

LIVING WITH THE LEGACY OF COAL:
A STUDY OF APPALACHIAN WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE COAL
INDUSTRY

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This thesis entitled
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Appalachia's long history of resource extraction and absentee ownership has created a legacy of environmental degradation and economic depression in the region. Women have been at the forefront of efforts to combat the negative impacts of the coal industry in Appalachia, indicating that they perceive coal mining negatively. This research investigates how gender and social dynamics shape women's perceptions of the environmental and economic consequences of coal mining in Appalachian Ohio. Using in-depth interviews with 20 women in Glouster, Ohio, I demonstrate that life experience, connection to the coal industry, generational ties to community, and political views all contribute to perceptions of local environmental quality. Participants express their views about the local environment in terms of "quality of life" and point out that excessive litter, poor water quality, and unemployment are some of the most troubling local issues. Women in Glouster voice concern about a wide variety of local environmental and economic concerns, indicating that even women with relatively similar backgrounds experience their local environment in very different ways.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Carol Mae Brady Runser, who instilled in me the ability to experience pure awe at the beauty and wonder of nature. Her dry humor, steadfast advice, rock-solid loyalty, and unfailing encouragement will be part of me forever. Mom gave me my first lessons in feminism, showed me the endurance of female friendship, instructed me in the importance of family, and taught me to love the hills of Southeast Ohio and the people who make them special.

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Thank you to my brother, Karl III (“The Rev”), for bouncing around political ideas and inspiring me to continue my academic career. Thank you to my father, Karl, for so much - many years of guidance, editing suggestions, encouragement, humor, financial support, and, above all, love.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The region of Appalachia, as defined by legislation that established the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 1965, consists of all of West Virginia and parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. See Figure 1. The ARC was created to counteract an economic crisis in the region: at its inception, one in three Appalachian people lived in poverty and the U.S. average per capita income was 23% higher than in Appalachia. Today, 42% of the 23 million residents of Appalachia live in rural areas and the per capita income in 1999 was 81.9% of the U.S. average (ARC, “About ARC,” <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=1>, ARC, “About ARC: History of ARC,” <http://www.arc.gov/indexdo?nodeId=7>, ARC, “The Appalachian Region,” <http://www.arc.gov/indexdo?nodeId=26>; ARC, “Appalachian Region: Economic Overview,” <http://www.arc.gov/indexdo?nodeId=26>).

The Appalachian region has a long history of environmental damage caused by extractive industries (Barry 2001; Bingman 1999; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002, 113; Purdy 2002). Poverty in the region has been intensified by limited control over land, since coal companies have a history of purchasing mineral and surface rights from illiterate or poor people at a greatly reduced price (Buckley 2004; Purdy, 2002). The region has been further attacked by numerous negative stereotypes applied by outsiders to the perceived homogenous population of the region (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002; Speer 2002).

Figure 1: The Region of Appalachia



Source: ARC, “Moving Appalachia Forward: ARC Strategic Plan, 2005 – 2010,” <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=2324>

The Appalachian people have overcome negative stereotypes and responded to coal mining’s negative environmental and social impacts through grassroots movements, such as those against surface coal mining in eastern Kentucky and other parts of Appalachia in the 1960s (Montrie 2003). For many years, Appalachian women have played an important role in efforts to prevent the environmental and economic destruction caused by coal mining (Barry 2001; Bingman 1999; Engelhardt 2001; Goldman Environmental Prize, “Goldman Prize: Recipient Profile,” <http://www.goldmanprize.org>; Maggard 1999; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Norris and Cyprès 1994; Slavin 2002, May

5; Slavin 2003, June 9). Their involvement in the resistance movement denies the stereotypes typically assigned to Appalachian women (Maggard 1999).

In spite of their prominent roles in grassroots activism, Appalachian women's voices have largely been ignored in feminist and Appalachian studies literature (Engelhardt 2005; Seitz 1995). Women in Appalachia have also been ignored by the male-centered nature of histories of the area (Banks, Billings, and Tice 2002; Duff 2005; Engelhardt 2005; Smith 1999).

Appalachian women's participation in resistance to coal mining suggests that women in Appalachia perceive the industry and its impact on the region in a negative manner. Studies of environmental perception at the local level have shown that a wide range of factors influence local understandings of environmental issues (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). My literature review did not reveal previous studies of local perceptions of environmental issues in Appalachia or that had focused solely on women. As Reed and Mitchell (2003, 321) argue, if geographic studies look at "gender-specific" experience they may be more successful at promoting social justice.

This research addresses the question of how social dynamics shape women's perceptions of the environmental and economic consequences of coal mining in Appalachian Ohio. For this research, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 women living in the small community of Glouster, Ohio, located in the southeastern portion of the state. Glouster's long and continuing history of coal mining made it an ideal location for this study. My research confirms other studies that have investigated

local interpretations of environmental issues, revealing that women in Gloucester perceive coal mining in a variety of ways based on life experience, connection to the coal mining industry, awareness of feminist issues, and other social factors (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar 2005; Gupte 2002; Irwin et al. 1999).

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This research is grounded in three disciplines: Appalachian studies, feminist studies, and environmental justice. A review of the literature in these research areas has not only provided the context for my study, it has revealed a lack of information about local-level environmental concerns among women in Appalachia. The following chapter summarizes the key points from the literature in these disciplines that serve as the basis for my investigation.

Studies on the region of Appalachia provide a platform for my research for a number of reasons. This literature reveals a history of misrepresentation and resource extraction that has had lasting impacts on the region's land and people (Barry 2001; Bingman 1999; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Gaventa 1998; Lewis 2002; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002; Purdy 2002; Speer 2002). Women in the region have had a unique and often unrepresented experience, indicating that my focus on Appalachian women's experiences is warranted (Banks, Billings, and Tice 2002; Buckley 2004; Duff 2005; Engelhardt 2005; Giesen 1995; Maggard 1999, 2002; Seitz 1995; Smith 1999).

The Appalachian region and its residents have long been misunderstood and misrepresented through a variety of stereotypical notions applied to them by outsiders (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002; Speer 2002). As a distinct geographic region, Appalachia has been set aside from the rest of the United States, viewed as an "internal colony" plagued by troubles unheard of outside of the region (Barry 2001; Couto 2002; Gaventa 1998; Lewis 2002; Lohmann 2002; Shapiro 2002). Generalizations about the origins of such localized problems have ranged from

negative accusations such as “victim blaming” to more positive images of traditional mountain culture (Couto 2002; Maggard 1999). Such notions stem in part from the tendency of outsiders to view Appalachia as a source of commodities, such as natural resources or literary fodder, or as a focal point for political posturing (Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Otto 2002; Shapiro 2002).

Residents of Appalachia have faced stereotypes as well, which began with the local color movement of the late 19th century and have been perpetuated through popular culture in cartoons, books, television shows, and movies (Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Maggard 1999; Otto 2002; Shapiro 2002; Speer 2002). These popular culture images are typically inconsistent, such as the idyllic “family values” portrayed on “The Waltons” versus the violence of the film *Deliverance* (Couto 2002, 8; Otto 2002). The Appalachian people continue to be ridiculed by popular culture, a phenomenon no longer openly experienced by any other group of people (Couto 2002; Otto 2002).

Appalachian women, in particular, have been characterized by a set of dichotomous stereotypes that fall into two groups: “romantic” and “degrading” (Maggard 1999, 229). The “romantic” stereotype paints a picture of Appalachian women as “quiet caretakers of an idealized rural mountain way of life” (Maggard 1999, 229). These women create all of the necessities of life by hand (Maggard 1999, 229). Colonial American crafts such as spinning, weaving, and quilting abound (Maggard 1999, 229). The romanticized stereotype places Appalachian women in the sphere of the home, canning, baking, and carefully crafting a long-lost, simple existence (Maggard 1999, 229).

The romantic stereotype stands in stark opposition to the degrading stereotype, perpetuated by popular culture even today (Maggard 1999, 229). This stereotype is embodied in Daisy Mae from the “Li’l Abner” cartoon, Daisy Duke from *The Dukes of Hazzard*, and Ellie Mae and Granny Clampett in *The Beverly Hillbillies* (Maggard 1999, 229). The first three women are highly sexualized, unintelligent, “and likely to be, if not already, pregnant” (Maggard 1999, 229). Granny Clampett, on the other hand, is portrayed as an elderly Appalachian woman, witty enough to outsmart city folk, but too focused on animal husbandry and soap-making to do so (Maggard 1999, 229).

When not being mischaracterized by stereotypes, women in the region have often been ignored. For example, images of coal camp life in the early 20th century captured by the Consolidation Coal Company rarely depict women (Buckley 2004). Because women had little chance of obtaining outside employment, their contributions to coal camp life were within the sphere of the home and therefore unseen by Consol’s cameras (Buckley 2004). Photographs of women on picket lines, however, dispel the notion that Appalachian women existed solely within the sphere of the home and indicate their participation in labor activism (Buckley 2004). Appalachian women have also been ignored by the gendered nature of representations of the region (Banks, Billings, and Tice 2002; Duff 2005; Engelhardt 2005; Smith 1999). As in most other historical accounts, the history of Appalachia is often told from a male point of view or with a male folk hero who “act[s] to defend the female Appalachia...from assault” (Smith 1999, 5). Even within feminist literature, the voices of Appalachian women have only recently become more common (Engelhardt 2005; Seitz 1995).

While the people of the region have undoubtedly been negatively affected by this history of stereotyping and exclusion, they have also experienced a long history of environmental degradation at the hands of extractive industries often controlled by outside interests (Barry 2001; Bingman 1999; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Gaventa 1998; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002, 113; Purdy 2002). Because resource extraction and manufacturing have historically been the primary basis for the region's economy, the influence of these industries on the region has been extensive (ARC, "The Appalachian Region," <http://www.arc.gov/indexdo?nodeId=26>). Coal mining, in particular, has had a powerful and lasting impact on the economy and environment of the region (Barry 2001; Bingman 1999; Buckley 2004; Couto 2002; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002).

The earliest reports of coal mining in Appalachia date back to the 18th century, including evidence from 1748 and 1755 of coal discovery and mining activity in Ohio and a report from 1783 by Dr. Johann D. Schoepf indicating that people in Virginia were harvesting coal (Crowell 1997, 1; Montrie 2003, 17). For much of the next century, coal mining remained small-scale, with subsistence farmers in Appalachia working seasonally in deep mines owned by small industrial mining operations (Montrie 2003). Coal mining's early history centered on underground mining methods, although small-scale surface mining occurred as well, usually in the form of pick and shovel mining on hillsides with coal outcrops (Crowell 2001). In Ohio, underground mines were the most common for the first 150 years of the industry's officially recorded presence in the state (Crowell 1997, 2001). Mining during the 19th century was accomplished by hand, using animals to transport coal to the surface (Crowell 1997).

When railroads infiltrated the region at the end of the 19th century, access to distant markets propelled the growth of coal mining, as did the industrialization of the economy (Crowell 1997; Montrie 2003). Surface mining operations began appearing in greater numbers in the late 19th century and grew in popularity as technological advances made production easier and faster (Montrie 2003). Coal extraction increased during World War I, with a drop in production following the war, and subsequently exploded during World War II (Crowell 1997; Crowell 2001; Montrie 2003). Mechanization continued to alter coal mining, most specifically by drastically reducing the number of workers needed to sustain an operation, and strip mining evolved as the most prominent form of coal mining (Purdy 2002).

Both forms of coal mining persist today. In Ohio, surface coal mining was the primary method of coal extraction from 1948 until 1995, when underground mining again became the method by which the most coal was produced in the state (Crowell 2001). Underground mining methods typically follow a room-and-pillar pattern, in which large “rooms” of coal 20 to 30 feet wide and as much as 400 feet long are removed, leaving behind “pillars” of coal to support the material above (Crowell 2001, 2). Modern room-and-pillar mining relies on mechanized technology to accomplish much of the work, in contrast to the pick-and-shovel methods used for much of the 19th century (Crowell 2001).

In surface mining, vegetation and material above the coal seam are removed and the coal is extracted at the surface (Crowell 2001). Beginning in the 1970s, surface mining in the form of mountain top removal became more popular, especially in

Kentucky and West Virginia, where coal seams are close to the tops of ridges (Barry 2001; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002). This process involves blasting the tops of mountains to expose the underlying coal seam (Barry 2001; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002). Drag-lines, huge buckets attached to cables, are used to collect the coal (Makris 2003). The remaining earth and stone is pushed off the mountain into surrounding valleys (Barry 2001; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002).

The environmental impacts of coal mining are numerous, including water pollution, erosion, and subsidence (Buckley 2004; Crowell 2001; Fields 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002). Disturbed land from surface mining is often made up of rock and materials unable to sustain plant life, which makes these areas vulnerable to erosion that can suffocate nearby streams (Crowell 2001; Montrie 2003). Mountain top removal has had particularly severe impacts on the environment, such as drastic landscape change, water pollution, air pollution, erosion, loss of hardwoods, and flooding (Barry 2001; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002). Coal mining continues to impact Appalachia's streams in the form of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD), which forms when pyrite-laden rock is disturbed and comes in contact with air and water (Buckley 2004; Crowell 2001; Fields 2003; Robb and Robinson 1995). The resulting orange runoff, or "yellow boy," continues to damage aquatic ecosystems long after coal mines are abandoned (Buckley 2004, 149; Crowell 2001, 3; Fields 2003, 156 – 157; Robb and Robinson 1995, 47).

Appalachian women in particular have been impacted by the environmental impacts of coal mining. Women experience environmental degradation in "gendered" ways, specifically because women often do not control resources and do not make

decisions regarding those resources (Buckingham 2004, 151; Maggard 2002, 248; Reed and Mitchell 2003, 324; Seager 2003a, 172, 2003b, 966). Historically, this has been the case for Appalachian women as well, who had little influence over decisions regarding mineral and surface rights (Maggard 2002).

The environmental degradation of Appalachia has had numerous economic impacts as well. The steady stream of resources flowing out of the region can be blamed for the economic crisis the region was facing when the ARC was established (Montrie 2003). Appalachian people have been further impoverished by limited control over land, because coal companies began purchasing mineral and surface rights at the beginning of the 20th century, often from illiterate or poor people at a greatly reduced price (Buckley 2004; Eller 1982; Gaventa 1998; Purdy 2002). Coupled with unemployment exacerbated by mechanization, these factors have contributed to a persistent poor economy in Appalachia (Eller 1982; Lohmann 2002; Purdy 2002). Because the true environmental cost of coal is not factored into its current market value, Appalachia has become an “energy sacrifice zone” for the rest of the United States (Makris 2003; Purdy 2002, 213).

Women in Appalachia often bear the brunt of these economic factors, as changes to the coal mining industry due to mechanization have resulted in associated job losses (Maggard 2002). These women are left with the sole responsibility of supporting their families when their husbands are left out of work, either as a result of mechanization or due to injury on the job (Maggard 2002). The resulting changes in family structure can result in additional stress within the home, meaning that some women face the threat of domestic violence following economic reorganization within a family (Maggard 2002).

Coal miners' wives have carried an additional burden, dealing with the persistent fear of injury and financial instability that make up the coal miner's life (Giesen 1995).

Those reaping the largest profits from coal mining in Appalachia seldom experience the environmental damage associated with the resource's extraction because they often live outside of the region (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004; Montrie 2003). The environmental justice movement seeks to end this kind of inequity by allowing all people equal rights to environmental benefits while ensuring equitable exposure to environmental hazards (Harner et al., 2002). Bullard and Johnson (2000, 558) have described environmental justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies."

Studies of environmental justice investigate the patterns of distribution and impacts caused by environmental hazards. Because the women in my study live with the impacts of extractive industry but reap few of its benefits, environmental justice literature provides a basis for investigating women's experiences of this pattern of distribution. The environmental justice movement began as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and came to national attention in the 1980s when protests against a PCB landfill in Warren County, North Carolina prompted two landmark environmental justice studies (Bullard 1994; Bullard and Johnson 2000). In 1983, the U.S. General Accounting Office study, *Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation With Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities*, revealed a pattern of environmental

racism in the siting of hazardous waste landfills in predominantly African American communities (Bullard 1994; Bullard and Johnson 2000). A national study conducted in 1987 by the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice discovered that race was the most effective variable for predicting the location of hazardous sites (Bullard and Johnson 2000).

Quantitative environmental justice studies have since used GIS and/or statistical methods to analyze the location of various hazardous waste sites and the demographic characteristics found nearby, often at a variety of scales and with varying results (Anderton et al. 1997; Bolin et al. 2002; Cutter et al. 1996; Downey 1998; Harner et al. 2002). In contrast, qualitative studies have examined historical processes that have influenced current patterns. Researchers have used site-specific historical analyses to show that, indeed, many variables such as zoning laws and real estate practices influence current patterns (Boone and Modarres 1999; Boone 2002; Pellow 2000; Pulido 2000; Szasz and Meuser 2000).

Whether investigating pattern or process, few studies actually attempt to gauge individual resident's perceptions of polluting industry. Burningham and Thrush (2003) took this approach by using focus group interviews to assess the attitudes of individuals living near environmental hazards, arguing that previous studies have neglected the perceptions of individuals actually living with environmental problems. Others have similarly approached the issue of "environmental risk" as perceived at the local level, discovering that issues of environmental quality are closely tied to other "quality of life"

concerns (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999).

Some environmental justice studies have described the role of grassroots environmental activism in shaping the environmental justice movement (Bullard 1994; Bullard and Johnson 2000; Kurtz 2003; Pellow 2000). Research on the role of grassroots environmental activism has revealed that women play a key role in mobilizing these often-successful efforts (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Brown and Ferguson 1995; Buckingham 2004; Gutiérrez 1994; Krauss 1993; Kuester 1995).

This is true in Appalachia as well, where for decades women have been extremely visible in efforts to resist environmental destruction caused by coal mining and polluting industries (Barry 2001; Bingman 1993; Engelhardt 2001; Goldman Environmental Prize, “Goldman Prize: Recipient Profile,” <http://www.goldmanprize.org>; Maggard 1999; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Norris and Cyprès 1994; Slavin 2002, May 5, 2003, June 9). Appalachian women became involved in resistance to coal mining by blocking bulldozers with their bodies, by occupying strip mine operations, and by organizing their communities to resist the environmental and economic destruction caused by coal mining (Bingman 1995; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003).

Researchers have found a variety of reasons for the heightened involvement of women in grassroots environmental activism. Some argue that women’s environmental activism is an extension of motherhood, often brought about when caring for a sick child (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Gutiérrez 1994; Krauss 1993; Seager 2003b). Studies of women’s toxic waste activism also reveal that women activists participate in networks of

women sharing information, which often increases women's participation as patterns of illness are discovered and strategies for resistance are shared (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Brown and Ferguson 1995; Krauss 1993). The ecofeminist perspective argues that women become involved in environmental activism because of patriarchal domination of women and nature and due to a unique relationship that exists between women and the earth, enabling them to better understand and fight against environmental problems (Buckingham 2004; Gupte 2002; Seager 2003a, 2003b). Critics of ecofeminism argue that this stance over-simplifies a complex issue and places white, heterosexual women at the center of the debate, ignoring lesbians, women of color, and men (Gupte 2002; Norgaard 2000; Seager 2003a, 2003b). Some have pointed out that a feminist consciousness is likely to make women and men more concerned with environmental issues (Gupte 2002). Factors such as economic level, education, and race also play an important role in determining women's participation in environmental activism (Gupte 2002).

Many of the studies that attempt to address why women become involved in environmental activism are grappling with issues of gender and its influence on environmental consciousness and understanding. As others have suggested, studies such as mine, which focus on the impacts of environmental problems, should include the unique perspectives of women (Reed and Mitchell 2003). Reed and Mitchell (2003, 319) argue that research in environmental geography should take gender into consideration more readily, with the goal of "gendering environmental geography." Women must be "count[ed] in" when conducting research in environmental geography to help end the

historic omission of women from environmental decision-making (Reed and Mitchell 2003, 321). Research in environmental geography must also take into account the function of “gender relations” in perpetuating women’s subordinate status through the social norms reinforced through patriarchal culture (Reed and Mitchell 2003, 321). Differences among women must also be recognized, because women’s experiences differ based upon their socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, and other cultural characteristics (Reed and Mitchell 2003). These differences are particularly important when investigating environmental perception, since they may lead women to view environmental problems differently from men and from other women (Reed and Mitchell 2003). Questions about the origin and value of knowledge must also be included in environmental studies (Reed and Mitchell 2003).

Works that highlight women’s involvement in organizing against social and environmental injustice suggest that women often feel compelled to respond to environmental degradation. It is clear that women have an important and often powerful voice when faced with environmental problems. Other writing that has focused on traditions of resistance in Appalachia and women’s resistance in particular point to the Appalachian woman’s discontent with the poverty and environmental ills plaguing her region. However, previous studies have often failed to hear Appalachian women’s voices. Similarly, most environmental justice studies have not taken into account the words and experiences of local people struggling with adverse environmental conditions.

Taken together these previous studies imply that Appalachian women are indeed unhappy about the toll the coal mining industry has taken in their region. Because these

studies have not directly addressed women's perceptions of coal mining, they provide an excellent context for such research. Because previous work has focused mainly on women's actions, the obvious next step is to focus on the thoughts and words of women whose lives have been affected by the coal mining industry.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Research Location

For this thesis I chose to focus on women living in rural Athens County, Ohio. I chose to limit my research area in this way because my literature review did not reveal previous studies that have focused on the impacts of coal mining on Athens County women. I also felt that my knowledge and familiarity with the area would aid my research and make the participants more willing to speak with me than if I was from outside the region. Living and working within the region made it simpler for me to establish contacts and schedule interviews than if I lived distant from the study area.

Athens County's location in Southeastern Ohio also made it an excellent area for my research due to its long and continuing association with Appalachia and the history of coal mining in this area. Athens County is one of 29 Ohio counties considered part of the Appalachian region (ARC, "Appalachian Region: Counties in Appalachia," <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=27>). Athens County has been designated as one of the ARC's Distressed Counties since Fiscal Year 2002, qualifying it for additional aid from the ARC for basic services and communications infrastructure (ARC, "Area Development Program: Distressed Counties Grants," <http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=18>).

One of the earliest reports of coal in Southeastern Ohio dates to *A Map of the Middle British Colonies in America*, published in 1755 (Crowell 1997). The map indicates the presence of coal near the Hockhocking River (now known as the Hocking River) in Athens County (Crowell 1997). See Figure 2 and note the word "coals" in the

center of the map near the Hockhocking River. In 1787, Dr. Manasseh Cutler's map of the Ohio Company property indicated the presence of coal and salt resources near the Hocking River (Tribe 1976). The earliest official reports of amounts of coal mined in Ohio date back to 1800 and since that time 3.4 billion tons of Ohio coal have been extracted from both underground and surface mines (Crowell 1997). Athens County has historically placed 5th among Ohio counties for total production of coal (Crowell 1997).

Figure 2: Portion of *A Map of the Middle British Colonies in America*



Source: Gipson 1939; Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, Ohio University Libraries

Only one coal mine is operating in Athens County today (Wolfe 2004). Since 2000, the Buckingham Coal Company has operated Buckingham Mine No. 2 in northern

Athens County in Trimble Township (Claussen, “New Glouster mine almost ready to open,” http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355; Wolfe 2004). See Figure 3. The mine is an underground mine below approximately 1,200 acres of land just north of Glouster (Claussen, “New Glouster mine almost ready to open,” http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355).

Figure 3: Buckingham Mine No. 2, Glouster, Ohio



Photograph by the author, September 2004

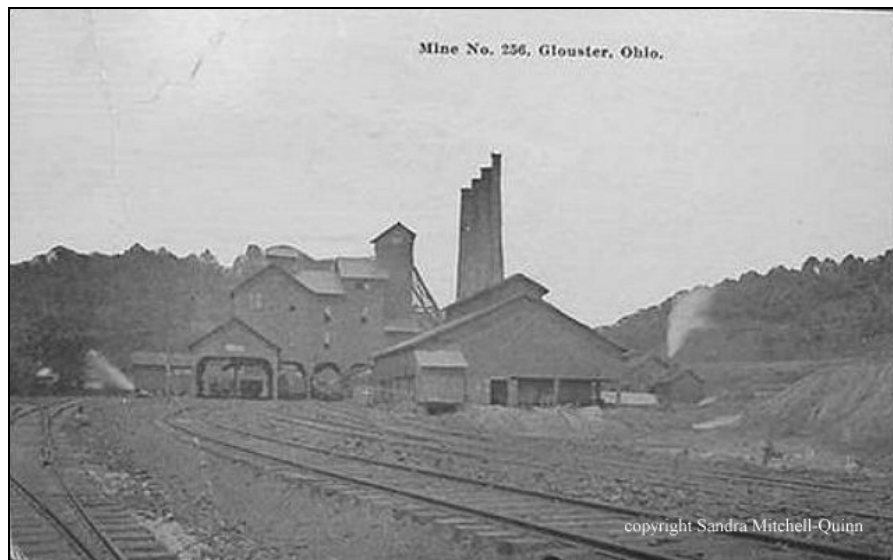
When the mine opened, the company was under a five-year contract to remove coal from the land, but in June 2005 the mine was still operating (Claussen, “New Glouster mine almost ready to open,”

http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355). In 2003, the Buckingham Mine No. 2 produced 1,162,172 short tons of coal at a value of \$1,145,019 and employed 64 underground production and 18 non-production employees (Wolfe 2004, 3, 35). Prior to the mine's opening, some residents of the Glouster area believed the mine would bring as many as 100 new jobs, although the coal company later confirmed that most of its employees would be people already working for Buckingham (Claussen, "New Glouster mine almost ready to open,"

http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355). The 2000 Census reported that 14 people in Glouster were employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining, accounting for only 2.2% of the Glouster population in all those fields combined (U.S. Census Bureau American Factfinder, "Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000," <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>).

Glouster's history of coal mining and the presence of the currently operating Buckingham Mine No. 2 made it the ideal location for my research. Coal mining led to the development of this and other small communities in the Hocking Coal Region (Tribe 1976, 1986). See Figure 4. As early as the mid-1880s several coal mines were operating near the village of Glouster, which had been settled with the name Sedalia less than a decade before (Tribe 1976, 1986).

Figure 4: Glouster Coal Mine No. 256, undated



Source: Ohio GenWeb, “Glouster Coal Mine 256”,

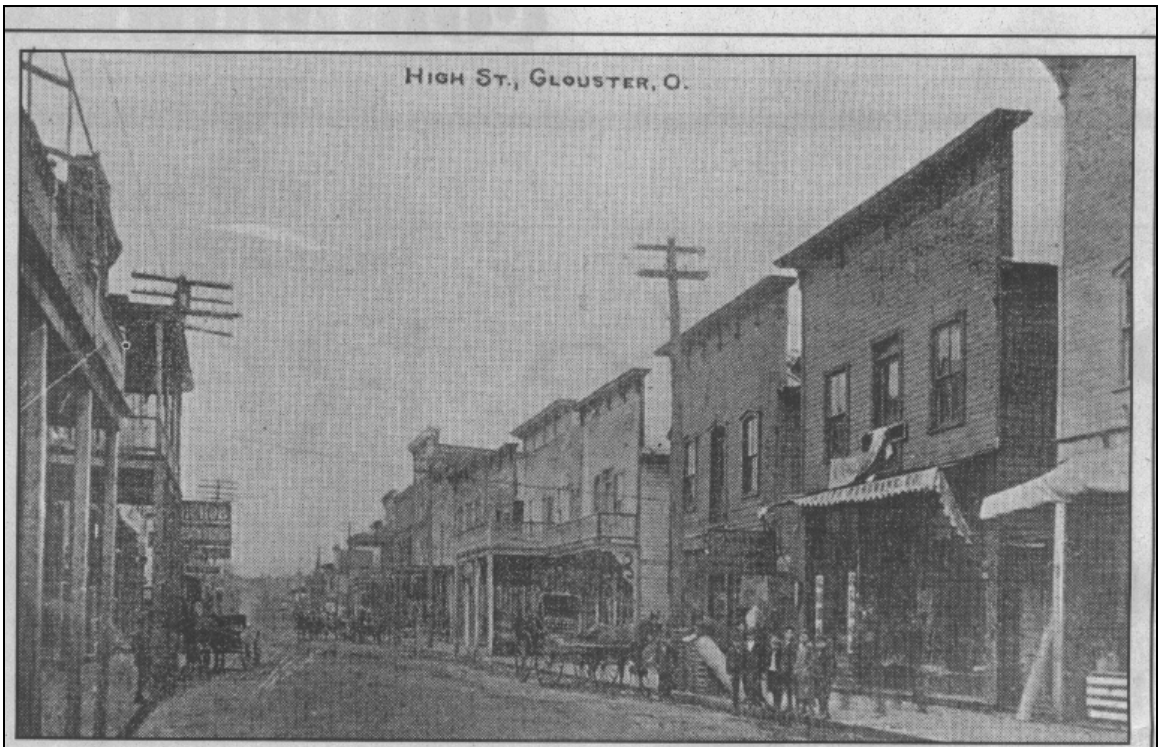
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ohathens/areacoalmine11.htm>

In December 1886, the *Albany Echo* reported that “it is confidently expected that the development of this region during the coming year will draw largely on both capital and labor and that the embryo city of Sedalia will in all probability experience a wonderful boom” (Tribe 1976, 152). The community was officially renamed Glouster in December of 1886 and the following year it boasted a population of 1,000 and numerous stores, businesses, churches, and a newspaper (Tribe 1976, 1986). Just 13 years later, the population had more than doubled, to 2,155 (US Census Bureau, 1900). See Figure 5, an image of High Street in Glouster from 1915. The false-fronts lining High Street in this image are typical of boom towns and were constructed during the early development of

such towns to make them appear “more substantially constructed and finished”

(Francaviglia 1991, 153).

Figure 5: High Street, Glouster, Ohio, circa. 1915



Source: Parsons, “Glouster, Ohio”, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ohathens/glouster.htm>

As demand for coal decreased following World War I, towns like Glouster felt a severe economic decline that continues today (Tribe 1986). Although World War II boosted coal consumption for a short time, the tide had already turned for much of the coal mining industry, leaving many former boom towns like Glouster with little

opportunity for economic stability (Tribe 1986). Gloucester's population reached a peak of 3,140 in 1920 and at that time the population of Trimble township was at its highest at 9,849 (U.S. Census Bureau 1920). See Table 1.

Table 1: Historical Population of Trimble Township, Gloucester Village, and Athens County, 1810 - 2000

Year	Trimble Township	Gloucester Village	Athens County
1810	na	na	2,791
1820	na	na	6,312
1830	190	na	9,763
1840	762	na	19,109
1850	924	na	18,215
1860	1,112	na	21,364
1870	1,379	na	23,768
1880	1,367	na	28,411
1890	4,966	na	35,194
1900	7,327	2,155	38,730
1910	8,893	2,527	47,798
1920	9,849	3,140	50,430
1930	7,736	2,903	44,175
1940	7,461	2,847	46,166
1950	5,533	2,327	45,839
1960	4,961	2,255	46,998
1970	4,629	2,121	54,889
1980	5,063	2,211	56,399
1990	4,716	2,001	59,549
2000	4,710	1,972	62,223

Source: United States Census Bureau

In 2000, the population of Glouster was 1,972 with a median household income of \$23,929 and 24% of families living below the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau American Factfinder, “Highlights from the Census 2000 Demographic Profiles,” <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>). The 2000 Census reports that 4.9% of Glouster residents are unemployed and 50.1 % are designated as “not in work force” (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, “Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics, 2000,” <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>). Of the population 25 years of age and older, 70.6% have an education at the high school level or above, compared to the U.S. average of 80.4% (U.S. Census Bureau American Factfinder, “Highlights from the Census 2000 Demographic Profiles”, <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>). Only 5.3% of Glouster residents over the age of 25 have a Bachelor’s degree or higher, much lower than the U.S. average of 24.4% (U.S. Census Bureau American Factfinder, “Highlights from the Census 2000 Demographic Profiles,” <http://www.factfinder.census.gov>).

Present-day Glouster does not have the number or variety of businesses and services it once had, but there are several businesses located on or near High Street (State Route 13), the main thoroughfare through Glouster. See Figure 6. There are several gas stations, two fast food restaurants, a dollar store, a thrift store, and several locally owned small businesses, such as a flower shop, two restaurants, and several bars. One of seven library buildings in the Nelsonville Public Library System is located in Glouster, providing the community with access to books and educational materials, space for public events, and special programs (Nelsonville Public Library, “Your Library,” <http://www.athenscounty.lib.oh.us/library.html>). Several non-profit organizations have

offices on High Street, including the Sunday Creek Watershed Group and the Sustainable Forestry Program, which are both administered by Rural Action, a local non-profit dedicated to advancing “economic, social, and environmental justice in Appalachian Ohio” (Rural Action, “About Us,” http://www.ruralaction.org/RA_about.html; Rural Action, “Rural Action Locations,” http://www.ruralaction.org/RA_locations.html).

Figure 6: High Street, Glouster, Ohio, present day

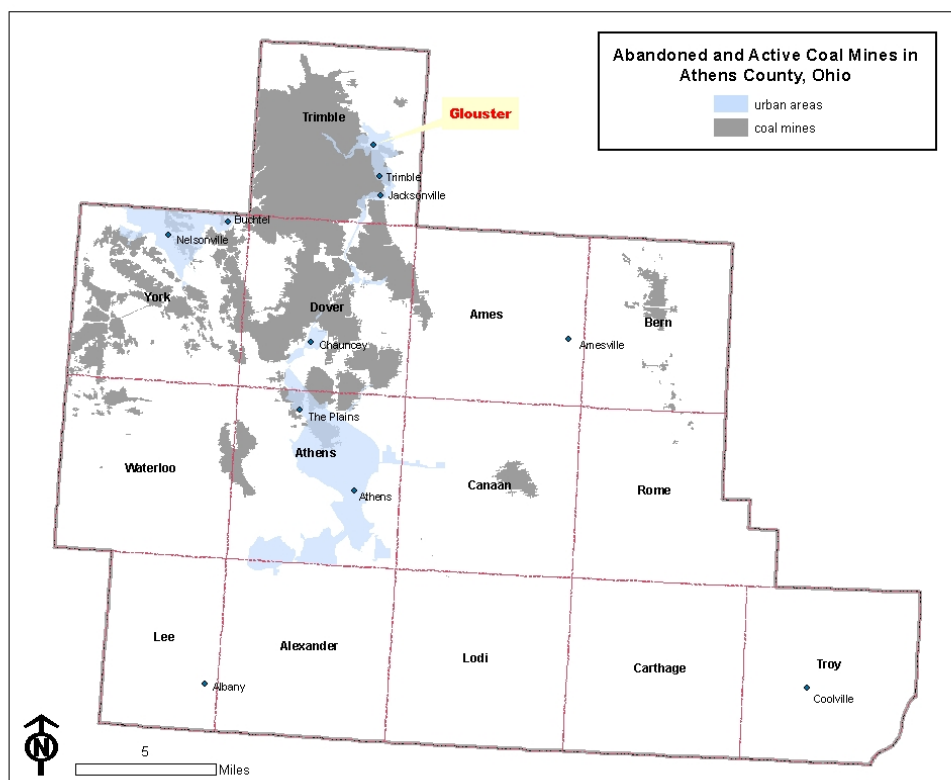


Photo by the author, September 2004

Because coal mining has had a long history in Glouster that continues today, women in the area have been impacted by the industry in a variety of ways. Figure 7 indicates the extent to which mining has occurred in the Glouster area. The architecture,

cultural diversity, and history of the area are all tied to coal mining. Women who have lived in the region for most of their lifetimes will likely know friends, neighbors, or family members who worked in coal mining. Women who spent childhoods in Glouster or who come from families with long histories in Glouster will probably remember stories and photographs shared by older relatives. Glouster's history of mining has resulted in numerous environmental impacts in the area as well, including subsidence, acid mine drainage, and open shafts, features that are still problematic. Finally, the continued operation of the Buckingham Mine No. 2 for the past 5 years has allowed residents of all ages to experience the environmental and economic impacts of a working mine.

Figure 7: Location of Abandoned and Active Coal Mines and Study Location in Athens County, Ohio



Source: ESRI. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Data. Retrieved September 24, 2004 from http://www.esri.com/data/download/census2000_tigerline/index.html; ILGARD

Interview Methods

The research method I used for this project is based on qualitative studies in the environmental justice and feminist literature. Although environmental justice studies have used both quantitative and qualitative methods, the qualitative approaches used to assess local environmental concerns is particularly relevant to my study (Bush et al.

2002; Burningham and Thrush 2002; Irwin et al. 1999; Farquhar et al. 2005). These studies involved interviews with men and women of low socio-economic status to gauge their perceptions of local environmental quality (Bush et al. 2002; Burningham and Thrush 2002; Irwin et al. 1999; Farquhar et al. 2005). This approach is important because of the paucity of research that has focused on “how those experiencing environmental disadvantage conceptualise their environment and the environmental problems they are exposed to” (Burningham and Thrush 2002, 519). Feminist studies attempt to “count women in” and “hear women’s voices” because of the impact that gender has had on how women’s experiences are valued and understood (Cope 2002, 44; Reed and Mitchell 2003, 321). This is particularly relevant in feminist studies in Appalachia, because women in the region have often been silenced and ignored (Duff 2005; Seitz 1995). Because my research focused on Appalachian women’s perceptions of the local impacts of coal mining, I felt that the use of interviews would provide me with the best data to answer my research question and would be most effective in giving my participants a voice.

My interviews followed a semi-structured design. Also known as an “interview guide approach,” this interview style focuses on pre-determined issues related to the research question, but still allows some flexibility during the interview (Dunn 2000, 52, 61; Kitchin and Tate 2000, 214; Seitz 1995, 23). I developed an interview protocol centered on the issues I felt were relevant to my research question based on the literature I had read and modeled after an interview protocol from a similar qualitative study (Whitson 2004). As I progressed through the interview process, I revised the wording of

some questions to try to elicit more detailed responses (Seitz 1995). See Appendix A: Interview Protocol. The semi-structured interview style worked well for my research because it allowed me to cover certain issues with each participant, but allowed for some variety based on the participant's experiences. This approach also encouraged a more comfortable, conversational interview that could evolve based upon the interview setting and the dynamics occurring between myself and the participant (Seitz 1995).

I located participants using the "snowball method," in which I made initial contacts in the community and asked for their assistance in finding participants (Seitz 1995, 21). I believed this would be most effective because I would be meeting women face-to-face from the very start, so any questions or concerns could be addressed immediately. I also chose this method because I felt it would make participants more willing to speak with me. I began by contacting women at several local organizations and these women provided me with several names of women who would potentially participate in my study. With each new participant, I asked for additional recommendations of potential participants.

I interviewed 20 women who live in or near the Gloucester area. The youngest participant was 23 and the oldest participant was near 90, although she refused to give me her actual age. I interviewed women who were married, divorced, widowed, and who had never married. Many of the participants had children of different ages, some had large families with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and several women of varying ages had no children. Many women were lifelong residents of the area, while some had moved to the area with a parent or spouse and others had left the area during adulthood

and moved back for retirement. Some of my participants had advanced degrees while others had completed only a portion of their high school education. Experiences outside of the area included living and working in other countries, attending college in other states, and living in other portions of Appalachia. Other women involved in my study had very little experience in other places.

Participants' involvement with coal mining reflected a range of experience. I interviewed one woman who had worked professionally in coal mining for a number of years and one woman who had worked informally in a small coal mine operated by her husband. Several women's husbands had retired from coal mining and one woman's husband is currently employed at the Glouster mine. Some participants grew up in families in which their father, uncles, and brothers were all working in coal mines, often at the same time. Others came from farming families but married into coal mining families. Some women moved to the area with families who had come here specifically to work in the mines, while others were "born into" the industry. Some younger women speculated that some family members in the past had been coal miners but weren't certain about their level of involvement. Other women had no connection to the coal mining industry at all, other than living near it. Nearly all the participants knew a friend, neighbor, or family member who had been involved in coal mining at some point.

All of the women who participated in my study were white. Their income levels varied greatly, although most participants were understandably vague when discussing income. Participants ranged from a young, unemployed single mother facing criminal charges to a woman with an advanced degree employed by the federal government. A

number of women were recently widowed with an uncertain financial future. Several were adjusting to a lower income following retirement. Some married women were working only part-time or not at all because their husband's income was supporting the family financially.

Political participation and party affiliation varied greatly as well. One woman never votes and several women vote only sporadically. Two women are on city council and are heavily involved in local politics. Fourteen participants identified with a political party, while 4 responded that they vote for the best candidate, and one refused to discuss political party affiliation. Of the 14 women who identified a political party, 11 were Democrats, 2 were Republicans, and 1 was an Independent.

Interviews took place in the local community center, at the senior center, at the Gloucester Depot, in private residences of participants, and at offices and places of employment of participants. I also spent time with groups of women in Gloucester on several occasions when I did not conduct interviews. This included time spent with a quilting group at the Gloucester Depot, visits to the local senior center and community center, lunch at the local restaurant with several local women, and participation in a program at the local public library branch. The interviews lasted approximately 1.5 hours, with some lasting only 45 minutes and others lasting as long as 4 hours, depending on the participant's willingness to talk. In the presentation of my data that follows, participants' names have been changed to protect their privacy. See Appendix B for a table of selected demographic data for each participant.

Method of Analysis

I tape recorded all of the interviews and then transcribed the tapes in their entirety following the interview. I then analyzed the tapes using NVivo software, designed for qualitative analysis. Using this program, I coded each interview for 117 different issues, topics, and responses, or nodes. I was then able to create reports for each of the different possible nodes. I then grouped the node reports thematically, choosing issues that were integral to the study, were mentioned by several participants, or were surprising or unusual issues I hadn't expected.

Chapter Four: Analysis

The responses presented in the following chapter are grouped thematically and each section includes direct quotations from participants. It was important that the integrity of the participants' voices be maintained by using direct quotations, particularly because the purpose of this study is to give voice to a group of women often silenced and to understand their perceptions of coal mining as they have expressed them (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Cope 2002; Duff 2005; Farquhar et al. 2005; Reed and Mitchell 2003; Seitz 1995). Similar studies have successfully used thematic grouping of interview responses in their analyses as well (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Duff 2005; Farquhar et al. 2005; Giesen 1995; Irwin et al. 1999; Mirchandani 2000; Seitz 1995). As I transcribed and reviewed the interviews, several important themes emerged that I believed warranted further attention and would be more meaningful if presented together.

This analysis follows a similar pattern as that of the interview protocol that I developed, beginning with the broad subject of "community," moving through general feelings about local economy and environment, and then exploring specific issues related to the past, present, and future of the coal mining industry. Finally, I include a section on the future of the community, describing participants' hopes and fears for Glouster in the years to come.

Community

Much of the literature concerned with grassroots environmental activism in Appalachia implies that participants were motivated by a connection to the land, because

people involved in such movements were fighting to protect the quality of their land and their communities (Bingman 1995; Fisher 2002; Garland 1988; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002). An investigation of local perceptions of the impact of the coal mining industry in Appalachia would not be complete without first understanding how residents perceive the community in which they live. Beyond the importance of a simple connection to the land, Burningham and Thrush (2003, 518) argue that concerns about the local environment are “bound up with wider assessments of local life.” Issues of local environmental quality are closely tied to other “quality of life” issues (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). Understanding the importance of place is integral as well. As Katz and Monk (1993) contend, previous work in both geography and feminism has not fully investigated the impact of place on women’s experiences.

Positive images of Glouster: “I always liked it here”

Most participants view the Glouster area in a positive way, pointing out the closeness of the community, loyalty of neighbors, presence of family, and natural beauty as some of the reasons they enjoy living there. While most women also mentioned negative aspects of the region, they typically balanced or exceeded their negative sentiments with positive feelings. Kendra, who is 29 and has lived in Glouster all of her life, summarized her feelings this way:

I never considered moving away from here...in high school you always hear, “I’ve got to get out of this place”, and “it’s awful.” Not me. I always liked it here. I knew everybody. My parents had [a] restaurant, so I knew old people, I knew young people and I have always enjoyed, you know, that kind of family - you feel like its family, you’ve known

someone for so long...It's traditional and...I don't have to worry about someone kidnapping [my son] off the sidewalk in front of my place...it's that security...that's important to me, I like that...I like just the small-town feel.

Many women pointed out that Glouster is a “close-knit” community. Participants expressed an overall sense that people in the community are very loyal to one another and although many people have limited resources, they often help others in need. Suzanne, now 70, recalled raising her young daughter as a single mother after the child's father deserted them.

We always had people. We always had friends - we would come home at night and there'd be neighbors or somebody just come out and they'll have a bowl of food for us for supper. Or, you know, have you come eat with them. There was one family...up the street, they took her for the night, whenever she needed a place to stay for the night. So, yeah, everybody was wonderful, everybody *really* was good to us.

Other participants who pointed out the closeness of the community felt that it is a result of Glouster's history of coal mining. Colleen, 67, was born in Glouster and grew up with a coal mining father who was heavily involved in union activity. She and her father were very close and she would tag along with him as much as possible, sitting on the steps outside of union meetings to wait for him. As a child, she believed that John L. Lewis, who was president of the United Mine Worker's Association (UMWA) at the time, “was up there next to God.” Colleen believed that residents' willingness to help one another in Glouster “stems from people stickin' together during strikes.” Wives of coal miners interviewed by Giesen (1995) similarly recalled their neighbors in the coal mine camp banding together to help those in need.

Many women mentioned the “natural beauty of the area” and the hilly topography as some of the best aspects of living in Glouster. One participant referred to Southeastern Ohio as the “jewel” of the state. Another participant, Paula, is 44, married, and has a young child. She works for a local non-profit dealing with water quality issues and has focused most of her career on environmental education and conservation. Her feelings about the local environment reflect its impact on her own life:

We have a lot of really nice state parks and things like that that are nice to be able to take advantage of - when you live other places you don't realize how blessed we are in Ohio, with the Hocking Hills and all these different places that we can go ride and camp.

Several participants viewed Glouster as providing an arena for social activism. This was expressed both by women who had left Glouster for a time and returned as well as women who were not natives of the area. They felt that one of the reasons they chose to stay in Glouster was to make a difference in the community. This was the case for Kathy, a 69-year-old retiree who has recently returned to the area:

I graduated in 1953 from Glouster High School, went to Columbus right after that...I worked and lived there until 1998, at which time I retired and came back to this area, because it was an area that I loved and an area that I thought I might be able to do something and make - make a mark here. And I came back and I've been on several boards...and I've gotten very involved in school issues here. I like this area, I want to see something happen here, but I've not been able to do what...I would like to do before I leave this area. So I'm working towards that right now.

Simone is a 58-year-old retired schoolteacher originally from Northern Ohio who came to the Glouster area in the 1970s to teach in the public school system. She recalled how her feelings about the area evolved during her first few years in Glouster:

I moved down here in '78...the first three years that I was down here I cried the whole time, because I didn't understand what people were saying and I wasn't used to being closed in by the hills. I had claustrophobia...but then somewhere along the line I fell in love with the area. I think the need for people to help, in education, and what I thought that I could provide, and I've been here ever since.

Other positive aspects of the area that women mentioned included the slower pace of life and a feeling of freedom and safety. Some women pointed out that living in a community like Gloucester allows you to "be yourself" because the possibility of being judged by others is low. For many women who are lifelong residents of Gloucester, a simple feeling of the area being their home predominated their positive thoughts about the area. As Burningham and Thrush (2003) found, strong generational ties to a region help solidify loyalty to the area. Even in studies focused entirely on negative aspects of a community, respondents still made positive statements about their community, reflecting a strong loyalty to one's home and neighborhood (Farquhar et al. 2005).

Negative images of Gloucester: "We're kind of the forgotten part of the state"

Although most women made primarily positive comments about the area, others tended to view things in a more negative light. As in other, similar studies, many people express a negative opinion about certain aspects of the community which may not be considered "environmental," but which still have a great impact on quality of life, such as maintenance of buildings and property, excessive litter, and increased crime (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). A feeling of neglect by local and state government

was repeatedly expressed, both by participants in the Burningham and Thrush (2003) study, as well as by residents of Glouster. Elaine, 67, who moved to Glouster from Europe as a teenager, tended to have a more negative view of the area and expressed a feeling of neglect by local and state government:

We don't get the jobs down here, we don't get the maintenance of the highways down here, I mean it's just like a forgotten thing...I think we're kind of the forgotten part of the state. They either forget us or they've given up on us. There's no money down here to offer them. It doesn't make them look good by coming down here, doing something for the Appalachian poor people. They don't get a star in their crown up there in Columbus for doing that, even though they know it needs to be done.

Increased crime, as well as drug and alcohol abuse, were cited by many women as negative aspects of the local area. Angela, 60, has lived in Glouster her entire life and felt the area has become more unsafe during that time:

I think it's got bad as far as drugs, and people like fighting, killing people, there's been killings here. It's gotten worse. It used to be you could go away, leave your doors unlocked and standing open, and nobody'd bother your place. No you've got to lock 'em up tight and, if they want in, they're gonna get in – they're gonna break in. But I don't know if it's because of jobs, you know, no work, and some of 'em do it just to be doing it, other ones might do it to try to make a living.

For other women, the presence of increased crime in Glouster is not unique to the area, but could happen anywhere. For women who feel a strong sense of loyalty to the area, pointing out the fact that such problems are common everywhere helps soften the negativity of their comments (Burningham and Thrush 2003). Several residents expressed frustration at the way Glouster is often portrayed in local news media. Maria, who is 38

and has lived in Gloucester for the past 8 years, is a successful businesswoman in Athens.

Although she has not lived in Gloucester her whole life, she visited the area often as a child and expresses great loyalty to the community. She conceptualized crime in Gloucester in this way:

If something bad happens in Gloucester, it's because those people knew each other. Somebody wronged somebody and they took matters into their own hands. And that's what happens in Gloucester, so it gets a bad reputation. You know, do people get cars broken into it and stuff? Yeah, if you don't lock your car, somebody's gonna walk by and if they see something, they're gonna take it. But it's like that everywhere, for the most part. You live on the east side [of Athens], everybody protects everybody. You live in a good area of Gloucester, everybody keeps an eye out, nobody wants their stuff stolen. But you get kids that, you know, the parents can't control them and they will break into your stuff, but it's rare, I think. And it's just as sad there. Everybody's just as sad about it [in Gloucester] as you would be if it happened here in [Athens].

Many women mentioned excessive litter as a local problem that bothers them very much. Several women identified litter as an environmental issue, as well. Some women used the local litter problem as an avenue for local activism, as was the case with Kathy, the retiree who returned to Gloucester to "make a mark":

I'm sure that cleaning up an area is part of the environment and that's another one of my favorite things, is I go to Council meetings and complain about the fact that this whole area needs cleaned up, and I don't feel...that the council is doing their job as far as making people clean up their areas...this used to be one of the prettiest areas...most every family up here was Italian or Hungarian or Polish, and people were proud of what they owned and they took very good care of what they owned. And then when I came back here, you know, it was just like a dump.

Kathy responded to the litter problem in her neighborhood by taking action herself and organizing a “clean up weekend.” She obtained supplies and assembled volunteers to help with the project. She planned a route for the cleaning team and even obtained a dumpster for removal of the litter. Although the weekend was a success, afterwards she felt disappointed by the community response:

We started up at the corporation limits and was gonna work down that way. We picked up all the trash - we had a big dumpster...we had that thing stacked all the way up...then, I thought, well maybe then people will keep it clean. No. They just let it go again you know, and it's so disgusting. I get so mad at those kind of things.

Kathy shares a similarity with other Appalachian women who have been involved in grassroots environmental activism. Although Kathy's activism was on a smaller, more informal scale, her intent is the same. She believed that if she worked hard at cleaning up her community, her actions might improve the neighborhood and send a message to her neighbors that they, too, should try to maintain their property. Kathy's activism is again tied to protecting her land and community and to using her actions to set an example (Barry 2001; Bingman 1993; Engelhardt 2001; Maggard 1999; Makris 2003; Montrie 2003; Norris and Cyprès 1994; Slavin 2002, May 5; 2003, June 9).

Mothers with small children expressed their concerns about the community in terms of the lack of opportunities for the youth. Lynn, a 23-year-old single mother of two, recalls her own experience as a child in the area and used that knowledge as her basis of concern for her own children:

I mean, it's not a place for kids to grow up at, I know that. I lived on the street practically my whole entire life, because my dad went out of town workin' and my mom and dad got

divorced. They did have youth centers here for children – teenagers. They took ‘em all out. Kids don’t have nothin’ to do here no more... And as far as me growin’ my daughter up in this town – no, never in a lifetime, no! I mean, at one time, Glouster was a good community for people, but there’s just nothing here anymore for your kids, you know?

Valerie, a 35-year-old married woman with two elementary school aged daughters and a teenage stepson, sees living outside of town as a benefit because the family farm and surrounding land provide her children with activities they wouldn’t have in town:

...there isn’t really a lot for the kids. I mean, if we lived in town, what is there for ‘em to do? Nothing. But like, we’re out of town so I mean, it’s not as bad for our kids. But yet they complain because, “there’s no kids around, mom.” You know? So I mean, they have their ups and downs with that, but other than that, if you stop and look at the county, then you see there’s nothing for the kids.

Concern with the school system was another common theme among Glouster women, and not just among mothers of small children. Retired schoolteacher Simone explains her concerns, revealing again her interest in social activism:

We have 75% of our children at school on free lunches. And if it weren’t for outside funding, the school district would be in really sad form. I also belong to a foundation that kind of got started around something that I said in the newspaper when I retired, about the school district not having enough money to buy textbooks, and the new grade card, how poor our district was doing and I said, “well, you know, what do they expect?” Our newest science book was [from] 1976 and the one before that said, “man may someday walk on the moon.” You know? So, this foundation got started to assist in buying textbooks for the community, and I think we’re moving into our 5th year.

Paula’s concerns about the local school system reflect her understanding of the impact of inadequate funding for education:

The schooling is really terrifying that it's not funded better. Because, I think that would be one way to combat all the pregnancies and all these people that are having kids that shouldn't be and all that kind of stuff. So I think that we need to work for education.

Overall, the most common complaints about the Gloucester area were related to the economy, a concern others have found to be among the “biggest problems” faced by local residents (Bush et al. 2002). Many women mentioned poverty, unemployment, and the paucity of services, medical care, and businesses as some of the most troubling conditions they deal with on a regular basis. For Marcie, 49, who left the area to attend college and for work and has recently returned and is employed by the federal government, the unemployment problem is revealed when she interacts with old acquaintances:

There's no jobs here...I mean, it's really sad to me when I see someone I haven't seen in a long time and the first question out of their mouth is, “are you working?” And I've heard younger people say that to each other, you know, in a group or something, and to me it's really sad. It's not, “how are you?” but, you know, “do you have a job?” I mean, to me, that's just horribly sad.

Beyond unemployment is the concern that so many people must leave the area to find work, either by commuting, sometimes as much as 4 hours a day, or by actually moving to another community. Hanson and Pratt (1990) have found that women generally have shorter commuting times than men because their household responsibilities make it difficult for them to travel far for work. With husbands away at work, many women are then left with an even greater share of household responsibilities.

Women in Gloucester reflect this trend, like Elaine, who recalled what it was like with her husband commuting to work each day:

It was hard. I mean, there's a lot of times he'd leave at 4:30 in the morning, it'd be 9 o'clock before he'd get home. You know, how he ever did it, I don't know. But he wouldn't consider moving and there were a few times that maybe he would stay over and just come home on the weekends, but not very many...But then, there's a lot of people around here that do that - and still do it. Commute, and you have to, really, around this area in order to get a good job to support your family.

For Elaine and her husband, that meant that the gendered division of labor was even greater, since he was often away and could not help with their children:

Well, really, it was like, he made the living, I took care of the house and raised the children, because he wasn't home, you know. I mean, he was a good provider and a good parent. But he gave up a lot by working away like that, by not being able to go to the kids' ball games or any of the activities they were in, you know. And sometimes I think some of the kids kind of resented that - I mean, they knew why, but you know...it's like, "Boy, my dad never comes to anything" - you know how kids are.

Other negative remarks about the area included concerns about the persistent flooding in the area and questions about how the flooding problem might be improved. Some women criticized the welfare system, arguing that while some welfare recipients are justified in their need for assistance, others take advantage of the system and promote generational welfare, setting their children up for continued reliance on the system. This was especially troubling to women who felt that the result is children whose potential becomes limited by their continued reliance on public assistance.

Seeing home from a distance: “There are other things outside...of southeast Ohio”

Women who recalled experiences outside of the region provided excellent insight both into their feelings about the local area and their understandings of their own identity. Bush et al. (2002) point out that individual life history is among several factors that influence understanding of the environment. For some women, leaving the area had provided the reaffirmation necessary to return to or remain in the Glouster area. By leaving the area to work in Columbus, Elaine and Donna realized that they would be happiest living in Glouster. Kendra’s visits to urban areas in Florida as a child confirmed for her that Glouster’s small, “family-like” community was right for her, although she saw some benefit in her travels because it made her “more knowing” about the outside world.

For other women, living outside of the area had helped them recognize both the positive attributes of the area as well as some of the negative aspects of it. Marcie’s educational pursuits took her out of the Glouster area and she remained in the state in which she attended college for several years to work. Having returned to the area for another job, she reflected on the benefits of her experience:

Well, growing up here - I don’t know, when you’re in high school, you don’t, I mean, you know what you have here, but you don’t realize what you don’t have until you leave and you see other things. I was so glad that when I graduated from high school, I actually went to college out of state, and even though it was Northeastern Kentucky, you know, I still had the opportunity to do things in college and go places...it was an eye-opener. Then, when I came back here, I see kids in the same situation I was in that, you know, they’re here...I just would like for people to realize there are other things outside...of southeast Ohio.

For women who left the region for work or education, most recognized the importance of their experiences in terms of a greater understanding of personal and regional identity. Edna, near 90, grew up in a farming family with parents who were both college-educated. She also attended college and considered her family “more civilized” than some of their neighbors because of the educational level she and her family had attained. After marriage, she had an opportunity to work elsewhere when her husband was drafted into the army. She and her husband had purchased a home and planned to return to the area, but the freedom and independence she discovered in earning her own paycheck (at a pay rate higher than her husband’s) is evident in her words:

World War II came along, of course [my husband] was drafted and had to go to the army, as did his five other brothers...the banker suggested I get a job and pay on the mortgage, so I did. I followed [my husband] to Gulfport, Mississippi and got a job driving an Army truck for the Army - one of 75 women working at the Gulfport, Mississippi Air Force Base.

Researcher: So, you were a WAC?

No, the WAC’s joined the service and I was on civil service. I got paid for what they did for nothing, basically. [My husband’s] salary was \$35 a month, and then he got a raise to \$50 a month. But I got \$45 a week! And I paid on the mortgage...we were lucky.

Women who had not left the area but who had been employed in jobs that allowed them to meet a diverse group of people also felt that they had benefited from their experience. Georgina, now 84, expressed considerable joy when recalling her work as a cook in the President’s house at Ohio University, where she met several international visitors as well as notable American citizens. Women who had these exposures to higher education and places and people from outside the area appeared to understand that their

experiences gave them additional perspective on the region.

What is Appalachia?: “It can be used for good or bad”

In one of my early interviews, a respondent, having heard me explain my research as a study of Appalachian women, voluntarily offered her negative opinion of the way the term Appalachia has been used to describe the area. Nancy, a 54-year-old woman with three grown daughters, grew up in Glouster and spent most of her life there. Her husband worked as a coal miner for many years before being laid off in the early ‘90s. Nancy worked for several years in real estate and is now retired, while her husband is now employed in education. She believes that the use of the term Appalachia to describe this area has made it even more difficult to bring employment to the region and she feels uncomfortable with the term’s usage:

I gripe about this all the time, and it involves this area, it involves OU, and ones like the mayor [of Athens] and his [comment that] “this area cannot sustain manufacturing.” When we were growing up, you had Poston’s [Electric plant], you had gas company jobs, you had Peabody [Coal], all the stuff that is now gone is that whole segment - they were wonderful workers. When I was growing up, though, the thing that bothers me now, I get so mad: “Appalachia.” When I was growing up in this area that was never a word you ever heard...I feel like in this area we label ourselves “Appalachia” and then try to crawl out from under that label. When Jesse Jackson was here one of the times with his Rainbow Coalition or whatever, they take him up to a place above Oakdale to a guy that probably never worked a day in his life, stood him there like he was a dirty zombie on his skuzzy front porch, and just said, “We need jobs in this area.” Now, are manufacturing people gonna look at that man and say, “Oh yes, let’s rush our companies there?” They totally miss out on the normal, middle-class, semi-well educated people that live in this area. And to me that labeling of Appalachia hurts us.

After hearing Nancy's analysis of the term "Appalachia," I began asking other participants about their feelings about Appalachia as a place name. I included the question within the context of a discussion about community and feelings about the local area. Nancy's opposition to the term was not solitary. Others certainly agreed that the term has had negative connotations in certain instances. Kathy argued that:

I think the word Appalachia - when people hear that word... they think, "you're scum, you're all living off the state or living off of welfare." And that's not true. You know, there are a lot of really good people in this town. There are a lot of really good, educated people in this town - a lot of people here who have retired and come back to this area. I just, I don't know, I just don't - the word Appalachia just doesn't, doesn't appeal to me for some reason. I never have liked it and I'm sorry but I just - I just think that's what people, in the cities, when they hear that word, that's what they think of...that's the word that...just bothers me.

Others viewed Appalachia as being both positive and negative. Edna contended that the term "can be used for both good and bad." Her ambivalence, and that expressed by several other women, is summed up by Paula's statement about Appalachia, which reflects the positive and negative dichotomous stereotypes described in Appalachian scholarship (Couto 2002; Maggard 1999):

I think - you know, my first thing I think of is Eli Wiggington and the Foxfire Books, and neat little musical instruments and people doing all sorts of interesting little home-based skills and things like that, but then the next thing I think about is Appalachian poverty and lack of education and poorly cared for children and children having children...but, I think in the long run Appalachia could be a good thing.

Overall, these statements reflect a variety of viewpoints and opinions about the area. While there are certainly common themes and many women mentioned similar likes

and dislikes, it is clear that the women in this study have a diverse conceptualization of what it means to live in Glouster. Above all, their sentiments deny one of the most popular myths about Appalachia: that it is made up of a homogeneous population with exactly the same experiences across the life course (Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Maggard 1999; Otto 2002; Shapiro 2002; Speer 2002).

Economy

The economic situation in Appalachia has long been a negative one. As Joyce Barry suggests (2001), it is somehow ironic that a region so wealthy in terms of the natural environment has historically been one of the country's most economically distressed. Extensive resource extraction, limited land ownership, and unemployment due to mechanization of the coal mining industry have all had negative impacts on the economy in the region (Buckley 2004; Gaventa 1998; Lohmann 2002; Montrie 2003, Purdy 2002). Not surprisingly, all the participants in my study mentioned concerns about the local economy and lack of employment, whether in response to a broad question about their feelings about the community or when answering direct questions about the state of the economy. As similar studies have shown, concerns about local economy can be seen as some of the most troubling faced by a community (Bush et al. 2002).

Concerns with the local economy: "It's very hard to find a job around here"

All the women in my study expressed concern over the local employment situation and resulting economic depression. Some women, especially those with less financial security, characterized the economic situation in Glouster as very negative.

Lynn, who is unemployed, felt that the closeness of the community has made it harder for her to find work because local employers tend to hire people they already know:

Yeah, it's very hard to find a job around here. I mean, because, it's like most of the places that's owned around here is family owners and the family members work for 'em. And if - like I said, they go by your name and who you are, and if they don't like you, they're not gonna hire you. I've put applications in at [a local fast food restaurant] several times, and no response.

Other women who appeared to be on firmer financial ground were more optimistic about the economic situation in the area. Several women felt that many people in the area who are not working do so simply because they don't want to work. These women stated that there is work available in the community if people are motivated to go out and find it.

Kendra, whose husband is a foreman at a factory and commutes 2 hours a day to his job, expressed more positive feelings about the economy. After being laid off from her previous job working in an office, Kendra is looking for a job elsewhere as well as running her own business in Gloucester. She does not want to have to commute to work like her husband and likes the independence of working in her own shop, where she can bring her children to work with her if necessary. She stated that she and her husband are making more money now than they have in 10 years. She recognized the poverty in the area but felt that conditions are not as bleak as some would suggest:

It's improving slowly, I think, because people are working out of town, because they're working in the University themselves and they've been there 20 or 30 years so, you know, I know that on a state level we are *poverty*, we are really poor, but we don't have homeless people, we don't have, you know beggars on the streets with "I'll work for

food” signs. So, everybody that I know has a house at least, they have indoor plumbing now. I mean, there’s a few people I knew in high school didn’t, but they have it all now. So, I think it’s alright...I wish that there was more retail, that’s just my one thing that’s not perfect - more retail businesses in town.

Although her personal financial situation probably influenced her feelings about the local economy, Kendra’s overall opinions about the area were among the most positive in response to all categories, so her optimism on this issue is not surprising. Kendra’s loyalty to the area and her family’s long history there clearly contribute to her positive outlook on the Glouster community (Burningham and Thrush 2003).

Questioning coal’s economic impact: “It’s been good to us here” and “It’s had a disastrous impact”

The women I spoke with in Glouster clearly recognize that coal’s impact on the economy has varied over the years. When asked if coal mining has had an impact on the economy, most women responded with a question of their own: “Do you mean now, or back in the old days?” Understandably, most women did not see an overarching economic impact from coal mining but rather conceptualized their opinion based upon different time periods in the history of coal mining.

Many women described Glouster as a “boom town.” Indeed, Glouster developed quickly following settlement and the opening of local mines, reached a peak of population in the 1920s, and, following the Depression, began a decline that mirrored that of the coal industry (Tribe 1976, 1986; U.S. Census Bureau). Women who could remember those times when Glouster was more prosperous tended to have more positive feelings about the economic impacts of mining. Other studies have found that residents of communities with a history of heavy industry and decline often have a “collective

memory” that influences current understanding of the impact of industry (Irwin et al., 1999). Colleen, whose memories of coal mining tended to be very positive, remembered the vibrant economy of Gloucester’s past:

In days gone by? Well, Gloucester used to be a boom town. I can remember you couldn’t get across the street for people, cars. It was definitely good, way back. I’d say - I would say from the late 30s up until the early 50s it was good times, because there were several deep mines around and if you’ve been around coal miners you know that if a coal miner has money, he’s gonna spend it.

Georgina, 84, similarly recalled a more prosperous time in Gloucester. Her father and uncles worked in the coal mines and her memories of that time tended to be relatively positive:

This little town was boomin’ on the weekend, on Saturday night. And they had the company store that kept the families fed. They could charge everything and take it out of their paychecks - so that helped.

Most women recognized that the economy was negatively impacted as the coal mines pulled out of Gloucester, even those who could remember the years when mining had still boosted the economy. Younger women and those who expressed greater concern for environmental issues seemed to feel that the overall impact of coal mining on the economy had been negative. Paula used the most explicitly negative language in her appraisal of coal mining’s economic mark:

I would say it’s had a disastrous impact on our economy in the area just because it has stripped away all the natural resources and caused it to not necessarily be the tourist mecca it could be or things like that, that would mean perhaps a lower impact on the environment and still bring in money. And it’s created long term health challenges for people that drains our financial resources - so I would say,

you know, in the long run it's been disastrous for our economy.

Participants were also asked if they felt personally affected by the economic impacts of coal mining. Women who had a connection to the mining industry, even through a related industry, seemed to recognize that it had benefited their families economically. Some of the younger women still working in the area recognized coal mining as economically beneficial, because any benefit it has for the economy helps improve their employment situation. Others expressed feelings of a negative impact in their families, ranging from a general feeling that the poverty of the region impacts everyone, to more specific feelings, as those expressed by Kendra as she recalled her grandfather's experience:

My grandfather was a police officer in Glouster. Coal mining was huge, I mean, the town was packed...we had at one time, in the census in 1920, like 87 retail businesses in Glouster...and to be a police officer in that time, you were pretty much guaranteed work, and when the coal miners left, there wasn't anything to do and he lost his job. So he had to move out of state...my grandma worked in a factory...and he moved out of state to work construction, 'cause the coal miners left.

Respondents' views of the economic impacts of coal mining varied greatly. As one might expect, women who have at one time or do now benefit economically from coal mining believe the economic impact for the region has been positive. As others have shown, loyalty to industry often fosters more positive attitudes about its presence and impact, even when the economic prosperity of the industry has waned (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Irwin et al. 1999). Those who work in unrelated fields or who are openly

interested in environmental issues expressed more negative opinions about the coal mining industry's economic impact.

Environment

The environmental impacts of coal mining are well established. Problems such as subsidence, erosion, increased sediment in streams, and acid run-off are persistent, evident on the landscape even decades after mines are abandoned (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004; Crowell 2001; Fields 2003; Makris, 2003; Montrie 2003; Purdy 2002; Robb and Robinson 1995). As others have noted, environmental impacts mean different things to different people (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002). An initial understanding of perceptions of the local environment provides the context within which an investigation of coal mining's environmental impacts can occur.

Perceptions of the environment: "There's so much sickness"

To begin our conversation about environmental issues, I asked women to describe the local environmental quality and to tell me about any environmental issues that concerned them, either locally or on a larger scale. Several women mentioned broad environmental issues while others admitted that the environment is just something they don't think about. Joanne is a 69-year-old widow who was born in Gloucester to a coal mining family. After high school, she traveled extensively and lived in a variety of other places, including spending a year abroad, before returning to Gloucester following the accidental death of her husband. Aside from women directly involved in environmental remediation, Joanne tended to have one of the highest levels of environmental consciousness. She also had a high level of feminist consciousness, commenting that she

had been involved in local women's rights organizations in the past. One of the environmental issues she was most concerned about was the possibility of oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. She described that possibility as "sacrilege" and went on to define her environmental consciousness this way:

Well, I mentioned the oil drilling and that type of thing. I think there should be more emphasis on solar power and windmill power, alternate sources of energy other than oil and gas and coal.

Although several women expressed concern about global environmental issues, a number of respondents also admitted a feeling of helplessness in the face of such problems. Simone's interest in the environment was higher than many other participants. She also expressed a commitment to women's issues and liberal political views. Simone listed a number of issues she worries about in terms of the environment, ending her progressively more serious laundry list of environmental concerns by saying, "I don't want to think about it." As Kathy explained, feeling that environmental problems are beyond one's control, or that other issues are more urgent, is understandable:

I don't think our government has done much about environmental issues for quite some time. And I think that that's something that has to be looked at, but I guess the reason is because there are so many other pressing things right now, that they've kind of let that one slip by. And there are a lot of other terrible issues in this country right now.

Many of the environmental issues discussed by participants in other studies of local environmental quality perceptions were related to human health (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). Environmental justice research that has focused on the role of women in grassroots activism has found

that many women become involved as a result of concerns about family and individual health (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Gutiérrez 1994; Krauss 1993; Seager 2003b). This was the case in Glouster as well. Many participants acknowledged a growing concern about the number of illnesses in the community. Participants of all ages mentioned the issue. Georgina related a recent experience that she felt indicates the alarming number of cancer cases in the area:

There's so much sickness and there's so much cancer.
There's more cancer in Glouster I think than anywhere. In fact, I went for chemotherapy treatment last week and there was 6 people from Glouster up there taking chemotherapy at the same time...it and radiation together. I don't know what to blame it on.

Several women expressed concern that the high level of illness in the area might be related to water quality. Drinking water quality is something of a hot-button issue in Glouster these days. In March, residents in the Glouster area received a letter from the Sunday Creek Valley Water District indicating that the local water supply may be contaminated with a chemical that could increase the risk of cancer and other health conditions (Claussen 2005, March 3). The contamination was detected in water supplied to the Sunday Creek District by the Burr Oak Regional Water District, which also sent a letter to Glouster area residents concerning the problem (Claussen 2005, March 3). The contamination is a byproduct of elevated total organic carbon (TOC), which is found in surface water sources (Claussen 2005, March 3). As the water is stored prior to usage, it develops byproducts, in this case trihalomethanes (TTHMs), that can pose a threat to human health (Claussen 2005, March 3). The letter stated that, "the levels detected do not pose an immediate risk to your health" (Claussen 2005, March 3). The letter also

cautioned that repeated exposure to water with TTHM contamination may cause “problems with [the] liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and...an increased risk of getting cancer” (Claussen 2005, March 3).

Kent Nichols, plant superintendent of the Burr Oak district, noted that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently changed its acceptable level for TTHM contamination, making the water provided by Burr Oak unacceptable (Claussen 2005, March 3). Nichols stated that he is not concerned about the safety of the water, but recommended that concerned citizens buy bottled water instead (Claussen 2005, March 3). Nearly all the women in my study mentioned their concerns about the drinking water, some making reference to the letter they had received. Some mentioned buying bottled water, while others expressed concern about the water quality but acknowledged that they are still using it. The suggestion by Superintendent Nichols that concerned residents purchase bottled water may not be very useful for an area like Glouster, where many residents are already facing economic difficulties. As in other studies of low-income residents dealing with environmental problems, the ability to avoid contaminated water or soil may simply not be an economic possibility (Farquhar et al. 2005). The water quality problem will not be remedied until 2007, when a new water supply will be used (Claussen 2005, March 3). In the meantime, some Glouster residents must continue to deal with concerns about the safety of their drinking water.

Although almost all the participants in my study expressed concern about the drinking water in Glouster, few mentioned other local environmental problems of concern when asked how they felt in general about the local environmental quality.

Exceptions include Paula and Marcie, whose careers are focused on environmental remediation. Their familiarity with the area and career expertise is an obvious explanation for their heightened environmental awareness. Both women also expressed liberal political views and a concern for women's rights. As in other studies, environmental concerns for Glouster residents centered more on "quality of life" issues like drinking water, flooding, and excessive litter (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999).

Coal mining's impact on the local environment: "I was one of those kids that thought that was natural"

When asked to describe the environmental impacts of coal mining, some participants flatly responded that the industry has had no impact on the environment. In reference to both general environmental quality and with regard to the environmental impacts of coal mining, some women indicated that they lacked the knowledge to answer such questions. Tillie, 77, is a lifelong resident of Glouster whose husband passed away recently. She did not feel that she could answer most of my questions specific to coal mining and responded that she doesn't "have time to think too much about anything like that." In response to questions about environmental quality, Joanne initially responded that she was not "qualified" to answer my questions, although she went on to express a high level of environmental concern and knowledge of a variety of environmental issues. Respondents in other studies have offered similar refusals to answer questions that they do not feel qualified to understand (Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999) Irwin et al. (1999) propose that this representation of "them and us" illustrates the respondent's perceived

difference between the researcher and herself. This response furthers a sense of loyalty to the local area and unity with one's community (Irwin et al. 1999).

A few participants acknowledged that air quality may have been affected in the days when coal was burned as a household fuel, but that environmental impacts now are likely minimal. Some women mentioned the impacts to local water quality, but without expressing much concern about it. It seemed that some local environmental issues have been present for so long, they have been accepted as normal. Marcie recalled her own experience of recognizing for the first time that local water quality was impaired:

I was one of those kids that thought that was natural. Growing up, I thought that seeing the water red was ok - I mean, there wasn't anything wrong with it. It wasn't until probably end of high school, and then I got into college...in some of our aquatic classes...I went into environmental science, we did ichthyology, hydrology, limnology. And here we are going into streams in Eastern Kentucky with...just our tennis shoes and stuff. And I would stand on the bank goin', "you're getting in that water!?" But then I would look at it and go, "this is pretty nice looking water!" I mean, it was just amazing to me...when the realization came that what I grew up in was not normal, it was normal to me, you know, growing up here, but when you got out of the area, and you looked around, it was not normal. And then that's where...you come to realize, boy, our streams are really awful. You know, this is not normal! But, I tell you, in high school, I thought it was normal.

Other participants, such as Joanne, who had a high level of environmental consciousness, and Paula, whose career focuses on the environment, also expressed considerable concern about coal mining's impact on the local environment. Joanne listed a variety of environmental impacts caused by coal mining:

Well, I mentioned the creeks and the streams - the sulfur that got into those. I think they are coming back a little bit

now, but I can remember when I was growing up here that Sunday Creek, in particular, was just orange. And - you know something's wrong when the water is orange. I know that [coal mining] did have an impact on that. And then I can remember areas near here, New Straitsville in particular, had what they called the slag heaps where the residue from the mines were dumped, and there were fires burning almost constantly on those heaps. And I don't know of this in particular, but I have heard that there have been the slips...you know, the ground subsides. I don't know of it myself but I understand that there are areas where that happens. And I think they're still happening, today, so that's an impact that the mines have had.

It seemed that the women in my study varied greatly in their perception of the local environment and the impacts of the coal mining industry. Kendra offered the following explanation:

Well, I think we live in like one of the most beautiful places in the country. I mean, we're surrounded by Wayne National Forest...I think that we live in a pretty environmentally sound area. So, you know, because we have a lot of wilderness still. I guess...maybe that's why the coal mining isn't regarded so poorly, because we have so much other natural abundance everywhere.

Most women did not feel they had been personally affected by the environmental impact of coal mining, even though they would share stories that clearly showed they had indeed been affected individually. Valerie recalled an incident when the family cow disappeared: it had fallen into an abandoned mine shaft. She expressed sadness about losing the cow because she and her family regarded it as a pet, but stated that, "you just, you go on, you fix the problem and you move on. I mean, I guess I didn't dwell on it or anything like that." She also explained that there had been some slippage on her land, but

she wasn't concerned: she mentioned that her house was over 100 years old, so she was confident that it was structurally sound.

Edna also confirmed that coal mining had impacted the local environment, but she didn't feel as though it had affected her personally, in spite of an incident that she recalled in which it clearly had affected her:

Well, it used to be more than now, of course, with the gob dumps, and they polluted the streams. And it still pollutes the streams, where the acid mine drainage - Sunday Creek and Monday Creek are two streams that are...we always called it orange juice, it was just as orange as can be. And when I was a kid, before we were married, I worked for a family in Millfield and then we went down to the creek to go swimmin', and it would turn my hair copper red [laughs]. With that acid in the water, I got a real copper top. And it was, I wore a knit swimming suit...that was white, until I went swimming and then it was orange colored from then on because it didn't wash out.

Edna's attitude about this story, which she found somewhat amusing, shows that while coal mining had clearly damaged the local environment, its apparent lack of impact on human health made it innocuous. As with environmental quality issues that result in women's activism, once a threat to human health is perceived or known, concern over the issue increases substantially (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Gutiérrez 1994; Krauss 1993; Seager 2003b).

Many women, even those who expressed great concern about local environmental quality, acknowledged that the environment has improved significantly. The environmental benefits of stricter regulations on coal mining have not gone unnoticed, even with women who seemed unconcerned about the local environmental quality. Even

Marcie, whose career interest in the environment makes her a skeptical judge of environmental quality, agreed:

Growing up, I saw *one* fish in Sunday Creek - Sunday Creek ran behind our house, and I can recall seeing *one* fish in Sunday Creek the whole time growing up and it was a carp. It probably came out of the dam - it just happened to still be living when it made it to Glouster. And now, you know, I see that there is life returning to Sunday Creek. I see green sunfish, not a high-profile or a high fishing experience or anything, but at least life's returning. I see wildlife down there all the time.

The lack of consensus among Glouster women about the local environment, as well as the inconsistencies exhibited in their attitudes towards the environmental impact of coal mining, confirms what others have found about environmental consciousness. Life experience clearly plays a large part in determining one's interest in the environment (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Gupte 2002; Irwin et al. 1999). Not surprisingly, women who are dealing with basic needs, such as concerns about money, fuel, and food, are more focused on the immediacy of those needs than on the quality of the stream flowing through their backyard (Bush et al. 2002). As in other locations with an industrial past, women in Glouster with a relationship to the coal mining industry have a different perspective on its environmental and economic impacts (Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999). To fully understand the factors that influence perceptions of the coal mining industry, it is necessary to further investigate general attitudes about the industry throughout its history in Glouster.

The Legacy of Coal Comes Alive: Past, Present, and Future

Nearly all of the women in my study qualified their statements about coal mining with references to the time period of the experiences they were using as the basis of their opinions. Because the coal mining industry has evolved and changed considerably during its tenure in Glouster, many women have different opinions about the industry depending on the time period to which they were referring. Not surprisingly, the time period within which the participants had experienced coal mining had an impact on their perceptions of the industry. The influence of “collective memory” has contributed to local understandings of the industry (Irwin et al. 1999, 1315). Individual participant’s views evolved as our discussion moved through coal’s past, present, and future.

Coal’s influence on memory: “It was a hard life”

Women who were recalling past days of coal mining, whose memories of that time were mixed with fond memories of childhood or early marriage, often had positive remarks about mining. Women who could recall the economic prosperity Glouster experienced from the coal mines recounted their memories with a sort of fondness, while tempering those positive statements with comments about the harsh working conditions, danger, and instability of the work. Colleen, whose father was a coal miner and an active union member, recalled her experiences of a childhood that revolved around the coal mining industry:

Well, when I was - I was born right to the coal mining times. My dad was in the mines, and it was a hard life. There was a lot of controversy at the time I come to this world in the mining field, lots of strikes, and people tended back then to be kind of violent. So they tell me - I can’t remember...I think probably what I come away with

knowin' or feeling about the days of coal mining was that if a poor man - if a working man did not or does not have a union behind him, he's lost. Because I remember what my dad went through in order to get decent wages and better benefits and they had to fight for it.

But it was a hard life. We were just poor people, but my dad raised a big garden, and when...they would stockpile coal, which is what mine owners did, especially in the summertime, because people wasn't burnin' coal to heat their homes. You had to have something to fall back on, and I remember enjoyin' helpin' my dad in the garden...I liked to help my Dad and I used to oftentimes go with him to where they would have a picket line set up. We wouldn't stay, of course, because that could be a very violent place, but he would take me and show me and tell me all about it...it was an enjoyable time for me even though it was hard. We never had a whole lot, so you can't miss what you've never had, never been used to.

Kathy recalled her childhood in a coal mining family with similar fondness, balanced by the difficulties of the time:

I was pretty young then, but I remember that...he came home from work every day with dirt all over him. Black soot all over him and my mother used to send him to wash as soon as he came in the door. And we were a happy family...I can remember so many good things. We had picnics in the summertime - even the coal miners would get together and have picnics and the churches and so forth. I just remember that there was a lot of dirt - it brought in a lot of dirt, a lot of black coal, we heated with coal at that time, also, and my mother spent all of her time cleaning...I'm sure it was very hard on her. She raised 6 kids and that had to have been very difficult for her, but I'm sure that the men worked very hard, too.

Many women remarked about the dangers of the job, the dirty conditions, and the health impacts their family members and friends experienced following their work in the coal mines. Several women remembered deadly accidents in the mines. Georgina

remembered an explosion at the Poston #6 mine in Millfield, where her grandfather, father, and five uncles were employed. One of her uncles was killed in the explosion, while her other family members escaped injury because they had just arrived for a shift change when the accident took place. She recalled the grief her family experienced: “we all was just sick, we were killed about it.” In spite of this tragic memory, Georgina recognized that the working conditions and safety of coal mining have improved substantially and that knowledge influenced her feelings about coal mining today.

I think that coal mining is a real hard industry. I mean, back in the years when they used to go in and dig the coal out with the pick and shovel and down on their knees and the coal would only be three feet high and they'd work all day on their knees, and wet...it was real hard, real bad on their health. And then - a lot of them walked to work, for miles, before they'd even start that job. And I'm glad to see the coal mining industry back around in the area today. And I wished we had more of it. They just recently - the mine up here on route 13, just mined the coal out from under my home. And they left big blocks of coal under the building, under my home, and all. But I'm glad that they're back and at least we can get more of it.

As these comments demonstrate, many women hold memories of coal mining that have a great influence on their perceptions of the industry today. Although tempered by memories of economic instability, danger, filth, and hard working conditions, most of the participants who recalled these memories had generally positive statements about coal mining. A common pattern was to present all of the difficulties of that life first, ending with a statement about what a happy time this was for them. Women with even closer ties to the industry, whose coal miners were husbands or who worked in the industry

themselves, told stories of injury and fear while reflecting on economic security and a close-knit community of miners, both in and out of the mines.

Living the coal miner's life: "When he first started, there was the fear"

Several participants in my study have been closely linked to the industry in the past and today. Four women had been or were now married to coal miners. Two women worked in "house mines," one as a child with her father, another later in life with her husband. Another participant worked in a coal mine as a laborer for 17 years. As Carol Giesen (1995) demonstrated, women with the closest ties to the coal mining industry experience it in a way unlike anyone else. Coal miners' wives experience persistent fear over the safety of their husbands and possibility that income could cease at any time (Giesen 1995).

The four women in my study who were married to coal miners represented different eras in the history of mining. Carla, 75, is a Gloucester-native who has lived there her entire life. Her husband of over 50 years, who is now deceased, was also from the Gloucester area. He worked in a wide variety of labor-related jobs and spent 5 years working in a coal mine in a neighboring town. He lost his job when the coal tippie burned down and could not find other work as a coal miner. Carla believed that if he had found another coal mining job, he would have continued the work, but not because he enjoyed it:

I think we just, more or less...there was no work here and it was just a job. I mean, whether you did or you didn't [enjoy it], it was a way of livin'. There was no other work or we didn't know of any other work.

Edna and her husband were married in 1941. While she came from a farming background, he came from a family of coal miners and left school after the 6th grade to begin working in the mines. Other than his time in the Army and a few years of employment at Ohio University, Edna's husband spent all of his working life as a miner. He worked in several different mines and even operated his own "truck mine" on their property for several years. Edna remarked about the danger of her husband's job:

Of course, the mines had exploded and killed 82 men before I came over here, so I don't remember the explosion and that part of their lives, but it's always been in the background of a coal miner's life...every day they go in they have that little question in the back of their mind, "will I be coming out?" So it's...a scary job.

Although Edna and her husband recognized that his job was dangerous, she stated that neither of them worried about it. She said she and her husband "[had] faith that everything's gonna be alright." She also pointed out that she and her husband did well financially because the mines were open year round when her husband worked as a miner. Other than her employment during her husband's time in the Army, Edna did not work outside of the home. She felt that her husband's salary provided for their needs and she always "wanted to make a man a good wife," so she felt happier if she knew her husband was happy.

Nancy's husband worked in coal mining for 20 years, from the early 1970s to the early 1990s, until he lost his job when the mine he was working in closed. Although she and her husband experienced the coal mining life 30 years after Edna and her husband, many of Nancy's concerns were similar to those expressed by Edna. She, too, recalled the fear she had with her husband working underground:

When he first started, there was the fear - and with anything like that, you kind of adjust and grow used to that and it kind of - you put it out of your mind and all. Because it was right at the end that I got the call that he was hurt and it's like, *man*, you go all this time and have something happen. Because there were guys killed occasionally and you just...get a little complacent about it because it's an everyday thing.

Nancy also reflected on the fact that they had done fairly well financially when her husband was mining, even commenting that she looks back on it now and wonders, “what did we do with all that money?” Still, like other coal miners’ wives, the threat of financial instability due to strikes was a constant (Giesen 1995):

Back when he first started at the mines it seemed like...the money was good when they were working, but you could never really drop a bunch of money, you felt you had to save some back for fear next week they wouldn't be working. And I can remember [when] he started...it wasn't long after that they talked about “oh, coal miners are making \$100 a day”...you might make that, but you didn't know if you'd make it the next month - they might go on strike for 6 weeks...whenever he pulled back up I'd say “what are you doing back?” because with the baby and bills...a lot of the strikes was back when...the kids were still small and home and not as expensive...so it was bad but not horribly bad.

Valerie's husband is employed at the Buckingham Mine #2 in Glouster and has worked there for about 5 years. Not surprisingly, her statements about coal mining reflect that it is currently providing her family with income. Here she expresses her allegiance to the coal mining industry, one of the few industries in the Glouster area providing a good paying job (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999):

I always hear so much negative stuff on [coal mining]. I mean, they've done a lot, the government's done a lot to help clean it up...I do know that. And I mean, I'm sure

there's a lot more that they could do, but you always hear negative on it...I don't care where you're at or every age group, I mean, you always hear bad things. It's all so dirty, it's bad for the this, and like this one's non-union, you always hear, it's non-union, it needs to be union, blah, blah, blah. And to me, it pays the bills. I mean, that's just the bottom line to me...its dangerous work for 'em, the guys, you know, but they're in there, they come out every day, they've never had anything bad happen down there, it seems to be ok.

Her husband's job at the coal mine has improved her family's economic situation considerably. While Valerie wouldn't classify her family in any particular income bracket, she said they live "comfortably." She had worked at a local factory for 12 years, but about two years ago she quit her job at her husband's urging:

Most of the other jobs my husband had were good prevailing wage jobs, were good jobs, but...he worked away, he'd have a four hour commute, and you work 10 hours, there's 14 hours of your day gone. And he'd get good paying jobs, but never insurance benefits, so that's why I always had to work. I always kept a job basically for benefits, so here, you know, it took him a year to convince me to quit, but I finally did and...I get to stay home with the kids now. And if he didn't have that job or a job with insurance, I wouldn't – you know, I'd have to work, because you have to have health insurance.

Although Valerie stated that she does worry about her husband being injured at work, she said it helps that he works at night, which means she isn't "thinking about it all day." She also pointed out that when he was commuting 4 hours a day, she worried about him getting into a car accident, which she characterized as more probable than the possibility of a work-related accident.

Clearly, women who have experienced the economic benefits of coal mining view it primarily in a positive way. Many women in my study stated that coal mining has

always been one of the few industries available to residents of the area, and, since unionization, one of the only living wage jobs available. Although Edna, Nancy, and Valerie all admitted that coal mining had impacted the environment, they also pointed out improvements that have been made as well as other possible culprits for environmental damage, such as air pollution from cars. Their deference to an industry that has provided them with financial security has made the environmental impacts of coal mining less conspicuous (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999).

Working with coal: “It was hard, but it was nothing that a woman couldn’t do”

Several women in my study had personal experience working in coal mines. Donna recalled helping her father with his “house coal mine” when she was a child. Her father would load the hillside with dynamite and blast out bits of coal, which Donna and her siblings gathered and loaded into the truck for their father. He would then deliver the coal to nearby houses for home fuel. Because her father worked seasonally as a miner, his own mine helped support the family, as did their livestock and garden, which provided the family with food.

Edna helped her husband in his mine, which she called a “truck mine.” She recalled that she helped him because she had to, even though “at the time...women weren’t supposed to be in the coal mine, it was bad luck.” Edna characterized the work as difficult, but stated that “it was nothing that a woman couldn’t do,” which she argued was further evidenced by female professional coal miners.

Suzanne, 70, is a retired coal miner. She worked for 16 years in an underground mine in Meigs County, a job she lost in 1992 when the coal mine downsized their staff.

Like other women coal miners in Appalachia, Suzanne became a coal miner due to a financial need that she felt could only be met with mining (Seitz 1995).

[My daughter] was 8 and her dad left us. There was the university, but I had been at [my previous job] 13 years and a lot of the university men were [former coworkers] and not one of them said, “hey, come with us, we’ll get you a job.” They just let me find my own way, so I thought the university must have something wrong [laughs]. And I thought the mine was gonna give me more money, and if we do ok here and the world stays together, and we keep our insurance...

Overall, Suzanne’s recollections of her work in the coal mine were fairly positive. She enjoyed many of her male coworkers, becoming good friends with them. There were lots of jokes and good humor among the miners. She enjoyed the physical labor as well, recalling that shoveling “good bottom” was one of her favorite jobs. She called coal “wholesome and healthy and good,” believing in it as a valuable product because “it’s the earth.” Although she recalled that it was “an uphill thing” getting acceptance in the mine from her coworkers, she remembered having more difficulty just getting hired. She recalled that, by chance, she met a man who was affiliated with the mine who she believed could help her get a job:

I went to a barn dance, and it was his barn dance, just by chance – this was a man I needed...he was training supervisor. So I went to his house, and I told him what I needed, so that’s how I got my job. But it took me months – six months, to get the job, I didn’t just fall into it...well, I went down there in clothing that you would go to get a job in. So one day I got dressed up in my clothes that looked right, and I went down and I said, now, these are some other clothes I have. So finally, I did get through, but this other woman, she just got right in there, and they said what a wonderful worker she was...well, I was a good, consistent worker, always have been.

So anyway I finally got the job, but it was in April. It was in April of '77 that I started. And we worked a day and we went on strike. And I made as much in that one day as I would've made at [my previous job] all week [laughs]. So, we were on strike for a couple of days, and I was at home – I was at peace, I was happy...but, you have to know somebody to get a job like that, you just don't go there on your own.

In general, Suzanne spoke with great fondness about her experience as a coal miner. She referred to coal mining as “a great industry.” She recalled only two times when she was very afraid at her job and also described a harrowing incident in which another miner was killed in a very violent accident. She was not present during the accident, but she said that losing a miner, especially in such a traumatic way, had a significant impact on all of the workers.

Although Suzanne exhibited concern for the environment in several other areas, she did not believe that coal mining had negatively affected the environment. She also felt that coal's impact on the economy had been very beneficial. The economic benefit she experienced from coal mining extended beyond her own personal experience, as she came from a large family of coal miners. She estimated that if all the miners in her family were together, they could operate a mine themselves. Although she is retired, she feels that she is continuing to benefit from her work in the mines, as the coal miner's insurance has completely covered recent medical expenses incurred by her husband's heart attack. Her fondness for and loyalty to the industry are understandable, considering her long family history with mining, her enjoyment of the work, and the economic benefit it provided and continues to provide for her family.

Coal's influence on community: "You don't much care what color hands a man has that pulls you out of a mine cave in"

The women in my study brought to light several ways that they feel the community has been impacted by coal mining, both positive and negative. While some issues pointed out by the participants relate to the environment or economy, others fall somewhat outside of the realm of environmental or economic impact. They relate to quality of life issues and community identity in a broader sense. Overall perceptions of the community encompassed a broad range of issues (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). Understanding these perceptions is necessary for a complete view of the impacts of coal mining in Glouster.

I questioned participants about the distribution of impacts of coal mining in an attempt to gauge the possibility that coal mining might be perceived as an environmental injustice. Joyce Barry (2001) argues that an environmental justice framework should be used to understand issues of environmental degradation, because it factors in differences due to class, race, and gender. The long tradition of resource extraction in Appalachia, in which the profits of mining often left the area and the environmental and economic destruction it caused remained in the community, qualifies it as an environmental justice issue (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004; Montrie 2003).

Many women felt that property owners near mines and local people probably experience the most negative impacts from mining. Many women also recognized a disparity between the risks of the miners and the profits earned by coal company owners. Some respondents felt that non-union miners were at an even higher risk, because their working conditions and salary are not governed by union regulations. Several

participants, who had previously expressed concern for the environment, quantified the distribution of impacts in a manner that could be categorized as environmental justice.

Paula's environmental consciousness is exemplified in her response:

I guess the biggest thing that I see the impact of and I think about from being a child is knowing that there's just tons of streams around here that nobody could ever go walking in or see a fish in or even get near without just stinking. And to know that there's all sorts of people living very wealthy, healthy lives far away from here that made a ton of money and just took their money and left, but there's no sense of...commitment from those companies to get that cleaned up. And I think that's just exceedingly sad. So I think it's sad to think of all the kids that grow up around here that do not get the chance to go play in a stream in their backyard and have all that stuff floating into their homes and everywhere else and just that its even an issue to get funding to fix those problems is just amazing to me.

Paula also felt that seeing the local area abused by outside entities for so long had made some local residents have less respect for the land, causing more littering and lower local concern for the environment. Simone similarly expressed her concern that the long history of resource extraction in the area has contributed to the poor economic, social, and environmental conditions locally:

I get mad, because it was the government that did this...first they came in and...everybody was a clan, they were self-sufficient, they took care of themselves, they lived in the mountains, you know, had everything they needed...they were self-sufficient. I like that word, self-sufficient. And then the government came down and said, well, can we buy your trees? And they were like, ok, well, we don't need 'em - you know, they not being environmentalists, they didn't know. So they bought all the trees and they had all the lumber companies, and then they had some of the worst rains that they've had in history and washed all the topsoil away...then the government started sending aid down, in the form of food surplus supplies and clothing, and stuff

like that. Well, everything that the people had before that...was biodegradable or reusable. Now they got all these plastic and metal containers and then people didn't know what to do with 'em, so it was trash and...it just led to the whole thing of the Appalachian people being, you know, grungy, slimy, poor...it was because they were being used and when the coal mines pulled out here, these people, now, they're not able to be self-sufficient, because the soil's washed away, they can't plant their crops...enough generations have gone by, they wouldn't know how to go back to being their little clans, so here they are left without any jobs or opportunities for jobs. The soil's used up, the coal's used up, the timber's used up, and the big companies made their money and went away and left the people.

Some of the other local negative impacts that women mentioned included loss of jobs and the resulting economic downturn in Glouster, loss of life and health of the workers, and wear and tear on local roads. Again, loyalty to the industry has probably made it difficult for some women to recognize the local negative impacts of coal mining (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999).

Several women identified positive impacts that coal mining has had in the community. A number of women pointed out that Glouster had developed around the coal mines, so if it weren't for coal mining there wouldn't be a community there. Participants also pointed out that the presence of coal mines had made Glouster a very diverse community: one woman called Glouster a "melting pot." Kendra also mentioned that the diversity of the area during the heyday of coal was a benefit that continues today:

Well, at the time, the benefits were that it was bringing new families into the area by the...truckloads. I mean, hundreds and hundreds of immigrants came in and built up this really great community for me to live in now. So, that's a big benefit...for me. I would say all these little communities are so rich in culture because of the coal mines. We have such

a diverse group of people. We have, you know, Polish and Italian and German and European.

The diversity that coal mining brought to the area meant that many different types of people were living together in close proximity to one another. Colleen pointed to cooperation as one of the benefits of coal mining. She remembered learning about cooperation and getting along with people of different backgrounds when she was a child:

That was the dearest lesson of my life, was growing up around different cultures like that. And my dad used to always say, you gotta get along. You gotta get along. And he taught us kids that we had to respect everybody...he rode to work with a black man, his name was Mr. Brown...and I had to call him Mr. Brown...this Mr. Brown, he'd get the biggest kick out of that...he just thought it was marvelous that my dad made us kids call him *Mister* Brown.

With regard to whites and blacks working in the mines together, Colleen recalled her father's belief that cooperation when working underground was too important to be limited by barriers of race:

The reason my dad always said that you gotta get along - you don't much care what color hands a man has that pulls you out of a mine cave in. You don't care if his hands is black. So, people just - they come together and they help each other. And that's the way it's always been and I'm hopin' that's the way it'll always be.

Aside from cooperation built into the community by living and working within a diverse group of people, cooperation has also been necessary when dealing with the economic and environmental legacy of coal. As Paula pointed out, solving some of the problems left behind by the coal industry has led to some unlikely partnerships:

It caused people to work together in ways that they probably wouldn't have had to if they hadn't had to...try to remediate some of the problems of coal mining, and created friendships that probably wouldn't have been made otherwise.

Some women also pointed out that coal had been used for many years as a household heating fuel. Many women mentioned that the main benefit of coal mining had been good paying jobs for the area. These perceived benefits of the coal mining industry continue to have an impact on the community today, making it more likely that women who perceive those benefits may have more positive views of the industry.

Coal in the present: "I was really hot about them puttin' in the new coal mine"

Glouster women expressed a variety of emotions concerning the Buckingham Mine #2, currently operating just north of Glouster. Some women were happy to see the mine in the area. Suzanne, the retired coal miner, says she loves the new mine and loves to look at it because it's "beautiful." A few women felt the new mine was a benefit to the community because of the jobs it has provided. Some were happy to see the industry in Glouster again because of the need for electricity.

Most women, however, had a relatively negative view of the Buckingham Mine #2, primarily because of their understanding that only a few workers at the mine are from Glouster. A majority of the women in my study believed that Buckingham brought in their own workers and this perception is confirmed by newspaper reports (Claussen, "New Glouster mine almost ready to open," http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355). Several women also mentioned the fact that the Buckingham Mine is non-union. Retired coal miner Suzanne pointed out that most

UMWA miners would not work in a non-union mine, as doing so would disqualify them from their pension. Nancy, whose husband is a retired coal miner, agreed that the mine's non-union status precluded her husband from working there. She also pointed out that she and her husband believe non-union mines may not be as safe and that salary issues would also be a concern. Suzanne reiterated Nancy's concern about safety issues. Other local concerns about the Glouster mine include an increased wear and tear on local roads, although the mine currently transports most of its coal via railroad (Claussen, "New Glouster mine almost ready to open," http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355). Women also expressed concern about remediation once the mine closes.

Opinions about the Buckingham Mine #2 in Glouster point to the conflict between the economic potential of an industry and its possible environmental and social impacts. One woman pointed out that many people in the area initially supported the new mine because they focused on its possible short-term economic benefits rather than its potential long-term environmental costs. The potential for additional jobs and an improved local economy often outweighs the possible risks to the environment, particularly if those potential risks are perceived as being minimal (Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999).

Simone expressed her internal conflict over the opening of the new mine:

I was really hot about them puttin' in the new coal mine out here, because I feel that the floods that we've had recently have been, in part, impacted by the mine out here. And when I first came down here, I was like, you know, people were griping about, you know, nobody's buying Ohio coal. Ohio coal down in this area anyway, is dirty coal - it has to be cleaned, and the companies weren't willing to put the money into the cleaners, and so eventually, one by one, all

the mines closed and I was definitely against the pollution, and I didn't want 'em cuttin' down stuff in the Wayne Forest, and all that kind of stuff. And people call me a tree hugger, and that kind of stuff, but it's really hard to balance it out, because there are no jobs. So, where do you say, "no, you don't eat, because these trees need to survive, but these trees need to survive so that in 100 years we still have air to breathe?" And the people around here in this whole area are more concerned with the immediate future than the long distance future, and so you have to kind of balance that out. I was always thinking of *the future* and they're thinking, I need to put food on the table for my kids and a roof over their heads, you know, I need the job. So, that kind of made it hard for me to get out and be real radical about things.

Simone, and others like her who were against the opening of the new mine, was in a difficult position. Although she felt strongly that the potential environmental damage of the new mine would be negative, she also recognized that the potential for employment in the area is important. Marcie expressed a similar feeling of it being a "50/50" situation, an emotional deadlock between environmental destruction and economic potential. Simone resolved the situation by expressing her concerns to a more outspoken friend, who voiced her opposition to the opening of the new mine.

Regardless of the internal conflict some women felt about the opening of Buckingham Mine #2 and the hopes that so many had for new employment opportunities, the reality of the situation is that only a handful of miners in Glouster are employed at the new mine. Only two women in my study knew a specific person who works at the Glouster mine. Valerie's husband is employed there and Maria recently completed a business transaction with someone who is employed there. No other women in my study actually knew people employed at the Glouster mine. This calls into question the future

of the coal mining industry in Glouster: what sort of future do the women of Glouster envision for the coal mining industry?

The future of coal: “I don’t think they’ll ever, ever say, ‘we’re not gonna mine anymore coal’”

In response to questions about the future of the coal mining industry, most women did not feel that coal mining would ever be the industry it once was. Some felt that the supplies of coal in the area are likely to run out. Kendra stated that the early coal mining operations “didn’t pace themselves” because they were “thinking about the dollar at that immediate moment.” For this reason she felt that most of the coal in the Glouster area has already been removed. Several women stated that the coal industry would not continue without better technology to make the use of coal safer and less environmentally damaging.

Other women felt that the coal mining industry will continue. Reflecting coal’s long history in the area, Mae, who is 79 years old and has lived near Glouster all her life, stated that she can’t imagine a time when coal operators will say, “we’re not gonna mine any more coal.” When I asked Mae if she felt that was positive or negative, she stated:

I think it’s good because they’re learning ways to clean the air and to make it more safe, so I would say as long as they’re doing that, it would be safe to go ahead and use coal.

Confidence in the ability of technology to allow the coal mining industry to continue was a common theme among women who saw a future in mining. Both women involved in environmental careers agreed that advances in technology will help the coal mining industry continue. Several women expressed a feeling that more mines in the area

would be good. Colleen, for example, commented that a deep mine employing 200 or 300 people would “make Gloucester well.” She questioned that ability of future mines to access the coal. She believed, based on her father’s opinion, that there is enough coal in the hills around Gloucester to last another 200 years, but actually removing the coal was something she couldn’t even imagine.

Overall Perceptions of the Coal Mining Industry: Positive or Negative?

Most women in my study responded that overall, they view coal mining in a positive way. For most, that response reflects the loyalty to industry and community that influenced many of the responses I received (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Irwin et al. 1999). Many of the women who regarded coal’s overall impact locally as positive qualified their answers by pointing out that coal mining had provided jobs for the area. As the women in my study have shown through their pervasive concern about unemployment, a depressed local economy can be perceived as one of the most troubling problems faced by a community (Bush et al. 2002).

Concern for the economy was prevalent in the responses of women who viewed the mining industry more negatively. One woman who responded that coal mining had been more negative for the area pointed out that at one time the industry had been positive, when it had been a source of employment for the region. Several women also pointed out that it is not possible to give an overall “rating” for coal mining as either positive or negative. These women exemplify the conflict between jobs and the potential environmental damage industry may cause, as reflected by Kendra’s statement regarding my request for an overall opinion of coal mining:

That's a trick question, because...I personally think, environmentally it's very negative, but on a personal level it's positive to people here. And it would be embraced again. If they came in here and said, "we found a new vein, let's get diggin'" and opened four more places the only thing that would be negative is if they brought other miners from out of town to do it, and not local people. But other than that I think it would be welcome.

Clearly, allegiance to the industry, concern about unemployment, and the willingness to accept environmental risk for the promise of an improved economy has had a major influence on women's overall perceptions of coal mining in Glouster (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Irwin et al. 1999).

Glouster's Future: Hopes and Fears for the Community

My questions about the future of the coal mining industry naturally led into questions about residents' hopes for the future of the community. Their responses offered additional insight into their thoughts about the future of the coal mining industry, as well. Several women stated that they would like to see Glouster focus more on a tourism economy. Many people recognized the natural beauty of the area and the nearby Burr Oak State Park and Wayne National Forest as potential draws for visitors. Several people argued that a focus on the arts would be successful in the area. As Paula pointed out, this sort of focus would also provide economic potential in a more environmentally sustainable way. Several women also hoped for more businesses and services in the area, as Maria expressed in her hopes that the community could once again be a vibrant economic center:

I want it to be like [it used to be] now. I want to see the hotel. I want to see everything alive and happening. I just think that Glouster is such a neat little town. I mean, the

looks of it is just awesome. It could be so much more, it really could. Its a perfect place, being close to Burr Oak, for there to be a lot of those junk stores, antique stores, and little craft stores to be there...I mean, it's a quaint, beautiful town, I mean, I just can't say enough how, and that's the kind of place that people like to go to and go into those types of little stores.

Although Nancy agreed that a focus on the arts and education could be beneficial to the Glouster area, she cautioned away from focusing entirely on those markets. She felt that it was equally important to promote manufacturing in the area so that a greater variety of people will be employed. Some women expressed concern that Glouster will continue its economic decline, citing concern that money isn't available or isn't used properly by local government. Kendra noted that many downtown property owners are converting commercial property into residential property, limiting the potential for businesses to return to Glouster's downtown area. She worried that without zoning to prevent these conversions, the potential to attract new businesses to downtown Glouster would continue to be limited.

Reflecting the concerns of many area women about the appearance of the local environment and the excessive litter problem in the area, Marcie expressed her hope that the community will remedy its excessive litter problem. In her opinion, Glouster needs to be "cleaned up," both literally and figuratively:

I'd like to see it clean up a little bit...I'd like to see cleaning up - cleaning up as in cleaning up the buildings and the aesthetic as part of it, because Burr Oak and the Wayne are right here, and I don't think they take advantage of that, you know, with the tourism, but also cleaning up our image. Because, when I first started here - I came back here, and this was like on the first or second day I was here. There was a college professor that came in to talk to a

person, and once he found out I was from Gloucester, he asked me just point blank, “how did you survive that?” “What do you mean how did I survive that?” I mean, people have such a negative attitude towards people from Gloucester, it almost is like we’re aliens or something - at times I get that feeling and that bothers me. I usually let people know that’s just crazy...there’s so many good people there...I think there’s some good outreach for commodities or clothing or whatever for the less fortunate. I just, I’d like to see more community pride in what we have there...

Here Marcie is pointing out something that others in Gloucester had revealed and also a broader theme within Appalachian studies. Marcie and others have had their community and individual pride attacked by outsiders who have stereotyped the Gloucester area in a negative way. As residents of Appalachia, these women have experienced stereotyping on multiple levels, including individually, as a community, and as a region (Barry 2001; Buckley 2004 ; Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Montrie 2003; Otto 2002; Speer 2002). Marcie’s belief that Gloucester is maligned by outsiders is not solitary. Several women in my study told stories of people driving an additional half hour into neighboring Athens on a flat tire just to avoid stopping in Gloucester. Others pointed out that the area has been misrepresented in local news media. The local acknowledgement of these negative images is another indication that community pride has had a great influence on the women in Gloucester. Although the women in my study reflected a wide variety of experience and presented different viewpoints on many issues, a common theme of community pride and loyalty is evident.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The respondents in my study confirm what others have found about local perceptions of environmental quality. They have shown that a wide range of issues are deemed important to overall “quality of life” and a variety of factors influence local understandings of environmental issues (Burningham and Thrush 2002; Bush et al 2002; Farquhar 2005; Irwin et al. 1999). The women in my study also deny the stereotypes that have been applied to Appalachia by exhibiting a diversity of experience and opinion (Couto 2002; Lewis 2002; Maggard 1999; Otto 2002; Shapiro 2002; Speer 2002). Participants in my study also show that gender impacts environmental understanding in a number of ways (Gupte 2002; Reed and Mitchell 2003). These factors show that social dynamics have shaped women’s perceptions of the legacy of the coal mining industry.

Many women in my study reflected positive opinions about the Glouster area in general. Negative comments about the local area were often tempered by positive comments or suggestions that local problems aren’t unique to Glouster. Many women in my study come from families that have lived in the Glouster area for generations: one participant was a 5th generation Glouster resident. Women with roots in Glouster that stretch back for multiple generations have a tendency to feel a strong connection to and fondness for the region, which makes their positive outlook on the community understandable. As others have found, a long, historical association with an area contributes to feelings of allegiance to the community (Irwin et al. 1999; Burningham and Thrush 2002).

Devotion to one's community can also encompass industry that has been associated with the area (Irwin et al. 1999; Burningham and Thrush 2002). Many women in my study have strong ties to the coal mining industry. All the women who participated have known at least one person involved in the industry and most could name at least one relative who is now working or did work in coal mining. Several women had even stronger ties to the industry through their childhoods. These women often grew up in a family of coal miners, with their father, grandfathers, uncles, and brothers laboring underground. Many of them can remember Glouster's heyday, a better time in the "collective memory" of the village (Irwin et al. 1999). Most women over 40 who had grown up in Glouster recalled a vibrant community with many more shops, services, and people than it currently supports.

Many women also make the connection between the coal mining industry and the boomtown Glouster once was. Its former prosperity is a direct result of the coal mining industry. For current Glouster residents, unemployment is a pervasive epidemic. The women in my study overwhelmingly expressed concern over the local economic situation, indicating that local residents perceive the unemployment problem in Glouster as one of its greatest drawbacks (Bush et al. 2002). Because coal mining provided so many jobs in Glouster at one time, it is understandable that many women who remember that time period view coal mining as an economic savior for their community.

Coal mining's influence on the economy in the past also impacts women's concern for its environmental impacts today. Many of the women in my study perceive coal mining as having the potential to solve Glouster's economic problems, provided that

any new mines hired local workers. Many women expressed that the potential environmental damage from coal mining is acceptable if the industry provides the region with much needed employment and economic relief (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Irwin 1999). Their statements about the economic potential of modern coal mining were tempered by the bitterness many women expressed over the Buckingham Mine #2 employment situation. Amid speculation about 100 new jobs in Glouster, the 5-year-old non-union mine has earned a fairly negative reputation in Glouster due to its employment of many people from outside the region (Claussen, “New Glouster mine almost ready to open,” http://www.athensnews.com/archives/article.php3?story_id=2355). Not surprisingly, women who currently benefit economically from the new mine hold no such negative views.

Although many women perceived coal mining’s economic potential as its most positive feature, many participants also acknowledged that coal mining has impacted the environment, even if in a very minimal way. Some women viewed the environmental impacts of coal mining as a problem that has no effect on them personally, reflecting the reality that environmental problems that are not perceived as threatening to human health are regarded as unimportant (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Gutiérrez 1994; Irwin et al 1999; Krauss 1993; Seager 2003b). Other women who are more focused on economic concerns are less interested in environmental issues that they do not perceive as immediate threats (Bush et al. 2002).

Women who work in environmental fields, those with higher education, and those with a higher economic level tended to show a higher level of environmental consciousness, and were in turn more concerned about the environmental impacts of coal mining. The influence of gender is also notable throughout the responses in my study. Women who had been related to the industry through family members conveyed a level of respect for the industry, a reflection of their gender-identified role of providing support to the men who labored underground (Giesen 1995). The “coal miners’ wives” in my study community experienced the added burdens of fear and economic instability exacerbated by the coal mining life (Giesen 1995). Traditional gender roles could be used to explain the way that many women related their environmental and social concerns in terms of the potential impact to children. This argument has been suggested in studies of grassroots environmental activism that suggest women’s activism may stem from their roles in the home and community (Bantjes and Trussler 1999; Gutiérrez 1994; Krauss 1993; Seager 2003b). As suggested by Gupte (2002), most women who expressed concern for women’s issues and liberal political views also expressed a higher level of environmental consciousness. As others have shown, life experience has a great influence on one’s perceptions of environmental issues (Bush et al. 2002; Gupte 2002).

It is important to note that in spite of a generally positive attitude towards coal mining, many women expressed a desire for the community to move on to a different kind of economy. Several hope that the community moves towards a tourism economy. Most who mentioned more mining as a potential future for the community did so with qualifications about its future, calling for better technology, unionization, and a local

work force. With many women focusing on a different future for Glouster, it seems that women in Glouster feel ready for the community to move on to a new sense of purpose as long as a respect for the industrial history of the area is maintained. As one participant noted, a coal mining museum might be needed in the future if the industry becomes extinct. For Glouster women, even a future without coal mining does not mean ties to the past should be broken.

Throughout my study, there were participants who were exceptions to the generalizations suggested above. Not all women who had ties to the coal mining industry or who had benefited economically from it viewed it in a positive light. Not all women who exhibited little concern for women's rights were completely unconcerned about the environment. One participant who argued that women should remain in the home with young children also exhibited concern about generalized environmental issues. This variation in local understanding of the environment has been confirmed in other studies as well (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 2002).

As Bush et al. (2002) note, it is not possible for researchers to create an all-inclusive umbrella statement that summarizes the experiences of residents. Instead, studies such as mine confirm that, "local people actively create forms of understanding as they negotiate the conditions of everyday life" (Bush et al. 2002, 1322). This points to another important aspect of research into women's lives. As Reed and Mitchell (2003) suggest, feminist researchers must avoid the temptation to suggest or perpetuate the idea that all women experience life in the same manner. As this study demonstrates, even

women with relatively similar backgrounds experience their local environment in very different ways.

Importance and Relevance of Research

My research adds to scholarship in women's studies, Appalachian studies, and literature on environmental justice. My focus on women has included several of the approaches to feminist geography suggested by Reed and Mitchell (2003). By interviewing only female participants, I have "count[ed] women in" and shed light on women's experiences in former coal mining towns, where their voices have often been silenced (Banks, Billings, and Tice 2002; Duff 2005; Engelhardt 2005; Reed and Mitchell 2003; Seitz 1995; Smith 1999). I have examined how gender roles influence women's experiences of local environmental conditions (Reed and Mitchell 2003). I have confirmed that even women with similar backgrounds have diverse experiences (Reed and Mitchell 2003). Finally, I have attempted to illustrate that women's perceptions of the local environment can improve our understanding of the experience of environmental problems by focusing on women's knowledge, which is often different from and less well-represented than knowledge possessed by men (Reed and Mitchell 2003).

This research is valuable for Appalachian studies because it focuses on a small community in Appalachia that has not received much attention in previous studies. This area has a long and continued history of resource extraction, the local-level impacts of which were not previously investigated. Finally, as other scholars have pointed out, my study adds a new dimension to literature on Appalachia by including women's voices

(Banks, Billings, and Tice 2002; Duff 2005; Engelhardt 2005; Reed and Mitchell 2003; Seitz 1995; Smith 1999).

Appalachia's history of resource extraction, in which the profits of those resources have left the region while the environmental impacts remain, is an example of environmental injustice. The goal of the environmental justice movement is to alleviate this sort of inequality (Harner et al. 2002). Scholars of environmental justice would do well to investigate local level experiences of environmental inequality, as an understanding of residents' perceptions of these issues can help create more meaningful environmental policy (Irwin et al. 1999).

It is my hope that my research will call attention to the lack of information about local experiences of environmental issues throughout Appalachia. Although the results of my study may not be transferable to other communities in Appalachia, my approach and that used by others researching local level environmental perceptions can be useful in a variety of locales (Burningham and Thrush 2003; Bush et al. 2002; Farquhar et al. 2005; Irwin et al. 2002). The disciplines of Appalachian studies, women's studies, and environmental justice can be effectively intertwined to provide a deeper and more thorough understanding of the impact of the environment on Appalachian women. All of these bodies of literature argue for a deeper understanding of conditions and lives that are often underrepresented or silenced. If the goals of these disciplines are to be attained, greater attention must be focused on those populations least likely to be represented as public policy decisions are made. If truly effective environmental policy is desired, an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on diversity of experience is required.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Answers to the following interview questions are completely voluntary. You can refuse to answer any question.

General Information

1. Can you tell me something about yourself?
2. How old are you?
3. Do you live alone or with others?
4. What is your marital status?
5. Do you have children? What are their sexes and ages?
6. What are the sexes and ages of the other members of your household? What is their relationship to you? What is the educational level and occupation of each member of the household?
7. Where were you born? Where was your husband born?
8. Tell me about your family - Where were your parents born? What is your racial/ethnic background? Do you come from a large family? What kind of work did your parents do? Do you still have parents/siblings living nearby?
9. Do you own your home? How long have you owned your home/ lived at this location?
10. How long have you lived in Appalachia?
11. How did you come to live in Appalachia? If your parents are from Appalachia, do you know how they came to live here?
12. What is your educational background?

Employment

13. What is your current occupation?
14. How long have you worked at your current occupation?
15. How many hours per week do you work at your current occupation?
16. What is your income range (i.e. low; lower-middle; middle; upper-middle; high)?
17. What other types of jobs have you had?
18. If you are married, does your husband work? What is his occupation? How many hours per week does he work?

Household Responsibilities

19. How are household responsibilities shared? What types of chores are you responsible for? What responsibilities do other members of your household have?
20. How many hours per day do you spend doing household chores?

21. If you have children, who has primary responsibility for them? What kinds of things do you do for your children? What kinds of things does your husband do for your children?
22. Do you have others living with you or nearby who help you with household chores? If so, what is their relationship to you? How often do they help you with household chores and what types of chores do they help with?
23. Would you prefer to do more or less household work?
24. Do you feel satisfied by the division of household responsibilities? If not, how would you like it to be?

Social Issues

25. What kinds of social functions do you participate in as an individual? Are you a member of any local organizations, are you active at church, etc?
26. What kinds of social functions do you participate in as a couple or family?
27. Do you enjoy most of the social activities you participate in? Why?
28. Are you a member of any environmental or political organizations? Are you a member of any labor unions? What about your husband?
29. Have you ever participated in any kind of environmental, political, or labor-related protest, demonstration, campaign, or similar public event or activity? If so, why did you participate? How did you feel about your participation? Did your husband participate? If you participated more or less than your husband, why?
30. Have you ever wanted to participate in any kind of environmental, political, or labor-related protest, demonstration, campaign, or similar public event or activity? Why did you want to participate? If you did not participate, why? What factors made it difficult for you to participate?
31. How do you feel about the local area? Do you enjoy living here? Are you happy in this community?
32. Do you think of Appalachia as your home?
33. What are some of the positive things about living here?
34. What are some negative things about living here?

Political Issues

35. To which political party do you belong?
36. To which political party does your husband belong?
37. Do you vote?
38. Do you and your husband discuss political issues? What about you and your coworkers? Do you and other family members discuss political issues? Do you and your friends discuss political issues? Why or why not? What kinds of political issues do you discuss (economy, environment, jobs, health care, war, women's issues, etc.)?
39. Do you and your husband vote the same way? Why or why not?

40. What are some political issues you are concerned about? What do you do about the political issues that concern you?

Coal Mining

41. What comes to mind when I mention coal mining? What sort of memories or feelings does this evoke? What does coal mining mean to you?
42. Have you ever worked in a coal mine or in a related industry? What kind of job was it (management, laborer, office work, etc)? How long did you work there? What was that experience like? Were there other women working there with you? What kinds of jobs did they have? Were you happy with your work? If you no longer work in that job, why did you leave it?
43. Do any of your family members work in a coal mine or a related industry? What is their relationship to you? What kind of job is it (management, laborer, office work, etc)?
44. If so, how do they feel about their employment? Do they enjoy their work?
45. How do you feel about your family members' employment in coal mining or a related industry?
46. In the past, did members of your family work in a coal mine or a related industry? What was their relationship to you? What kind of job was it (management, laborer, office work etc.)?
47. Do you remember how those family members felt about their work? How did you feel about it at the time? How do you feel about it now?
48. Do you have friends and neighbors who work in a coal mine or related industry? What kind of job is it (management, laborer, office work)? How do they feel about their work?
49. Have you or anyone in your family or circle of friends ever been injured in a coal mine? What kind of injury was sustained? How did it happen? What happened after the injury? How did you feel about what happened? How do you feel about it now?
50. Has any portion of your property ever been damaged or altered by coal mining? If so, how and when? What kind of damage or alteration occurred? Who was at fault (if anyone)? How did you feel about it at the time that it occurred? How do you feel about it now? What was the resolution (damage repaired, alteration was permanent or temporary, etc)?
51. Has any portion of a friends', neighbors', or family members' property ever been damaged or altered by coal mining? If so, how and when? What kind of damage or alteration occurred? Who was at fault (if anyone)? How did you feel about it at the time that it occurred? How do you feel about it now? What was the resolution (damage repaired, alteration was permanent or temporary, etc)?
52. Can you recall any major accidents in coal mines in this area? What kind of impact did such an accident have in the community? What about for you as an individual – did you feel affected by it?

53. Can you recall any major accidents or events in coal mines throughout the US or the world? What kind of impact did the accident/event have? What about for you as an individual – did you feel affected by it?
54. In general, what are some of the benefits of coal mining? How has coal mining benefited this region? How has coal mining benefited this community? How has coal mining benefited you or your family?
55. In general, what are some of the disadvantages of coal mining? How has coal mining had a negative impact on this region? How has coal mining had a negative impact on this community? How has coal mining had a negative impact on you or your family?
56. In general, do you feel coal mining has more positive or negative impacts? Do the benefits of coal mining outweigh the negative impacts?
57. In Appalachia, do you feel coal mining has more positive or negative impacts?
58. In your community, do you feel coal mining has more positive or negative impacts?
59. How would you describe the state of the economy in Appalachia? How do you feel about the economy in Appalachia? What about in your community?
60. What effect has coal mining had on the economy in Appalachia? What about the economy in this community?
61. Have you ever been personally affected by the economic impacts of coal mining?
62. If so, what was your reaction? Why did you react in the way that you did? If you took some action, what are some of the factors that led you to do so?
63. Do you have friends or family members who were affected by the economic impacts of coal mining? What was that experience like for them? How did you feel about it? How was it resolved?
64. How would you describe the state of the environment in Appalachia? What can you say about the air quality here? What about water quality? Are there any environmental problems in terms of soil quality or availability of habitat for wildlife? What about forest quality?
65. What are some environmental issues here that concern you – or issues anywhere else that concern you? Why?
66. What effect has coal mining had on the environment in Appalachia? What about the local environment?
67. Have you ever been personally affected by the environmental impacts of coal mining?
68. If so, what was your reaction? Why did you react in the way that you did? If you took some action, what are some of the factors that led you to do so?
69. Do you have friends or family members who were affected by the environmental impacts of coal mining? What was that experience like for them? How did you feel about it? How was it resolved?

70. In general, who do you feel benefits the most from coal mining? In Appalachia, who do you feel benefits the most from coal mining? In your community, who do you feel benefits the most from coal mining?
71. In general, who do you feel experiences the most negative impacts of coal mining? In Appalachia, who do you feel experiences the most negative impacts of coal mining? In your community, who do you feel experiences the most negative impacts of coal mining?
72. Do you feel this distribution of positive and negative benefits is fair? Why or why not? How could it be made more equitable? Will it ever be made more equitable?
73. What do you think will happen in the future in the coal mining industry in Appalachia? What would you like to see happen in the future in the coal mining industry in Appalachia? How do you feel about the future of the coal mining industry in Appalachia?
74. What do you see happening to your community in the future? What would you like to see happen here in the future? How do you feel about the future of your community? Do you plan to stay here, why or why not?
75. Do you have anything further to add?

Appendix B: Selected Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Pseudonym	age	marital status	children	birth location	husband's birth location	educational attainment	employment status	income range	involvement with coal mining	tenure in Appalachia	political party affiliation
Angela	60	widowed	yes	elsewhere in US	local	high school	retired	low	few family members	lifelong	unanswered
Elaine	67	widowed	yes	outside US	local	high school	retired	low	few family members	most of lifetime	democrat
Carla	75	widowed	yes	local	local	some high school	retired	low	many family members	lifelong	vote for best candidate
Donna	76	widowed	no	elsewhere in US	local	some college	retired	NA	many family members	most of lifetime	vote for best candidate
Nancy	54	married	yes	local	local	some college	retired	medium-high	husband & many family members	lifelong	democrat
Colleen	67	multiple marriages & widowed	yes	local	local	high school	retired	medium	many family members	most of lifetime	democrat
Georgina	84	widowed	yes	local	elsewhere in US	some college	retired	low	many family members	lifelong	republican
Lynn	23	single	yes	local	NA	some high school	unemployed	low	some family members	lifelong	don't vote
Kathy	69	divorced	yes	local	local	high school	retired	low	many family members	most of lifetime	democrat
Joanne	69	widowed	yes	local	outside US	college	retired	medium	some family members	part of lifetime	democrat
Tillie	77	widowed	yes	elsewhere in Appalachia	local	some college	retired	low	few family members	lifelong	democrat
Edna	89	widowed	no	elsewhere in Appalachia	local	some college	retired	NA	self, husband, family members	most of lifetime	democrat
Paula	44	married	yes	elsewhere in US	elsewhere in US	advanced	employed	medium	none	most of lifetime	vote for best candidate
Mae	79	married	yes	local	local	some college	retired	low	few family members	lifelong	republican
Simone	58	single	no	elsewhere in US	NA	college & some advanced	retired	medium	none	part of lifetime	democrat
Marcie	49	single	no	local	NA	advanced	employed	medium	some family members	lifelong	democrat
Kendra	29	married	yes	local	local	high school	employed	medium	some family members	lifelong	independent
Suzanne	70	married	yes	local	elsewhere in Appalachia	high school	retired	low	self & family members	lifelong	democrat
Maria	38	married but living separately	yes	elsewhere in Appalachia	local	some college	employed	medium-high	few family members	lifelong	democrat
Valerie	35	married	yes	local	local	high school	self-employed	medium	husband & some family members	lifelong	vote for best candidate