

Participation type: **panel**

Session title:

Appalachian Music: Discussing the Top Ten

Appalachian Journal invited musicians, teachers, folklorists, ethnomusicologists and other scholars to participate in a roundtable discussion about Appalachian music—and to create a “Top Ten” playlist of songs/tunes that best represent the music of this region for a forthcoming special music edition of *AppalJ*. This unprecedented conversation raised so many intriguing points that several of the contributors agreed to participate in a panel discussing this project, including Emory University doctoral student Meredith Doster; musicians Trish Kilby Fore and Kevin Fore; Boone’s cultural resources coordinator, Mark Freed; musician and WMMT radio producer Rich Kirby; folklorist Bill Lightfoot; musician and archivist Trevor McKenzie; ETSU Department of Appalachian Studies faculty member, Ted Olson; University of Kentucky professor and director of the John Jacob Niles Center, Ron Pen; Berea College faculty member and coordinator of Country Dance Programs, Deborah Thompson; and doctoral student in ethnomusicology at Brown University, Dave Wood. The purpose of this panel is to explore the “must haves” when choosing representative examples of Appalachian music, the rationales for choices, and the issues that emerge from attempting to define Appalachian music.

Convenor

Sandy Ballard, Editor of *Appalachian Journal*, Appalachian State University

Moderators

Mark Freed, Cultural Resources Coordinator for the town of Boone, NC, and teacher of Appalachian Music, Appalachian State University. Guest editor of Appalachian Music edition of *Appalachian Journal*.

Trevor McKenzie, archivist, W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection, Appalachian State University. Guest editor of Appalachian Music edition of *Appalachian Journal*.

Panel Participants

Meredith Doster is a doctoral student in American Religious Cultures at Emory University researching representations of Appalachian religious cultures. She earned a master’s degree in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University, where she studied seven-shape gospel music in Watauga County, NC. She is assistant managing editor of *Southern Spaces*, a peer-reviewed, open-access digital journal, hosted by Emory University’s Woodruff Library.

Kevin and Trish Kilby Fore are active bearers of the old-time and mountain string band traditions of northwest North Carolina and southwest Virginia. Kevin makes and plays banjo. Trish is a clawhammer banjo player, singer, guitarist, and ambassador of old-time music as an instructor in the Junior Appalachian Musicians program.

William Lightfoot received his Ph.D. in folklore from Indiana University's Folklore Institute. He is Professor Emeritus of English, Appalachian State University.

Rich Kirby is a listener, performer, and producer of mountain music, and a founder of Appalshop's June Appal Recordings. He recently retired from Appalshop's radio station WMMT but still does a weekly old-time radio program. He lives in Dungannon, Virginia.

Ted Olson *teaches in ETSU's Department of Appalachian Studies and in the Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Country Music program. He edited the Music Section for The Encyclopedia of Appalachia, and has produced and written album notes for several documentary albums of Appalachian music.*

Ron Pen *is a University of Kentucky faculty member and Director of the John Jacob Niles Center for American Music. His research interests include American vernacular music with an emphasis on the music and culture of the Southern Appalachian region.*

Deborah Thompson *serves as coordinator of Country Dance Programs and Assistant Professor of General Studies at Berea College. Her dissertation research focused on the interconnections of music and community in eastern Kentucky and how race and gender inflects the social construction of Appalachia.*

Dave Wood *is a musician and an alumnus of Appalachian State University's Appalachian Studies M.A. program. He is a Ph.D. student in ethnomusicology at Brown University, where his dissertation is investigating the role of music perception and affective response to music in understanding the insider/outsider dynamics within the old-time Appalachian music revival.*