finally kilt Fighting Fult; and then young Fult you might say had a bound to revenge his paw, and he kilt Rafe; and then there was a spell of peace whilst young Fult was down at Frankfort a year—"
>
> "Do you mean in the penitentiary?"
>
> "Yes; and then whilst he fit a year in Cuby. But when he come home, 'peard like he was kindly wild-turned, and hit wa'n't no time till him and Rafe's boy, Darcy, started the war all over again. The two boys don't hardly ever meet without shooting, and they've wounded each other time and again, though not fatal; and t'other boys that runs with 'em has been kilt and wounded, and things is pretty bad." (70-71)

As in *Mothering on Perilous*, readers are introduced to a longstanding feud taken as a matter of course by community members. Though such wars are not so common that they preclude a little fanfare (i.e. the boys in *Mothering on Perilous* sit spellbound as Nucky relates the story of the Marrs-Cheever battles), their inevitability is never questioned. Uncle Adam concedes this very point, explaining to Isabel that, though the settlement women have recently brokered a

truce between the warring factions on Troublesome, "of course hit won't last—there's too long-lived a hate betwixt Kents and Fallons ever to raly die down" (71). Though the "war" stories are used primarily as background information or as part of a subplot, their ubiquity in Furman's stories suggests a general lawlessness that pervades mountain communities.

Unlike Miss Loring in *Mothering on Perilous*, Isabel Gwynne in *The Quare Women* finds the feuds romantic rather than depressing. Naïve fascination therefore colors her initial meeting with young Fult Fallon, the handsome yet reckless young perpetrator of the Fallon-Kent war. She does not know the young man's identity upon their initial meeting, despite his mentioning time spent in Frankfort and Cuba, and is blind to all but his striking good looks—"young and extremely handsome, with large dark eyes, blue-black hair, and olive skin, and he sat on his horse with perfect grace" (74)—his beautiful singing voice, and his knowledge of Old English ballads. When Isabel does finally realize that "the youth sitting before her on his saddle, in all his dashing beauty, was the young feud leader," she is "thrilled through and through" to meet such a romantic figure (80).

Misgivings eventually replace the initial thrill, though, even when it becomes clear that the attraction is mutual. Isabel slowly learns more about Fult from others in the community and is soon appalled to learn that he is engaged to another woman. When he eventually confesses his love for Isabel, she berates him for "the wild and reckless things you have done" in giving away his affection so easily and threatens to leave the school and start home immediately (152). Fult laughs off her threat at first, but his desire for Isabel soon takes an ominous turn: "'Do you think you can get away from me that way?' he said fiercely. 'Don't you know I allus have what I want before I finish? That nothing can't stop me?'" (153). Any student of literature sufficiently acquainted with

foreshadowing can guess what comes next: intent on having Isabel at any cost, Fult kidnaps her a few weeks later with the idea of forcing her to get married. As he binds her hands and feet, he growls menacingly, "I don't allow nothing to stand between me and my desire" (188). Here Fult has become predatory, almost animalistic, in the violence he perpetrates against Isabel. Luckily, she cleverly breaks free and Fult eventually atones for his behavior toward her, as well as his behavior in perpetrating the Fallon-Kent feud. As is the case in *Mothering on Perilous*, the climax of the narrative comes when Fult and his archenemy Darcy Kent vow to end their fighting once and for all. Again, though, peace comes only with the assistance and influence of the quare women. In *Mothering on Perilous*, Miss Loring's quick thinking saves Nucky's life, which leads to a reassessment of the "war" by both factions. In *The Quare Women*, Isabel's gracious behavior in the face of danger—she forgives Fult for kidnapping her—persuades Fult and his rival Darcy to renounce their violent tendencies in favor of civilized discourse. Modernity may not be a lost cause in the southern highlands, but in Furman's novels, at least, it requires much cultivation from outsiders. Indeed, Furman's mountaineers display no shame or sense that the wars are at all problematic until they see their behavior in contrast to the polite society modeled by the settlement women. Once the error of their ways is revealed to them, they are quick to reform themselves accordingly. But both novels sensationalize mountain violence to such an extent that an overall sense of lawlessness and bloodshed prevails in the mind of the reader, and Furman's warning is insistent: danger lurks in the mountains.

### *"With a little knowledge": Furman's* Topos *of Mountain Ignorance*

Just as dangerous as the mountain feuds is the ignorance of the mountaineers, another *topos* in Furman's novels. In Furman's accounts of

Appalachian life, mountaineers disregard modern science, medicine, and education in favor of superstition, folk wisdom, and primitive religion—and the results are often disastrous. In *Sight to the Blind*, we meet Aunt Dalmanutha, an elderly mountain woman beset by a life of hardship. Having lost her children to typhoid and diphtheria and her own eyesight besides, the old woman is "powerful low in her sperrits" (32) when she receives a visit from Miss Shippen, the settlement's trained nurse. To hear Aunt Dally tell it, her blindness is simply the wages of sin. Having publicly cursed God at the funeral of her only daughter Evy, the grieving mother was warned by preacher Uncle Joshuay to rescind her blasphemy or prepare for vengeance from heaven—a warning Dalmanutha failed to heed. When her eyesight began to weaken the next winter, Uncle Joshuay deemed his prophecy fulfilled, leaving Aunt Dally to pronounce her life "a living monument to the hate and revenge and onjestice of God!" (46). As she offers her lament to Miss Shippen, describing the deaths of her children and cataloguing her own health problems, she reaffirms her bitterness, "It were cruel, it were onjust, it were horrible, it were wicked, of God to treat me that way, and never will I say it wa'n't!" (48). Aunt Dally's resignation and Uncle Joshuay's fire-and-brimstone judgment belie what Furman would have us believe are common religious attitudes in the mountains. As perilous as physical violence to mind, body, and soul, ignorance has ensnared the Appalachian people—and must be "corrected" by outsiders. Bourgeois oracle Miss Shippen reacts with predictable sympathy for Aunt Dalmanutha's suffering, but she rejects the woman's retribution narrative and offers an alternative:

> It *was* cruel, it was unjust, it was horrible, it was wicked, that you should have been made to suffer so; above all, Aunt Dalmanutha, it was unnecessary. With a little knowledge, and proper food and fresh air, your daughter's life could have been saved, with

> knowledge and proper treatment your sons need not have died of dysentery or typhoid or even diphtheria; with knowledge your blindness itself, which is no curse, but would as surely come upon you had you never lost Evy and never rebelled in your heart, need have lasted only a few months. For these are cataracts that you have on your eyes, and nothing would have been simpler and easier than their removal. (48-49).

The *real* heartbreak for Furman and the other settlement women (and their fictional counterparts) is not simply the tragedies Aunt Dalmanutha has suffered throughout her life, but the ignorance which allowed them in the first place. Having never received an education of her own, and forced to rely on equally uneducated mountain preachers to make sense of her trials and troubles, Aunt Dally has no choice but to view her blindness as the punishment of a vengeful God. In her introduction to *Sight to the Blind*, Ida Tarbell makes this point explicit: mountain religion and education, she says, consist of "sternness and superstition, little 'plain human kindness,' almost nothing that points the way to decent, happy, healthy living. The results are both grotesque and pitiful" (20). Tarbell goes on to ask, "Is it strange that the feud should flourish in a land ruled by a 'God of wrath?' Is anything but sickness and death to be expected where both are looked on as visitations of an angry God?" (20-21). The unspoken exhortation in Tarbell's introduction—to say nothing of the narrative that follows—is that those in a position to help should do so with haste. Those with the benefit of modern religion and education should share the wealth of their knowledge.

Furman, then, constructs a dichotomy that sets the primitivism of the mountains and the modernity of bourgeois America in stark relief: where mountain religion and folk wisdom teach vengeance and terrible justice, the

settlement women like the fictional Miss Shippen "preach the gospel of soap and fresh air" (Breck). Armed with faith in modern science and medicine, these women hope to bring the mountaineers into the twentieth century. And in Furman's novels, characters are rewarded for complying. Convinced by Miss Shippen to travel to "the level land" for cataract treatment, Aunt Dally returns home transformed. She has been to the doctor for eyes and stomach trouble, she has been fitted for false teeth at a dentist, and—significantly—she has learned to read along the way. Health thus restored, Dalmanutha reclaims her faith as well and vows to shine the light once snuffed by ignorance and anger:

> And now, fellow-sisters, you see before you a ree-surrected woman. I hain't only got the sight of my eyes; I got mind-sight, heart-sight, soul-sight. I hain't only got these fine store-teeth and a tamed and biddable stummick; but the innard power to chaw and digest sperritual truth. I hain't only wearing these gayly, boughten clothes, I'm a-fla'nting the robes of joy and the gyarments of praise. I know the Lord don't hate me and never did; I know I am free, restored, and saved; I know my Redeemer liveth, and has fotch me up out of the blackness of darkness on to the top-most peaks of joy and peace and thanksgiving….And don't think, women,—don't never, *never* think I hain't aiming to let my light shine!...There won't be one in twenty mile' that won't see me a-coming, and a-taking my stand by the grave-houses in these resurrection gyarments, for to norate the wonders of my experience, and to shame and confound and drownd out Uncle Joshuay and t'other blind leaders of the blind wharever they dare raise their gray heads and hoary lies " (71-72).

Having shed her superstition in favor of modern science, Aunt Dalmanutha is transfigured—she has literally and figuratively seen the light. Beyond a healed body, Aunt Dally's very soul is healed too, as we see in her triumphant appropriation of religious discourse—discourse that calls up Uncle Joshuay's earlier condemnation. No longer a target for "the hate and revenge and onjestice of God," as Uncle Joshuay says in his blindness and ignorance, the "ree-surrected" Aunt Dalmanutha is full of "joy and peace and thanksgiving." The new Aunt Dalmanutha is "free, restored, and saved." And the new Aunt Dalmanutha—aided by the quare women and their compatriots in the Bluegrass—is willing to "norate the wonders of my experience," to bear witness to her mountain neighbors still living in darkness. Again, Furman's symbolism is a bit heavy handed here, but the message is unmistakable: Dalmanutha's story ends favorably because she physically and symbolically accepts the ideological mantle of the settlement, and Furman positions her as a seer, an exemplar, a beacon for her friends and neighbors.

Aunt Dally's ending is a happy one only because she is able to transcend her dangerous mountain context (in this case, the false teachings of mountain preachers) and overcome her ignorance. But in relying on the *topos* of mountain ignorance, Furman does not always set her characters up for a happy ending. Some of her characters are sacrificed to demonstrate to readers what might happen to the mountain people if left to their own devices. In *The Glass Window*, we meet Little Lowizy, a sickly young girl with a rapacious desire for learning. She immediately takes to the settlement women and vows to start her own school someday—in fact, she tutors several neighboring children already whenever she gets the chance. In many ways, Lowizy is an ideal student for the settlement, completely willing to accept new ideas that fly in the face of received mountain wisdom. But because she has tuberculosis, her visits to the school are

dependant on her strength. One day when she is too weak to ride in, teacher Christine Potter pays a visit to her home. In discussing Lowizy's condition with her mother Phebe, Christine is stunned by the mother's ignorance of tuberculosis treatment and distressed to learn that in the winter months, Lowizy is never allowed fresh air or sunshine:

> 'Fraish air hain't bad of a warm summer's day,' [Phebe] said, slowly, 'but time out of mind folks has knowed that cold air was dangerous and night air pyore pizen, even to well folks, let alone a puny young un like Lowizy. That nurse that was with the quare women last summer she allowed, the same as you, that fraish air ought to be turnt-in on Lowizy. But I told her no, not while breath was in my body; that I loved my child too good for any sech; that hit allus had been and allus would be the business of my life to keep the air from her. (58).

As Lowizy's condition worsens along with the winter weather, Christine tries to impress upon her mother the most recent medical findings that those suffering with tuberculosis should get as much fresh air as possible. Phebe does not budge and clings to mountain wisdom, even when Christine brings a doctor along with her. Distraught, Christine understands that Lowizy will soon die due to her parents' ignorance. When the doctor tries to reassure her that Phebe might change her mind in time, Christine cries, "No, no don't you see *she is the kind nothing can change*? That if Lowizy were to die tomorrow she would be absolutely satisfied she had done everything possible to save her?" (214, emphasis added). Phebe's position is not merely dangerous but deadly, epitomizing the grievousness of Appalachian folk wisdom and, Furman suggests, the threat it poses to modernity. But mountain ignorance (as embodied in Phebe) is not only wrong, but *tenacious*. Phebe's ignorance is bad enough, but

it is her unwillingness to even consider an opposing viewpoint—even one backed up by science and doctors—is the real danger.

Soon enough, of course, Lowizy does die. Her deathbed scene is remarkable in its irony. Having been pent up for months in her mountain cabin, Lowizy begins hallucinating right before her death, imagining the voices of her "scholars," that is, the young children she tutored throughout the spring and summer:

> They're a calling me constant, the young uns, up all the creeks and branches—acres of 'em—miles of 'em—fur as I can see through my glass window—all a-hollering at me, 'Lowizy, come teach us; we're starving for knowledge, and you laying up there in bed!' Pappy, Maw, I got to get up! I got to go to 'em! I can't wait no longer! Help me up out of heres, so's I can kindly peaceify 'em, and maybe learn 'em a few lessons! Yes, young uns, I'm a-coming! (279)

Furman would have us believe that the tragedy of Lowizy's story is that, had it been up to her, she would have listened to the settlement women, the doctors, and modern science, and she would have lived. Like Aunt Dalmanutha, she would have assumed the mantle of upper-middle-class modernity and would have dedicated the rest of her life to shining her light in the mountain darkness. But her mother's refusal to give up old ways of thinking ultimately lead to her death, and Lowizy is literally and figuratively suffocated by ignorance. For Furman, individual ignorance is not the only obstacle to be overcome in Appalachia; communal ignorance renders the whole mountain context treacherous. As is the case with mountain violence, the only antidote to the danger of mountain ignorance is the modernity and bourgeois sensibility offered by the settlement women. By fixing her arguments about Appalachian otherness

around the *topoi* of mountain violence and ignorance, Furman constructs an Appalachia in which the only hope of salvation comes from outside.

### *"Of the same blood as our boasted aristocracy!": Furman's* Topos *of Embodied Virtue*

But despite their violence and ignorance and poverty and strange beliefs, Furman's characters are still somehow redeemable, innately good, deserving of the special attention and the assistance the settlement women have come to provide. To that end, the *topos* of mountain potential surfaces frequently in the fundraising letters, which frequently cite the "picturesqueness" of the mountains and mountaineers as implicit proof of their worthiness[21]. But Furman's use of this *topos*—both in her letters and her fiction—is slightly more specialized: she relies not only on a general worthiness of the mountaineers as human beings, but locates the potential of the Appalachian people in their potentially "aristocratic" bloodlines. For Furman, mountain virtue is not simply a vague air of unrealized potential possessed by the Appalachian people; it is written on their very bodies, located in their blood.

The *topos* of embodied virtue is illustrated in a subplot in *The Glass Window*. In this thread of the story, volunteer Susanna Reeves has come to the Hindman Settlement School from "the level land" to perform whatever odd jobs may be of use to the school. Well educated and genteel, Susanna looks to Appalachia for a bit of adventure before she marries her surgeon fiancé and settles in to a life of ease. Though she has no training in nursing, she ends up taking care of an entire family stricken with typhoid. The mother of the family, Cory, is the most listless and despondent, so Susanna devotes most of her time to this woman. One night, as Cory fears she is dying, she offers Susanna a

[21] See Chapter Two

confession: she and her husband are running from the law, as her husband killed a man in their previous town. What is more, she cannot go back to her own family because she married her husband against their will and left in disgrace. When Susanna asks Cory where she is from, Cory replies, "In Harlan, on Reeve's Fork of Marrowbone. [My father's] name's same as yourn. There's a whole tribe of Reeveses there" (73). Susanna, startled at the connection, presses Cory for the names of her ancestors and realizes soon enough that the two women must be related:

> "Cory," she said, "Winfield Reeves was the name of my father, and also of my pioneer forefather who came out from Virginia to Kentucky more than a hundred years ago. Near Cumberland Gap his young brother, George, left the wagon train to hunt a deer, and was never afterward heard of. My people went on to the Blue Grass, fought the Indians, subdued the wilderness, and became prosperous and prominent. They always supposed George had been killed by Indians. Instead, he must have found the hunting good, and have wandered from year to year in these mountains, at last settling down and founding the family to which you belong. The names tell the story. You and I are the same blood, and blood means a great deal to a Reeves!" (73)

Later, in a letter home, Susanna considers the implications of her discovery, marveling, "How easily I might have been in her place, and suffered what she has suffered! How selfish we prosperous Blue Grass people are, and how little we realize what is going on in this forgotten section of our state, where many of the people, doubtless, *are of the same blood as our boasted aristocracy*!" (75, emphasis added). According to Furman here, what seems like a great gulf between these two women—status, breeding, morality, lifestyle, education—is really just an

accident of fate. The implication seems to be that, though certainly degenerate *now*, Appalachians are not wholly and essentially irredeemable. After all they are "of the same blood!"—their ancestry is pure! If only these unfortunate people had the benefits of those in more prosperous regions—namely education, for let us not forget that Furman's novels in particular were written as fundraising propaganda for a school—the degeneracy might be overcome.

Clearly, though, the mountaineers' innate mountain virtue is often compromised by a degenerate lifestyle, which Furman is quick to point out. In *The Quare Women*, we meet Lethie, a young mountain girl lately despondent after meeting the fashionable and attractive quare women. Having come to the mountains in the latest Bluegrass fashions—elegant and trim white dresses—the women have unknowingly thrown Lethie into a sort of existential crisis owing to her crude (though entirely culturally appropriate) wardrobe. According to Lethie, when asked why she has lately become so dejected, "'the reason I hain't a-playing is, my clothes looks so quare.' She looked down at her dark, heavy linsey skirt, coarse little shoes, and ill-fitting pink-calico waist…. I allowed they was alright till yesterday. But sense Miss Isabel come in, they look so quare" (113). But beneath obvious deficiencies in dress and grooming, the mountain people, Furman would have us believe, are all stunningly gorgeous. Despite her drab clothing, the narrator tells us Lethie had "a lovely, wistful little face...the skin of milky whiteness, the big, heavily lashed gray eyes, the brave little mouth, the mass of pale golden hair" (114). The implication is that any material deficiencies the mountaineers might be guilty of—coarse clothing, poor grooming—are redeemed by an abundance of natural beauty, or, in other words, embodied virtue. A scene near the end of the novel illustrates this point. Lethie, who earlier had become insecure as a result of her appearance, has a role in the

end-of-summer school play, and one of the teachers dresses her up as a princess. As she stands before the town in her elaborate costume,

> Lethie's full loveliness broke upon the assembly. Standing there, the golden veil of her hair streaming down from a coronet of pearls over the rich, flowing folds of satin, her bare neck and arms white as their strings of pearls, her pale cheeks for once pink with excitement, her large eyes starry, her lips gravely smiling, she was a vision of delight. Women, children, men gazed spellbound. Never had they seen, or imagined, anything to compare with this. Her beauty was of the kind that brings tears to the eyes, a pang to the heart, because of its very perfection. And a spiritual quality shone through the fleshly vessel as a clear light in a vase of alabaster. (206)

Having shed her mountain togs and accepted the bourgeois finery pressed on her by the settlement women, Lethie is transfigured, and her natural beauty is redeemed. The regal and transcendent language in this passage casts Lethie as a veritable princess : the "golden veil" of her hair cascades over skin "white as…strings of pearls," and the young beauty's overall demeanor is pure as "a clear light in a vase of alabaster." Properly adorned, Lethie does justice to her so-called aristocratic bloodlines and thus embodies one of Furman's favorite plot devices: though her innate goodness (here, her bodily beauty) is dangerously compromised by her mountain context, it is not irredeemable. It just needs cultivation—which the settlement women were happy to provide in the form of satin and pearls.

Thus, the mountaineers in Furman's fiction are not entirely degenerate; despite the ignorance and violence Furman assigns to the mountain people en masse, her point seems to be that they *can* be emancipated from their

metaphorical prisons of incivility, if for no other reason than that they are racially and ethnically "pure." Such redemption comes at the price of rejecting mountain mores in favor of bourgeois beliefs, but the rewards are great: restored life, restored health, restored peace in the community. Nucky Marrs, Aunt Dalmanutha, Cory Reeves and young Lethie accept the settlement's "quare" teachings and are rewarded accordingly. But if characters cannot or will not reject their old lives, they cannot be redeemed. Lowizy's, after all, is a cautionary tale, a testament to the physical and ideological work that remains to be done in the mountains.

*The Glass Window: Furman's Transparent Fiction*

In constructing her narratives, Lucy Furman relies on several plot devices to spice up her accounts of life at the Hindman Settlement School: boy-meets-girl (to various effects: the relationship between Fult and Isabel in *The Quare Women* is initially promising but does not end well, while the relationship between genteel teacher Christine Potter and mountain schoolteacher Giles Kent in *The Glass Window* ends with a happy marriage); the unexpected adventure (Fult's kidnapping of Isabel and Isabel's subsequent escape in a chapter portentously titled "The Danger Line"); the dying, angelic child (Lowizy's death in *The Glass Window* recalls Eva's in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—along with scores of others like it in nineteenth century fiction); the "amazing grace" narrative of redemption (perhaps no one could sing "I once was lost but now am found/was blind but now I see" with more conviction than Aunt Dalmanutha at the end of *Sight to the Blind*). Layered behind these narrative conventions, however, is a rich and vivid picture of turn-of-the-century life in the mountains—a picture nearly indistinguishable from the one painted by the nonfiction fundraising literature sent out by the Hindman Settlement School. True, Furman allows on the flyleaf

of *The Quare Women* that "the atmosphere of this story, its background, and even many of its incidents" are inspired by true events, but this statement scarcely reveals the extent to which she represents people, places, and events almost to the letter, at times borrowing directly from the fundraising letters and pamphlets themselves. Though lifted almost entirely in service of verisimilitude, Furman's borrowed text belies her reliance on the very subjects elsewhere deemed unsuitable for "print."

For the most part, Furman changes names and locations in her tales of life at the settlement, though most of her substitutions are rather obvious. In *Mothering on Perilous*, for example, she changes the name of the school's location from Troublesome Creek to Perilous Creek—hardly a stretch—and in *The Quare Women*, May Stone and Katherine Pettit become Amy Scott and Virginia Preston respectively. Despite the fact that Furman discloses the truth behind the pseudonyms on various occasions (she admits in her afterword to *Sight to the Blind* that the "real name of the school creek is of course Troublesome, not Perilous" [92]), the fact that she *does* feel compelled to change names and places perhaps reveals a bit of anxiety over bringing Hindman and its inhabitants before a national audience. In any case, the aliases lend the stories a literary air not shared by the more overt—that is, nonfiction—fundraising materials. Clearly the letters and pamphlets are no more "real" than the fictional materials—they are, obviously, just as consciously constructed as Furman's novels. The artifice may not be as evident, but these materials are artificial just the same. However, the settlement women clearly perceived a difference between the two types of writing, the *rhetorical* letters and the *artistic* novels.

And yet, some of the fundraising letters—especially those authored by Furman herself, despite the ever-present "PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS GET INTO PRINT"—serve as a testing ground for several of the characters, subplots,

and themes that would eventually appear in the novels. In her first years at the Settlement, Furman served as housemother of the Little Boys' Cottage and often drew from this experience when taking her turn to write the annual letter. In 1908 she introduces us to one the youngest of her charges, Nelson: "Nothing insults him more than to compel him to do little boys' work—such as picking up paper in the school yard, taking out ashes, splitting kindling and the like…But give him what he considers a 'big boy's job,' such as sweeping a large room or handling an ax or mattock heavy as himself, and he is perfectly delighted" (Furman 1908). A mere two years later little Nelson appears as Jason in *Mothering on Perilous*: "Jason, my 'little pet' as the others call him, resents any allusion to the fact that he is small, and burns to play the man. In our garden work, he seizes shovels and mattocks almost as large as himself from the bigger boys, and whacks away joyously with them" (52). The phrasing has changed a bit, but just the repeated use of the word "mattock" alludes to the earlier description in the annual letter. Later in the chapter Furman again references the earlier text, as one of the other boys in the novel goes on to tell housemother Miss Loring, "That 'ere little Jason says he's aiming to leave if you give him little-boys jobs,—he wants big ones" (53). Changed name or not, any reader of the fundraising letters would have recognized Nelson immediately.

In a more obvious example, Furman tells in a fundraising letters of a "little boy of ten, who, before coming to us, was described by his father as 'a pure scholar, that knowed the speller from kiver to kiver,' and who actually spelled the hardest words without difficulty on his arrival (for I tested him then and there)" (Furman 1911). The exchange with the boy's father is represented faithfully in the novel: "[Mr. Atkins] said he had a younger son over on Rakeshin he would like to bring us, little Iry, ten years old, a 'pure scholar, that knows the speller from kiver to kiver'" (*MOP* 23). And, just as Furman says in her earlier

letter, the housemother quizzes the new student upon his arrival: Iry "carried an old blue-back speller under one arm. So great was my curiosity that I opened the book at once. The result was amazing,—'genealogical' and 'irreconcilable' were child's-play to him, 'incomprehensibility,' a bagatelle" (30). The spelling examination as it is presented in the novel may have a bit more flourish than in the original letter, but the effect is the same. As is the case with Nelson/Jason, the characters in the novels are indistinguishable from the boys in the letters. In fact, almost every boy and every anecdote mentioned in Furman's fundraising letters reappears: the boy who resists wearing a collar and tie on Sundays; the boy who throws a fit when forced to cut his toenails (the better for scratching opponents in schoolyard fights); the boy whose father gets him drunk and gives him a loaded pistol as a joke on Christmas Day; the influx of fleas in the cottage; the fights that arise after the housemother begins reading *The Odyssey* at bedtime. Brief sketches become full-fledged characters; simple anecdotes become subplots. Scarcely a line of the letters, it seems, is wasted.

Topically, too, Furman draws from the fundraising letters that precede her creative works. One of her favorite *topoi*—the purity of the Appalachian bloodlines, or the *topos* of embodied virtue—appears to great effect in both. The Susanna/Cory thread of *The Glass Window* fixates on said blood purity, as Susanna tells Cory, "You and I are the same blood, and blood means a great deal to a Reeves!" (73); later she laments that "many of the people, doubtless, are of the same blood as our boasted aristocracy!" (75). As we might expect, many of Furman's fundraising letters presage this focus. While the letters authored by Pettit, Stone, and others do hone in on the ancestry of the mountaineers, they usually make vague mention of noble lineage or "stock"—rarely do they get so graphic as to mention blood, even symbolically. Furman, on the other hand, seems slightly obsessed by it: "Another thing should appeal to us more than all,

and that is *the 'call of the blood.'* These people of the mountains are our kin" (1910); "in their veins flows *the purest and some of the best Anglo-Saxon blood* in the nation" (1911); "With *good blood in them*, and good traditions behind them, it is small wonder that the children who are brought to us by their eager parents usually show great ability and ambition (1911); "Their *good blood*, their invincible bravery, the hardships they learn to endure from their very birth...are sure to make good and strong and valuable men of them" (1911, emphasis added). The blood of the mountaineers is of special importance to Furman, appearing first in her fundraising letters and later in her fiction as evidence of their embodied worth.

While I hesitate to make too much of the connections between Furman's fiction and the more "overt" propaganda she produced for the settlement, we cannot discount the apparent double standard imposed by the settlement women. At the same time they warn their supporters against bringing the mountaineers "before the public as a peculiar people," they advertise the literary efforts of a settlement insider whose novels do just that. Though Furman's fundraising letters, like all the fundraising letters in Hindman's archive, end with "PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS GET INTO PRINT," she seems unable to take her own advice. Furman's mining of the early fundraising letters could be read as an attempt to lend credence to her later fiction—after all, "authentic" regional detail is a hallmark of her literary forebears, the local colorists—but a more likely explanation is that Furman, Pettit, and Stone simply saw the two genres as serving different purposes: the letters were meant to be rhetorical, and the novels were meant to be literary (or, we might say, poetic). In Ciceronian terms, they probably would have said that the letters were designed to *persuade*, while the novels would *delight* or perhaps *inform*. But Furman's fiction, as we have seen, is just as rhetorical as any of her real-life musings on the settlement.

Fiction/propaganda, novels/letters…no matter the form, the ideological function of all public writing produced by the settlement women is identical.

On the whole, Furman's *topoi* are darker and more damning than the *topoi* located in the fundraising letters. To be sure, the arguments invented by the settlement women in the fundraising letters contain elements of mountain violence and ignorance, but the stories found in those documents are generally a bit sunnier. It is ironic, then, that the most troublesome representations of the mountain people—the tragedy of their violent ways, the tenacity of their ignorance, the corrupted "purity" of their bloodlines—should appear in the more public genres. Indeed, Lucy Furman saw to it that her stories from the southern mountains got into print whenever possible, and the administration of the Hindman Settlement School was not shy in supporting her efforts. Furman's rhetorical prowess, whether or not she or the other settlement women would have acknowledged it as such, is on full display in her fiction. For Furman, and for countless other women throughout history, fiction was the "available means of persuasion." Our job now is to listen to what they have been saying, to look for those writers to whom we have been blind, and to identify the women who have been hiding in plain sight all along.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### "Who will speak a good word for our work": Conscripted Invention, Ventriloquized Testimony

> These letters speak for themselves...
>
> Lucy Furman to
> Hindman Settlement
> School supporters, 1910

> I hope that this somewhat heavy article meets your wishes. If not I might try again.
>
> Rev. J.T. Mitchell to
> Katherine Pettit, 1900

Of all the skills cultivated by the quare women in their first years at Hindman, perhaps none was more essential than their ingenuity. Katherine Pettit and May Stone quickly learned to squeeze every last drop out of every last resource. Fretting over mountain nutrition, for example, they taught their students how to grow their own fruits and vegetables and offered prizes for the largest and healthiest yield—which then appeared in the meals served in the settlement's dining room. Recognizing an appreciation for mountain handicrafts among their genteel peers in the Northeast and Midwest, they set up a Fireside Industries program through which mountaineers could sell baskets, quilts, and home goods and use the money for their children's tuition. Hoping to bring the latest technology to their new community, they arranged for an electrical engineer and provided power for the town as well as the school—using the money from the townspeople to offset the cost and generate additional income. No opportunity was squandered; every activity was mined for maximum productivity.

Such resourcefulness served rhetorical needs as well as material. As we have seen in Chapters Two and Three, the settlement women clearly relied on

their own suavitas in the letters, pamphlets, and literature they produced in the fundraising effort for the Hindman school. But they also realized that for some situations and some readers, their words—however affecting—may not be enough. Hence they made the most of the valuable rhetorical resources around them in students and community members, volunteers and visitors, and high-profile guests. Thus, much of the fundraising propaganda features voices besides those of the quare women, testimony used to triangulate the arguments invented elsewhere by the settlement administration. Student writing appears as proof of mountain desire and ability; comments from teachers, volunteers, and visitors corroborate earlier depictions of mountain life; and letters from distinguished guests endorse the work of the settlement so far. The use of testimony not only builds up the credibility of the settlement women in the eyes of their readers, but it also gives those of us reading the materials a hundred years later additional perspectives into settlement life. The rhetorical savvy of the settlement women is on full display in the public documents they produced at the Hindman school, but they were more than willing to cede their soapbox to others who wished to speak on behalf of the settlement.

But the quare women's use of testimony—a method of proof outlined in the oldest Western rhetorical handbooks—complicates and, at times, subverts the traditional uses of this strategy. Certainly they adhere to the conventions of testimony as they offer the words of others as objective (or at least disinterested) evidence. But sometimes their use of testimony is more *artificial*—that is, both artistic and artful, creative and cunning. A look at their private correspondence reveals the extent to which the settlement women shrewdly dictated how and what their "testifiers" wrote, thereby cloaking their own claims in the co-opted *ethos* of students, volunteers, unaffiliated visitors, and high-profile guests. By ventriloquizing the testimony of their endorsers, the settlement women

manipulated the expectations of testimonial evidence to craft their own arguments through the words—and *ethos*—of their endorsers. In so doing, they illuminate the extent to which testimony—classified by rhetoricians from Aristotle on as an inartistic, or uninventive, form of evidence—might in fact be used artistically. This type of testimony begins with what I am calling *conscripted invention*, where *conscripted* can be understood to mean "forced" or "compelled," or it can be parsed to mean "written together" (from the Latin verb *scriptere* meaning "to write" and the Latin prefix *con-* meaning "with" or "at the same time"). Some of Hindman's testifiers, that is, are compelled into service, and the settlement women facilitate their endorsement by providing specific requests, stylistic models, and rhetorical coaching. The result is a hybrid form of testimony, one that tinges a traditional method of inartistic proof with shades of rhetorical invention.

*Testimony in Ancient and Modern Contexts*

Testimony has a long history in the rhetorical tradition. In his famous delineation of rhetoric, Aristotle identifies the two types of *pisteis* (that is, evidence or proof) a speaker or writer may draw upon when ascertaining the "available means" of persuasion in a given situation: evidence that originates in the speaker's own mind, and evidence that originates elsewhere. The bulk of *On Rhetoric* offers advice toward the invention of this first type of *pistis*, which Aristotle deems "entechnic"—that is, evincing technique—because it stems directly from speaker's technical ability and "can be prepared by method" (37). Also known as "artistic" proofs, entechnic arguments originate in the text itself and include appeals to *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. Rick Kennedy classifies the entechnic *pisteis* within the Aristotelian scheme as "pure art" since they are "constructed out of what could be known by one's self and could yield the

strongest knowledge" (3). But the second type of *pistis*, that which originates outside the rhetor's domain, is "atechnic"—or inartistic, void of technique—because according to Aristotle its proofs "are not provided by 'us' [i.e. the potential speaker] but are preexisting" (*Rhetoric* 37). Compared to the rest of *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle's treatment of the atechnic proofs is brief, though he does spend some time late in Book I explaining those types of evidence which fall outside the realm of the rhetor's control: laws, witness testimony, contracts, evidence taken under torture, and oaths (113). Because the rhetor cannot invent these proofs, only wrangle them in service to the larger argument, Aristotle's treatment of laws, testimony, and the like is brief. As Rick Kennedy explains, "Aristotle was most interested in codifying the art of pure thinking," although he did recognize that the thinking which was "less pure and yielded weaker conclusions" nevertheless deserved some scholarly consideration (3). So Aristotle allows for the use of atechnic proofs in his rhetorical scheme, even if he spends most of his time cataloguing the evidence which could be created in the speaker's own mind.

Though Aristotle was probably not the first to conceive of the differences between the two types of *pisteis*, he was the first to record them. His taxonomy must have been widely accepted, as the same delineation appears in a slightly different form in the *Rhetoric for Alexander*, an anonymous rhetorical text compiled approximately fifty years after Aristotle's death. The provenance of the *Rhetoric for Alexander* is a bit sketchy; George Kennedy calls it a "composite work consisting of a forged introductory letter, purporting to be by Aristotle writing to Alexander the Great, and two separate rhetorical handbooks by different authors, covering some of the same contents but differently organized" (269). The rhetorical handbooks may have been contemporaneous with the introductory letter, or they may have been older. As a result, it is unclear

whether Aristotle and the author of the *Rhetoric for Alexander* knew each other, though Kennedy says the possibility "remains uncertain but is likely" (270). The important point, in either case, is that this text retains the division between *pisteis* articulated by Aristotle in *On Rhetoric*, that evidence which is "derived from actual words and actions and persons," and that which is "supplementary [*epithetoi*] to what is said and done. Probabilities, inferences, enthymemes, maxims, and refutations are proofs drawn from actual words and persons and actions; the opinion of the speaker, evidence of witnesses, evidence under torture, and oaths are supplementary" (G. Kennedy *Rhetoric* 272). Though Aristotle would probably place "the opinion of the speaker" in the former category of entechnic or artistic proof, the basic categories remain the same: there is evidence *invented by* the speaker, and evidence *accessible to* the speaker. The distinction, for both Aristotle and the author of the *Rhetoric for Alexander*, is firm.

The distinctions were preserved in the Roman textbook tradition. Like Aristotle, Cicero differentiated between those topics "inherent in the very nature of the subject" and those "brought in from without," though his terminology typically translates into "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" proofs (387). S. John Macksoud points specifically to Cicero's work in the *Topica* as a "basic contribution to the theory of evidence" in that he defines extrinsic evidence as "everything that is brought in from some external circumstance in order to win conviction" (221). While Cicero's diction further codifies Aristotle's taxonomy, the Roman orator's understanding of the extrinsic proofs in general and testimony specifically seems much more fixated on the credibility of the outside source; in fact, he says, the success of such witness testimony "depend[s] principally on authority" (397). Even so, Cicero—like Aristotle before him—viewed extrinsic evidence as the weaker of the two *pisteis*, though he recognized that "any system [of rhetorical theory] that aspires to be comprehensive needs to

address the subject" of external proof (R. Kennedy 22). Quintilian followed suit and adapted Cicero's curriculum, acknowledging in *Institutio Oratoria* that "the division which has been laid down by Aristotle has gained the approbation of almost all rhetoricians, namely, that there are some proofs which an orator adopts that are unconnected with the art of speaking and others which he himself extracts and, as it were, produces from his cause" (Bk 5. Ch. 1). Quintilian, too, perpetuates the theory that the inartistic *pisteis*—his terminology has come down to us as "inartificial"—is the weaker of the two types of evidence. Though the inartistic proofs are "devoid of art in themselves, they yet require, very frequently, to be supported or overthrown with the utmost force of eloquence" (Bk. 5 Ch. 1). Again, the inartistic proofs might be weaker, impure, and external to the rhetor, but they warrant *some* attention. Together Cicero's and Quintilian's conceptions of the *pisteis*—adapted, of course, from Aristotle's scheme—became "the standard models of Roman handling of testimony and authority used by later textbook writers in Western history" (R. Kennedy 22). So by the end of the first century BCE, the division between artistic and inartistic proofs had become relatively cemented. Though the binary categories (entechnic vs. atechnic for Aristotle; intrinsic vs. extrinsic for Cicero; artificial vs. inartificial for Quintilian) differ in vocabulary, they all point to the same divide between evidence invented by the rhetor and evidence invented elsewhere. The terminology has in fact become rather interchangeable, though Sharon Crowley and Debra Hawhee explain that most scholars now reject the specific language of artistic vs. inartistic proofs since "*art* carries connotations of 'high' or 'creative' art to contemporary ears" (221). Instead, Crowley and Hawhee propose the categories "invented" and "situated,"[22] though they—like rhetoricians before

[22] Crowley and Hawhee's point is well taken, but I have chosen to retain the "artistic"/"inartistic" labels in this project. Problematic implications aside, the potential double meaning of "artistic" as both consciously

them—still cling to the notion of testimony as uninvented, or as Rick Kennedy might say, "impure."

Invented or not, though, testimony is a dominant strategy among the inartistic proofs and unique in its suasory power, particularly in legal contexts. John Macksoud explains that of Aristotle's atechnic *pisteis*—laws, oaths, tortures, contracts, and testimony—all but the last two have evolved out of the rhetorical canon: "Laws have been formalized into 'precedent,' and are dealt with, today, outside the framework of evidence. Tortures have fallen into disuse. The oath has become a standard rule of court procedure and is no longer optional" (220).[23] Contracts, too, have become almost rote. But the law still allows for the rhetoricity of testimony, especially as it is used to buttress a claimant's case—provided, of course, that it is credible. In the ancient world, says David Mirhady, "testimony has the rhetorical power to turn [a litigant's] statement into a fact, since the judges/jurors are said to have relied so heavily on its credibility" (257). And in the modern world, too, testimony can achieve similar ends, as our understanding of testimony is strikingly similar to the Greco-Roman model. Macksoud argues that the millennia-old model articulated by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian "has evolved from nonartistic proofs into [modern-day understandings of] evidence," so that "even on a topic as responsive to temporal circumstances as is the subject of rules of evidence, classical study is illuminating (222). He goes on to cite seven different points of comparison between ancient and modern understandings of evidence (specifically testimony), including "the

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crafted *and* creative is useful here. Also useful is the etymological proximity of "artistic" to "artificial"—which can also be read doubly to mean both artful and deceptive.

[23] Unfortunately, Macksoud's claim that torture has "fallen into disuse" is not as easy to make in 2008 as it might have been at the time of his article's publication in 1968. The policies of the current presidential administration invoke the "War on Terror" to justify the torture of suspected terrorists—despite Aristotle's millennia-old admonition that "tortures are not reliable; for many slow-witted and thick-skinned persons and those strong in soul nobly hold out under force, while cowards and those who are cautious will denounce someone before seeing the instruments of torture, so that there is nothing credible in tortures" (*Rhetoric* 115-116).

manner in which the validity of a writing is established, the ways in which interested witnesses should be handled, the bases of credence of testimony, the ways of impugning testimony, the matter of circumstantial evidence…the definition of evidence, and the question of the relative merits of proofs" (222). Clearly our contemporary perceptions of testimonial evidence are rooted in the classical tradition.

Beyond the courtroom, we invoke testimony in the formation of history, which is "fashioned out of accumulated testimony, the conglomeration of various individuals' assertions about their experiences" (Watson 28). Rick Kennedy reminds us that even before Aristotle so neatly outlined the use of testimonial evidence in forensic contexts, Herodotus had developed a scheme for evaluating the testimony which constituted his source material (14). Indeed, Aristotle himself cites "ancient testimony"—that is, the likes of "the poets and other well-known persons whose judgments are clear"—as "the most credible" of all possible witnesses, for "they are incorruptible" (*Rhetoric* 112, 113). While historiographers might take issue with Aristotle's unquestioning faith in the reliability of ancient texts, the point is that without testimony, there is no history. We rely on the words of others to make sense of the past. Historian Gerda Lerner uses the metaphor of history as "collective memory," or "the archives of human experience" (52)—but that memory and those archives do not come to us whole-cloth. They rely, instead, on shared observations. And when those shared observations seem inadequate—when they seem one-sided or unfair—we seek out new voices, new memories, new testimony from the past to reconfigure the shape of our received history.

But despite its ubiquity in certain ancient and modern contexts, testimony remains undertheorized as a rhetorical strategy. Because it has always been classified as an inartistic proof, because it is only accessible to the rhetor second-

hand, testimonial evidence has traditionally been excluded from the canon of invention. Rick Kennedy attributes the eschewing of such second-hand evidence to "the tendency of the great philosophers…to be triumphantly self-reliant" (12). He bemoans this "lost tradition of reasonableness," arguing that reasonableness—which he contrasts to the more inventive art of "reasoning" celebrated by the likes of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian—is as important to the rhetorical and philosophical canon as its more academically scrutinized counterpart. Recent work, though, has begun to resuscitate this "lost tradition." Kennedy's study, for example, historicizes testimony (alongside the other inartistic *pisteis*) within the genre of Western rhetorical textbooks. Shevaun Watson, in a recent dissertation, complicates ancient notions of testimony—she focuses particularly on the testimony of slaves in the American early republic—and redefines it as "the material or embodied *performance* of truth," a treatment which perhaps opens the door for more sophisticated understanding of the inventive uses of testimony throughout history (9, emphasis added). The specification of truth-performance allows for direction, interpretation, and manipulation to fit an audience or rhetorical situation; "whether truthful or not," says Watson, testimony "aims above all to be believed" (32). And it is that hazy terrain between "truth" and "performance" that compels us to interrogate the artificiality of testimony and its potential as a site of rhetorical invention.

*Testimony as Triangulation: Students and Visitors*

Certainly the settlement women used testimony in traditional ways in the Hindman fundraising literature, namely, to corroborate the claims they themselves make elsewhere about the students, the mountain lifestyle, and the good work being carried out at the school. David Mirhady reminds us that in Athenian courts, "the more witnesses, the greater the expectation of accuracy…if

one witness guaranteed the truth, more guaranteed it better" (264), and the Hindman administration seemed to adhere to the same principle. Nearly every communiqué from the settlement contains outside testimony in some form or other. They drew from the well of settlement student writing and speaking with frequency. Though very little actual student work remains from the early years of the Hindman settlement—two major fires within the first decade destroyed most of the school's records—student voices often surface in the fundraising literature. Many of the letters detailed in Chapter Two include excerpts from student writing, and some pamphlets consist entirely of reprinted student letters and stories. The majority of the anecdotal student evidence is rooted in the settlement's focus on mountain desire and gratitude; some anecdotes, however, are purely epideictic, meant solely to praise the settlement and, implicitly, its supporters. Such praise serves as the theme for the annual letter of 1921, as May Stone explains, "Recently a prize was offered, by a Louisville friend, for the best essay written by one of our students, on the subject of 'Knott County and Our School.' We feel you will be glad to know what the School and Settlement life mean to them, while they are still here, so we quote extracts from these papers" (1921). The excerpts, all of which extol the virtues of the settlement, comprise half of the entire annual letter:

> "They don't just teach us our books, but we are taught how to do most every thing from scrubbing the floor to reading Latin."
>
> "There have been great changes in the county and the lives of the people, things have bettered themselves every way. The progress of the county is slow but sure."
>
> "Some, in their search for wisdom, go on to College, while others who are not so ambitious, go back to their little mountain homes and teach their families the things they themselves have

learned here about sanitation and the many things the homes need."

"The greatest point to our school is the working system. All the children have to work an equal amount….The teachers work also, they do things for us by giving us knowledge and we do things for them by cleaning their rooms, etc. The school has saved hundreds and hundreds of people from being ignorant because they were too poor to go any where else." (qtd. in Stone 1921)

Pointing out the unique features of settlement education—the focus on industrial and domestic pursuits as well as academic, the desire to educate children back to their own homes, the share-and-share-alike mentality that governs the work program—such articulate and heartfelt praise must leave little doubt in the reader's mind as to the worth of the school and the aptitude of its students. Faithful readers of the fundraising literature would have found little new information in these excerpts; the novelty comes from the *source* of the information—that is, the students who bear witness to the benefits of the school.

At times the student testimony is less overt and more implied. In some cases, the words of the settlement students indicate not proficiency, but deficiency—thus testifying to the need for settlement work in the first place. Relying on (and perhaps exploiting) heavy dialect and supposedly flawed features of Appalachian English, these examples drive home the point that mountaineers desperately need what the settlement women have come to teach. A 1915 pamphlet reprints one little girl's letter which begins with a description of the day's activities at the settlement—"This morning we went up in the chapel to see some moveing pictures. We sow pictures with hik worms (hook-worms) and men with hikworms. We saw a girl dying with the hikworms and a man the same. We went overy to the hospitam to see a little hikworm through a

mackascope but when we went ovety thei it was gown" (HSS 1915)—and concludes with an ironic concession: "Soom of the words may not be spellet right but I have doon my best for one time" (HSS 1915). Readers find a similar admission a few pages later in the same pamphlet as another young writer explains, "I am only nine years old. And will be ten the 18th of February And I am in the third garde. I can not rite very good" (HSS 1915). But whereas readers may still have hope for these two young students—they have come to the settlement to learn about spelling and writing, after all—such is not the case for Rosy Bell, whose letter to May Stone is reprinted in a 1917 pamphlet:

> Dear May. I recived your Letter I am Sorry that you Said it wasent a Single vacancy Place for me and Sally Janes well I Dont now huther Sallie wants in or not But me and Miss Susie M— wants in School and T— R— he is 10 years old t— R— is Samie R— Brother and Both of them is my nephew well you ask me if I new any Body in School up there I now Sam allin girls and the widow Napier girls and Sussie M— Dont no one in School up there But She names Gemmie S—
>
> She went to School up there and She is our teach Now and we Both would Love to get to School up there and you must Rite and tell us huther we can get in our not well we are Poor girls and we wood Love to get in School we want to work for our Books and our Clothes we havent got no money to Pay in School we can work our way in School and this place is aBout 20 miles from Hindman. It is on Lost Creek well t— R— is in Second grade and I am in fourth grade and Miss Sussie is in fourth grade and she is 16 years old and I am 15 years old and we want to work aBout 4 weeks Before we go to School any and you Must Make Room for us 3 we

> herd that hindman was a industry Place and you Surely must Let us in School Yours very Sincerely from
>
> Miss Rosy Bell R— to
>
> May Stone Hindman Ky.
>
> May excuse me for writing more Say my Popy is ded and me and T— will Bring are Books and Cloth and we will work our way in School. (HSS 1917)

Nearly indecipherable due to inconsistencies in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, a letter like Rosy Bell's must leave no doubt in the reader's mind as to the importance of settlement work in Appalachia. And lest readers think Rosy Bell an anomaly, the writer of the pamphlet appends a sobering statement: "Such appeals as this come to the Settlement almost every mail" (HSS 1917). Yet even these heartbreaking appeals, though they go unanswered, do not go to waste—the settlement women make them public, using them as testimony for the good work being done at the settlement and the many who would benefit from additional support.

It should be noted that Rosy Bell's message is itself sufficiently pitiful to pull at the heartstrings of settlement supporters. The earnestness and urgency of the postscript alone—"Say my Poppy is dead, and me an T— will bring our books and clothes, and we will work our way in school"—would have been just as affecting had it been edited like so. But the settlement women chose to retain her spelling and usage, and that of the two other examples of student writing above, as yet another illustration of the urgent need for a good school in the mountains. Of course, only the testimony of the *un*schooled or only-just-schooled Hindman children is read through the screen of error. We have no way of knowing if the written testimony of current students, like the essay excerpts culled by May Stone for the 1921 annual letter, have been edited or were simply

error-free from the beginning; the point is that the letters of the needy students "speak for themselves" not only in content, but also in form.

The testimony of one-time visitors and short-term volunteers also appears frequently in the settlement's fundraising materials, giving readers their particular impressions of the school and its surroundings. Where student writing provides readers specific insider viewpoints, however, the letters of visitors and volunteers do just the opposite—they supply sweeping outsider perspectives to readers who are outsiders themselves. The writers offering these types of once-over testimonials apparently need no special knowledge or expertise; the fact that they come from outside the mountains and are interested in the work of the settlement, if only tenuously, is enough. According to Aristotle, of "recent witnesses" (i.e. living people, contrasted with the more reliable ancient witnesses), outsiders are the most "objective" because they have nothing to gain or lose from their testimony (*Rhetoric* 113). These visitors unaffiliated with the Hindman settlement fit the bill, and their most significant quality seems to be an affinity with the reading audience. Many of these visitors and volunteers are, like the many of the readers, women from central Kentucky, the Midwest, or the Northeast; readers would undoubtedly have appreciated these dispatches from their peers. Visitor Belle Breck, whose chief—and oft-repeated—impression of the mountains is its "picturesqueness," begins by positioning herself as a Kentuckian "who has lived the last fifteen years in California, with only the occasional visits home. Like the majority of Kentucky women I had never been to the mountain regions of my own State—the Kentucky that I loved being one of colonial homes set in bluegrass woodlands, reached by beautiful, stone fenced turnpike roads" (Breck 1908). The point here seems to be that Breck, though a Kentuckian, is as removed from the settlement's mission field as any reader in Chicago, Boston, or New York. Her seemingly

disinterested observation, then, that "[it is] a pity—a profound pity—that these women must work under the tension of such anxiety as to the money with which to work" must resonate with the audience members who may have otherwise found it difficult to identify with settlement workers or students. In writers like Breck, bourgeois readers find a similarly genteel figure preaching the same message as those more closely associated with the school: the settlement does important work, and it needs our help.

This same technique appears in an undated letter authored by visitor B.K. Van Slyke, in which readers are (supposedly) treated to a peek into the mail bag sent from the settlement. The letters reproduced for readers—one by a student, one by a volunteer, and one by a paid teacher—are probably fake, manufactured solely for this bit of fundraising paraphernalia. Nevertheless, they are presented as authentic and meant to be read as such. Thus, readers would have read the letter from an anonymous volunteer visiting from New York to a friend still in the city, excerpted below, with much interest:

> The town is scattered along the banks of Troublesome Creek—you've read Mothering on Perilous by Lucy Furman, haven't you? It's really awfully interesting and the country is just as she has pictured it, except that now feuds are a rare occurance. Miss Furman is still here, and as good as her book. Well, half the children in the school come from the town and the other half is made up of Settlement children. There is such a difference—you can't imagine! The town boys and girls are, generally speaking, not so polite, are rougher in their ways and make lots more trouble in school. The teachers have a hard row to hoe with discipline, I think. But I suppose it's perfectly natural, for mostly the town children can do pretty much as they please, becoming little

> vagabonds; while the Settlement children do all the work of the Settlement in order to pay for their board and schooling. Hard as they work, it's impossible for a hundred children to pay their entire way; and so for every child in the Settlement there is what is called a scholarship given by generous subscribers. Some subscribers take an active interest in the children for whom they provide scholarships, and often send them whole outfits of clothes, and toys and books.
>
> The children truly are adorable. They have such a quaint manner of speech it seems a shame to spoil it by teaching them grammar. One little girl has the most beautiful grey-green eyes—lustrous and soft—they melt me every time she looks my way. The boys are goodlooking, too. I should like to transport some of them to Exeter or the Hill School. It's a pity for them to stay all their lives in this back water, growing as narrow and provincial as their grandfathers before them. But, there simply isn't the money….

Certainly less effusive and more overtly judgmental than other letters about settlement life and work, this one may nevertheless have struck a chord with some readers because of the writer's willingness to experience the school and its setting through a decidedly bourgeois, Northeastern filter. She pulls no punches in condemning the drabness of Hindman, the ragamuffin town children, and the "narrow and provincial" community elders. Some readers would, no doubt, consider this an "unbiased" view of the mountains and the settlement—especially since outright critiques of mountain culture became infrequent in the fundraising literature after the settlement women's first few years in the mountains. When this volunteer, then, describes the need for sponsorship and

scholarships, and when she laments the fact that "there simply isn't the money," readers may be more likely to read these statements as unbiased as well.

Some visitor/volunteer testimony, of course, is meant not necessarily to connect with the reader in any way, but to simply bestow a bit of unqualified praise. That is, it allows the settlement women to show off a bit through the words of other people. In the annual letter from 1910, Lucy Furman says, "A visitor paid us the compliment of saying recently 'Your school is the best in the mountains. It educates the children back to their homes instead of away from them.'" (1910). Here the visitor's name and background are unimportant; the point is that someone unassociated with the school has confirmed what the settlement women have been saying all along. Furman continues in this vein: "Upon this we pride ourselves. We want our children to spend their lives in their own country, improving the conditions, uplifting the ideals, developing the immense resources now latent in minds and hearts as well as in mines and timber" (1910). A few pages later, Furman provides further testimony from another visitor, enclosing a letter from Frederick Libby of Massachusetts; tellingly, this letter full of commendation and good cheer closes out Furman's letter as well. Though Furman could have made much of Libby's position as a respected minister at the Union Congregational Church in Magnolia, Massachusetts (Marabell 21), she chose to withhold any biographical information save his location. Again, the important point seems to be only that Libby is an "objective" observer who comes from far away—and that he has good things to say about the school. He begins by pointing out, "The Settlement School at Hindman fascinated me when I read its report two years ago. Its claims grew upon me when I visited it in October," (qtd. in Furman 1910), and he continues with general impressions of his visit: the hominess of the log cabin structures, the hospitality of students and teachers, the hardworking children, the merry hours

at play, the happy customs. Having observed life at the settlement thusly, he concludes, "I can't think of a more practical union of imagination and common sense than one finds at this school. And I can't think of a people that would profit more by its friendly offices than the people of the mountains. May good success attend the school now and forevermore! It deserves it" (qtd. in Furman 1910). No further commentary is provided by Furman; none, apparently, is needed. As with the testimony provided by students and alumni, these letters from volunteers and visitors seem to speak for themselves.

*Testimony as Triangulation: High-Profile Guests*

But perhaps the most celebrated testimony—celebrated, that is, by the settlement women and trumpeted in the fundraising materials—comes from the settlement's high-profile guests, those whose professions (medicine, education, etc.) or societal standing make them somehow qualified to pronounce judgment on the school and its mission. Students providing testimony are identified by their affiliation with the school; visitor/volunteers are identified by home states or hometowns; these distinguished guests are most often identified by their areas of expertise. These doctors, professors, or otherwise esteemed patrons provide the final point of triangulation for readers seeking to substantiate claims made elsewhere in the fundraising materials. Some of this VIP testimony appears in passing without much fanfare, alongside other tidbits about the settlement. The annual letter from 1905 includes this brief quote from "Prof. Brownell of the Louisville Manual Training High School" regarding the settlement's exhibit at the World's Fair: "It is superb, excellent, a great credit to your school and to Knott Co." (qtd. in Pettit and Stone 1905). Sandwiched between a description of the settlement workshop and an account of living conditions at school's cottage, this quote functions simply as a quick endorsement from a trustworthy source.

It seems slightly off-the-cuff, but no matter: it is an affirmation, however perfunctory.

Similarly pithy sound bites appear elsewhere in the fundraising material, usually identifying the high-profile speakers or writers by their profession or association with important institutions. The annual letter from 1913 includes a bit of encouragement from "Mrs. Frost, of Berea College"—that is, Ellen Frost, wife of Berea president William Goodell Frost, whom Henry Shapiro credits with "inventing" Appalachia as a discrete region in American consciousness—urging the settlement women to keep the faith despite trying circumstances: "You who are struggling with the obstacles, feel the defects, but don't let your teachers think of these to the exclusion of the really big things you are accomplishing in the midst of obstacles and in spite of defects" (qtd. in Pettit and Stone 1913). Such advice, pointed as it is to settlement administration and teachers, might seem a bit out of place reprinted in a letter to a far-flung audience only peripherally associated with the school—unless we read it as outright name dropping. The thrust of Frost's statement is less important than her social rank and affiliation with Berea College; thus, her words appear here as reminder of the settlement's reputation among those in the know. Frost's remarks are followed by a sound bite from an unnamed "visitor of unusual prominence," who laments, "You are too economical—you don't spend money enough—you ought to have a great deal more to use" (qtd. in Rue 1913). Here the only identifying information provided for this anonymous guest is his "unusual prominence"—which the letter writer references presumably in order to certify his sympathetic commentary on the school's financial woes. Though the comment necessarily loses a bit of cache when presented to an audience not privy to this VIP's true identity—perhaps he asked not to be identified by name—it works well as a follow-up to Mrs. Frost's similarly supportive advice.

Taken together, the two observations endorse the settlement and exhort readers to do what they can to support its work.

Noted British musicologist Cecil Sharp also lent his voice to fundraising efforts during a research trip to Hindman in 1917, when he visited the school to collect the mountain ballads that had so fascinated the settlement women upon their arrival almost twenty years earlier. News of his visit appeared in the next year's annual letter:

> Recently we had a distinguished visitor at the school, Mr. Cecil Sharp, the great English collector of ballads. He was profoundly interested in what he saw and heard here,--in the large number of old ballads, sixty in all, which he obtained in five days' time, and many of which are no longer preserved in England; in the mountain vocabulary, with its Old English and Chaucerian and Shakespearian survivals, and its equally picturesque coinage of new words; and in the people themselves. Looking around one day in our dining room, he said, "Judging from their faces, voices and manners, these children of yours might belong to the very best English families." On another occasion he remarked, "It would be a great mistake ever to try to change the mountain people. They should be developed along the line of their natural culture, in which I believe strongly. This, in a day when so much is artificial, is perfectly true. Build upon this foundation." (Stone and Huntington 1918)

Though it implicitly supports the settlement's mission—to educate children back to their homes instead of away from them—and corroborates claims made elsewhere in the fundraising literature about mountain potential, Sharp's statement, like Ellen Frost's, is actually directed to the school's administration

rather than its supporters. His imperative to "build upon this foundation" of a "perfectly true" mountain culture would have certainly resonated with long-time supporters who had experienced mountain culture through the annual letters, the pamphlets, and the fiction of Lucy Furman, but his statements come off as advice more than anything. In other words, the praise of these high-profile testifiers is not always unmitigated; often it appears (and is later reprinted) in the guise of support, encouragement, and counsel. Their comments, then, sometimes seem a little out of context or random. Once again, however, the focus is less on what they have to say, and more on the fact that they have something to say in the first place—that they deem the school worthy of their time and attention. The comments of the high-profile endorsers implicitly back up the school's mission and work, to be sure, but their specific comments pale in comparison to their overall approval.

But when absolute praise is heaped on the school, the settlement women seize the opportunity to capitalize on it. After a Dr. Hagerty visited the Hindman school in 1907, he documented his impressions in a letter which was reprinted in the annual letter from 1908—but his commentary reappeared afterward in more than one pamphlet. Fundraising authors are quick to point out Dr. Hagerty's position, Professor of Economics and Sociology at Ohio State, and this title is always reprinted alongside his commentary. Full of admiration for the settlement's work, his initial comments also reiterate the school's financial woes and conclude, "I hope that you may be able to carry out your plans, and that those of philanthropic impulses will not suffer an institution to fail for lack of funds, which has started out with such splendid ideals" (qtd. in HSS 1908). Like Frost and Sharp, Hagerty is in a position to endorse the school simply by offering his opinions of its mission and practice. He extends his symbolic

patronage by allowing his words to be reprinted as the administration deems appropriate.

Other esteemed patrons lend their voices to the settlement's cause. An undated pamphlet probably sent around 1919 spotlights Henry White, President of Cambridge University Press, and his visit to the settlement. The post-card-style pamphlet dedicates an entire side to his letter, as follows:

> The five days I have spent in your midst have certainly served to increase my already firm respect for, and my confidence in the solid good which the school has accomplished and is accomplishing in your remote mountain region and by example, in other localities; also to increase my desire and purpose to continue to have at least some part in contributing toward its support and extension in these strenuous times.
>
> Seventeen years of devoted service have served to stimulate and direct the best desires and to encourage the hopes of the community and to create a very serviceable and complete outfit of well constructed buildings, also to develop a splendid corps of unselfish, devoted and enthusiastic teachers and co-workers.
>
> You have established cordial and co-operative relations with the local community—serviceable in regard to providing much needed and profitable home handicraft instruction and a paying outlet for the products of a serving and growing number of workers.
>
> To this must of course be added moral and material uplift which cannot be expressed. (qtd. in HSS 1919)

Again, readers familiar with the school through the annual letters would find no new information in this pamphlet; White's message is simply an affirmation of

previously and extensively documented settlement work. Nevertheless, presumably because of his position with Cambridge UP, White apparently warrants an entire pamphlet. Indeed, very little else accompanies his extracted letter, save a subscription card on the opposite side labeled "Do Your Bit For Lincoln's Race."

A similar pamphlet from 1918 is printed in the same post-card vein, with one side taken up by a lengthy quote from a notable figure and the other side a subscription card. The VIP in this case is "Judge A.T. Patrick, Judge of the 31st Judicial District of Kentucky, July, 1918." Judge Patrick:

> This county is no less than one of the best in the State for law and order, notwithstanding, some years ago, it was recognized and had the reputation for crime and immorality.
>
> The great change that has taken place among this people, was brought about, in a great measure, by the influence of the good work the Hindman Settlement School has accomplished.
>
> The work that this institution has done to establish in a measure scientific farming too, has had a valuable effect throughout the county. Old things are passing away and new are taking their places.
>
> The good that your strong faculty and the cooperation of many friends of education and advancement in and out of the county, have done for Knott County, cannot be estimated in dollars and cents. You and all who have had a part in this achievement, should feel that your labors among this people, who are endowed with wonderful natural mentality, have been crowned with success. The people of the county and state owe you all a debt of gratitude which they are unable to repay you. (qtd. in HSS 1918)

Patrick's praise, like Henry White's, does little more than add to the settlement's growing stock of accolades from purportedly objective strangers, bringing to mind David Mirhady's rejoinder that in the case of testimony, "if one witness guaranteed the truth, more guaranteed it better" (264). Meant as a sort of pat on the back for a job well done, Patrick's words edify both the Hindman administration and their supporters while unequivocally confirming overall impressions of settlement life.

Further straightforward praise-testimony comes in a letter quoting the settlement's "endorsers"—those far-flung individuals who have either witnessed the work of the school first-hand or are willing to give their seal of approval from a distance. This list of endorsers and their attendant praise accompanies a letter to supporters on the occasion of the settlement's incorporation in 1915. The cover letter from settlement administration notes, "Many of our best friends have advised this change," and assures readers that they "will be glad that the "Hindman Settlement School" has been incorporated by an independent Board of Directors" (Stone and Huntington 1915). The authors then include a document titled "Extracts from letters about Change of Management," excerpted below, citing comments from those who welcome the news of incorporation. The document lists the names and locations of these endorsers, with support coming from New York, Pittsburgh, Honolulu, Wellesley, Asheville, Philadelphia, Boston, Berea, Washington DC, Evanston IL, Toronto, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Chicago:

> "I am very glad to permit you to use my name as an endorser of the Settlement School in the mountains of Kentucky" (Walter F. Frear, Honolulu, Hawaii).

> "I am much interested in your letter of July 15th, and am very glad to have you use my name in your list of endorsers…" (Ellen Pendleton, Wellesley).
>
> "My interest in this work will be even greater than in the past, now that you have made this change" (John C. Campbell, Asheville NC).
>
> "Your favor of August 15th is at hand, telling me that the expected had happened, and that the Hindman School is to have an organization independent of the WCTU. I shall be very happy to have you use my name as an 'endorser'" (Wm Goodell Frost, [Berea College]).

Shrewdly hitching their wagons to the stars of supporters from Wellesley, the John C. Campbell Folk School, and Berea College, the settlement women provide readers with an impressive list of respected leaders from across the country who champion the cause of the Hindman Settlement School. The list reappears frequently in the fundraising literature. Several pamphlets from subsequent years list the above endorsers along with new ones, including several university deans, a former governor, a federal judge, and assorted professors and education administrators—information to which readers are privy because the pamphlets list the endorsers' institutions and positions alongside their names. Growing more impressive throughout the years, the endorsement lists drop the statements of support seen above to simply offer the names, locations, and occupations of endorsers, demonstrating once again that *what* the "endorsers" have to say about the school is less important than *that* they endorse the school in the first place. The message seems to be that once these VIPs have granted their patronage, readers hardly need to know how or why they are connected to the school. As outside—or, as Aristotle would say, "objective"—observers with nothing to lose

or gain from their support, these high-profile endorsers lend the settlement their credibility and connections via testimony.

*Testimony as Ventriloquism*

Though the settlement women use the testimonial evidence of students, visitors, and endorsers in conventional ways, their personal correspondence—especially with the high-profile guests—reveals the extent to which that testimony may have been manipulated. This is not entirely surprising; we might expect those who appear on the list of official "endorsers" to have been courted by settlement administration, for example. To that end, an August 1915 letter from Ruth Huntington to William Goodell Frost explains, "We are now forming our Articles of Incorporation, Board of Directors and a list of 'Endorsers' who will speak a good word for our work and allow their names to appear as references in different parts of the country" (1915). Frost clearly agrees to the arrangement, citing "your favor of August 15th" in his eventual statement that he is "very happy to have you use my name as an 'endorser'" (HSS 1915). The solicitation of official endorsements is nothing new, of course, but it does illustrate the behind-the-scenes effort put forth by the settlement women in securing "a good word" for their work at Hindman.

Perhaps more surprising, however, is the level of rhetorical coaching that apparently went into the longer letters of support, many of which were reprinted whole-cloth in the fundraising literature. Many of these letters originate in the conscripted invention of the settlement women. After Dr. J. A. Stucky's visited the settlement in the spring of 1911, for example, Pettit and Stone were glad to read the letter he sent to the school nurse recounting his observations. An esteemed physician from Lexington, Stucky had spent several days in Hindman and the surrounding towns treating adults and children with trachoma, an eye

affliction rampant among mountain families. While his letter to Nurse Butler focuses on the "sanitary, hygienic, and medico-surgical work that is to be done" in the mountains, he also offers some general impressions of the mountain people and the work of the settlement women. Much of his account is hardly news to long-time supporters of the settlement: he comments on the school's isolation ("having ridden on mule-back 45 miles from a railroad, into the very heart of the mountains…having safely traveled the treacherous, dangerous roads"); he notes his own responsibility to help out those in need ("The work in the Highlands of Kentucky should be more than a sentiment from a religious, missionary view-point. They are a part of our State and these people are our people, therefore it is more akin to a family affair, a generous privilege, a humane duty"); he praises the settlement model ("The needs of the Highlanders cannot be understood or met from a distance—not from our surroundings although so near them….Whatever purpose the Settlement School has for its ultimate end…their ideal must have been that the only way to better the conditions of the Highlanders was to teach them better living in their homes"). But Stucky, a distinguished guest whose education and occupation must command respect among readers, offers testimony which lends credence to the school and its mission, and his words underscore similar arguments in a decade's worth of fundraising literature. Recognizing an opportunity for endorsement, Pettit then wrote to Stucky asking if he would rewrite his letter with a wider audience in mind so it could be reprinted and distributed to the school's supporters. The opening paragraph of Pettit's letter is as follows:

> You have said so many things that would be a tremendous help to us of our various contributors and friends in the east as well as in the state could know, that we feel we just must ask you to write it in the form of a letter that we may have printed and send out to

> them. The enclosed printed letter, typewritten form, of Miss Butler's is the style we would like. Just as many words as you can put on one page. I realize this is asking a great deal of a busy man, but just that sentence about the top-heavy young manhood and womanhood would mean a great deal to have our friends know. I am going to quote some of the things from your letter that I hope you can put in this one. (Pettit 1911)

Pettit goes on to quote the especially useful passages of Stucky's original letter, then specifies that this new letter should be "informal…giving me your impression of our work" (Pettit 1911). She suggests that "we could use this letter in the back of our next circular that we have printed like the one on the enclosed circular written by Dr. Hogarty [sic] of the Ohio University, Columbus" (Pettit 1911). By teasing the useful passages from Stucky's initial letter and providing him with two stylistic models—Miss Butler's "enclosed printed letter" in "the style we would like" and Dr. Hagerty's oft-reprinted endorsement—Pettit provides some subtle rhetorical coaching for the letter she hopes to receive, one which will back her own take on mountain life.

Stucky complied with Pettit's request, and quickly. Her letter to the doctor is dated April 26, 1911, and two months later the following message from the settlement was sent out to Hindman supporters: "I hope you will be interested in the enclosed letter from Dr. Stucky, one of Kentucky's specialists, and also in the good news that the money has been given us for a new hospital." (Pettit and Stone 1911). Stucky's revised letter follows, and he seems to have followed Pettit's instructions precisely. For example, Pettit suggested that the doctor might emphasize "just that sentence about the top-heavy young manhood and womanhood," and he complies, slightly changing his initial sentence from "you are not developing a top-heavy young manhood and womanhood, but on

the contrary are training each to do with their hands as well as with their minds and tongues" (qtd. in Pettit 1911) to the slightly more developed, "In a word Miss Pettit and Miss Stone and their efficient faculty are not developing a top-heavy young manhood and womanhood, but on the contrary are training them to do with their hands as well as their minds and tongues the great things that make for a useful and happy life" (qtd. in Pettit and Stone 1911). The revisions are minor but significant, in that they demonstrate the degree to which Stucky complied with Pettit's gentle requests.

The ventriloquizing of Dr. Stucky's testimony was not a fluke occurance, it seems. Even before the settlement experiment got off the ground, Katherine Pettit especially was working behind the scenes to secure the appropriate backing. All accounts of the Hindman school's history point to Rev. J.T. Mitchell's request that the Federation of Women's Clubs send "a gentle, womanly woman" to run a model home in the mountains as the spark that ignited the club's full-blown involvement in the region. Katherine Pettit had been pushing for club involvement for half a decade, but it was the mountain preacher's validation of her desire that seemingly got the ball rolling. The year after the club heard Mitchell's initial request, he sent another letter to Katherine Pettit, one which argued along the same lines as the first. But his salutation suggests that he was not writing of his own volition: "Why should we have 'Home Industrials'? Did somebody ask that?" (Mitchell 1900). He goes on to answer the question apparently posed by naysayers in the bluegrass, a question which Pettit evidently felt would be best answered by Mitchell himself. He regales the reader with a (somewhat murky) story about a rich man who offers to buy a little girl from her destitute mother, who refuses his extravagant offer because she recognizes "the worth of the precious gem committed to her" (Mitchell 1900). The parable is meant to demonstrate the need for "true men and

women who know the inestimable worth of a Human Being," and Mitchell uses it to argue for the inherent worth of his friends, family, and neighbors in the mountains. He ends his missive by imploring the reader to "give to the rising manhood and womanhood of eastern Ky., whom to know is to love, the opportunities of their brethren and sisters of sections hitherto more favored, and find that you have opened the doorway into some of Kentucky's noblest society" (Mitchell 1900). Mitchell's fervent pleas both echo and anticipate arguments made elsewhere about the need for a school in the Kentucky hill country, but perhaps the most striking feature of this request is its earnestness.

But that earnestness, too, appears to have been coached in some small way. At the bottom of Mitchell's letter is this note: "Dear Miss Pettit, in writing the above response your favor of the 19th [unintelligible], I leave it open to be headed with such address as you like…I hope that this somewhat heavy article meets your wishes. If not I might try again." Though we do not have Pettit's letter to Mitchell, we might assume that it served the same purpose as her letter to Dr. Stucky some years later, namely, to solicit specific testimony on behalf of the quare women's work. For example, the concern Mitchell expresses over his style—he seems to be apologizing for his "somewhat heavy" tone—indicates a sensitivity to purpose and audience perhaps heightened by Pettit's own instructions.

Significantly, almost all of the high-profile guests and endorsers are men, a fact which is plainly evident if not explicitly mentioned by the settlement women. Though they tended to steer clear of overt gender politics in their public writing, the Hindman administration surely recognized the potential rhetorical weight of a male endorser, especially one who was employed in medicine, education, or the church. But at the same time these men are busy lending their public support and supplying their educated opinions as to the school's work,

the settlement women are in the background, surreptitiously dictating that support and those opinions via gentle coercion and conscripted invention. By ventriloquizing some of the testimony printed in their fundraising materials, Hindman's administration could offer a familiar message in more impressive packaging. Certainly we cannot assume that *all* the good words spoken and written on behalf of the settlement would have been solicited, nor should we assume that the praise of the testifiers was anything but sincere. Sincere or not, though, their words were on some level coached. At least some of the testimony provided on behalf of the settlement was manipulated in terms of style and content, however quietly, to meet larger goals. But the conscripted invention of the settlement women is not so much duplicitous as it is resourceful and rhetorically savvy. Through ventriloquized testimony, the settlement women seize on yet another available means of persuasion as they publicize their work.

## EPILOGUE

### The Quare Women's Legacy

In April of 2007, American Idol, arguably the most popular show on U.S. television, abandoned its customary talent-show format, wherein unknown singers compete against each other for the votes of an at-home audience, to present a two-day charity special called Idol Gives Back. Hailed as a "TV extravaganza" on its promotional website, the show relied on donations from viewers and corporations alike to "help children and young people in extreme poverty here at home in the U.S. and in Africa." With performances from contestants past and present, plugs from corporate partners, and appearances by a bevy of celebrities, Idol Gives Back came off as nothing so much as a massive and frenetic telethon. But despite the relentless cacophony of movie stars, recording artists, corporate bigwigs, comedians, philanthropists, international children's choirs, words-from-our-sponsors, and—yes—a holographic Elvis Presley singing a duet with Celine Dion, the real star of the show turned out to be the collection of pre-recorded segments featuring American Idol personalities dispatched to various sites of squalor in the U.S. and Africa. One of these segments, narrated by judge Paula Abdul, highlighted the hardships faced by Appalachian youngsters grappling with the scourge of illiteracy as the camera panned across a desolate-looking playground in Letcher County, Kentucky, adorned by an empty swingset and broken-down school bus. As a trio of cherubic children and their haggard, toothless mother looked plaintively into the camera to convey to America their fervent belief in education, literacy, and books as the key to a better life, Abdul assured viewers that their donations would in

fact provide the children of this community with the books they so desperately wanted—nay, deserved.

This segment—along with others in a similar vein featuring poverty-stricken children in inner city Los Angeles, Katrina-ravaged Gulf Coast communities, and various African nations—appears to have done its job: viewer pledges combined with corporate donations netted $75 million dollars for such charities as UNICEF, The Global Fund, America's Second Harvest, Save the Children, and The Boys and Girls Clubs of America. But the show as a whole was not without its critics. While some detractors were unhappy with the heavy reliance on corporate sponsors such as Ford, Coca-Cola, ExxonMobil, AT&T, and ConAgra Foods—corporations whose business practices arguably perpetuate the poverty the show purported to address—one vocal faction took issue with the caricatured representation of Appalachian people as wholly poor and illiterate. Bloggers, letters-to-the-editor writers, and even Kentucky's governor issued indignant statements in the days following the airing of *Idol Gives Back*, decrying the use of tired stereotypes for fundraising purposes or otherwise.

But the righteous indignation summoned by Kentuckians in the spring of 2007 apparently fell on deaf ears, as the 2008 reprise of *Idol Gives Back* once again drew from the well of Appalachian illiteracy. This time a trio of (different) mountain children was visited by teen pop star Miley Cyrus and her country-music-singing father Billy Ray—both of whom arrived at the children's home bearing books. The characters and setting for this illiteracy-themed segment were only nominally different from the previous year's—the backdrop was a modest mountain home instead of an abandoned playground, and this group of children was eager to discuss their love of computers as well as books—but the moral of the story remained the same: Appalachia needs help. Send money.

Send books. Evidently producers were so pleased with the response from the 2007 show that they decided to use it as a sort of template for the 2008 version, relying once again on popular stereotypes of Appalachia as needy and unlettered.

All this talk of a decidedly twenty-first-century reality show might seem a bit discordant in a dissertation whose purported subject is an early-twentieth-century settlement school. But the impulse that led *American Idol* producers to the Appalachian mountains in 2007 and 2008—that is, to save the poor illiterate children from themselves—is the same impulse that led the Progressive founders of the Hindman Settlement School to the region a century before. When genteel clubwomen Katherine Pettit and May Stone set out from their bourgeois Bluegrass homes at the turn of the twentieth century, their goal was likewise to help mountain children achieve a better life. Though the overall goals of the Hindman founders may have been more egalitarian than those of *American Idol* producers—learning as well as teaching—they, too, felt that the best way to address the "problem" posed by Appalachian poverty (to say nothing of Appalachian otherness) was by improving mountain education. Over a hundred years later, viewers of American reality television are reaping what Pettit and Stone sowed. Some of the same images and impressions of mountain life that Pettit and Stone favored in the settlement fundraising materials have surfaced repeatedly in the century since the quare women's initial sojourn to the mountains.

In some ways, this dissertation is just as much about *Idol Gives Back* as it is about a settlement school in Knott County, Kentucky, about a group of women living and working in unfamiliar territory and sharing their experiences with the world. It is about a specific set of local rhetorical practices invented by a small group of upper-middle-class and well educated women living and working in

eastern Kentucky—but it is also about the consequences of those rhetorical practices on the people among whom they lived and worked. All ideologies and cultural norms are grounded in specific rhetorical contexts, so this dissertation addresses the local as an attempt to explain or account for the global or cultural. Like politics, all rhetoric is to some extent local, so this project seeks to acknowledge both perspectives.

Henry Shapiro's argument that Appalachia was thrust into the national consciousness thanks to postbellum "local color" novels has been compelling in the thirty years since its publication. In subsequent decades, scholars such as Allen Batteau (in *The Invention of Appalachia*) and J.W. Williamson (in *Hillbillyland: What the Movies Did to the Mountains and the Mountains Did to the Movies*) have sketched the construction of the southern mountains via other media: sociopolitical treatises, popular news, and films that have presented the region in paradoxical terms of abundance and poverty. The message seems to be that what the region lacks in education, literacy, job opportunities, health care, and culture it makes up for in plentiful natural resources and a wealth of homespun Americana charm. For Batteau, Appalachia signifies a "creature of the urban imagination," a region that has "provided American society with colorful characters for its fiction, perfect innocents for its philanthropy, and an undeveloped wilderness in which to prove its pioneering blood" (1). For Williamson, "the mountains" are home to the shape-shifting hillbilly, "our richly symbolic American country cousin" who represents the best and worst of American identity (2). For all three writers, Appalachia as a discrete and knowable region cannot exist but for the writing and speaking of (for the most part) outsiders who insist on its otherness. The resulting—and enduring—portrait of the mountaineer is thus a caricature, a pastiche, a compilation of

extreme characteristics ascribed to an entire population…then featured in sites such as *American Idol*.

The settlement women played no small part in the painting of this portrait. Though their depiction of life in the southern mountains was generally more careful than that of, say, the regional writers of the same period, the quare women nevertheless took it upon themselves to represent the Appalachian people and region for an audience far removed from Appalachia. Their writing suggests a region full of earnest, gifted, and hardworking people fairly begging for a hand up; in an early journal entry on life at the settlement, Katherine Pettit reminds herself, "The cry of the mountaineer is, "I have not had a chance. I would be so glad if my children could have a chance" (qtd. in Stoddart *QWJ* 94). The settlement women thus built their fundraising campaign around such a characterization, creating various *topoi* and employing various rhetorical strategies to deliver their message across the country. But as they invented their arguments, the settlement women invented their mountain neighbors—indeed, the mountains themselves—for a national audience.

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