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Accent, Linguistic Discrimination, Stereotyping, and West Virginia in Film

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by

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Abstract
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This study examines connections between accent, linguistic discrimination, and stereotyping in portrayals of West Virginia film characters. Ten films featuring West Virginia characters were examined for accent and stereotyping: *The Right Stuff* (Kaufman, 1983), *Matewan* (Sayles, 1987), *Blaze* (Shelton, 1989), *The Silence of the Lambs* (Demme, 1991), *October Sky* (Johnston, 1999), *Hannibal* (Scott, 2001), *A Beautiful Mind* (Howard, 2001), *The Mothman Prophecies* (Pellington, 2002), *Wrong Turn* (Schmidt, 2003), and *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton!* (Luketic, 2004). Coders were employed to score character accents. Stereotyping data was gathered by comparing portrayals with stereotypical traits associated with Appalachian and/or hillbilly characters. Thematic analysis provided further insight into stereotyping of both West Virginia and West Virginians across the sample. This study is modeled on and found support for Lippi-Green (1997). While West Virginia characters were the focus of this study, this type of research may be beneficial for any stereotyped accented group.

Dedication

To my mother and father who instilled in me a love of lifelong learning, respect for the history of my people, and an abiding desire to fight unfairness.

To my husband who enabled me to attend Marshall University, where I learned that education can be not only enlightening, but also fulfilling and empowering. His patience and understanding have been immeasurable and greatly appreciated.

To my sister whose unwavering support has been my rock, her belief in me has often been the only thing that enabled me to believe in myself.

To my niece who inspires me to strive to be a better person, to better the world she will inherit.

And, to the memory of A. James Manchin. As a young girl in the 1970s, the reactions of my elders to his efforts to stand up to the national media whenever it showed West Virginia in a negative light indelibly impressed upon me the need to fight stereotyping in West Virginia. In this respect, he was a pioneer who touched many hearts he never knew, including mine.

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I would like to thank Camilla Brammer, Ph.D., for being on my committee. Dr. Brammer is instrumental in teaching the value of applied research. Her class on communication consulting was my first opportunity to experience the value and fulfillment of being able to use academic experience to help people who face stereotyping in real-world settings. Her guidance as a professor and a confidante has been instrumental in shaping my notions of what can be.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Accent is not merely a by-product of speech. It is a salient symbol that conveys a host of concepts. Accent is a sort of conversation into which one is born, into which one is raised, and through which society sees a reflection of information about one who speaks with an accent. That reflection falls on a continuum ranging from positive to negative. Accents do not merely shape the sounds of spoken words, they also shade the way the hearer of the accent sees the speaker with the accent.

Many West Virginians have an accent that has been labeled either Appalachian (Wolfram & Christian, 1976), Southern Mountain (Williams, 1961, 1992), or Mountain (Herman & Herman, 1997). Accent has been found to be used as a cue for a host of stereotypic character traits in mass media (Lippi-Green, 1997; Cavanaugh, 2005). West Virginia has well-documented image problems and has been associated with a number of stereotypes (Kabler, 2004; Gorczyca, 2003a and 2003b; Janofsky, 1996). West Virginia's state government has tried to shed the stereotypical negative images of West Virginia for economic reasons (Janofsky, 1996).

This research will concentrate on the connections between film representations of accent and representations of stereotypes, so the reader will need an understanding of the histories of each variable, accent and stereotype, in relation to West Virginia. As one reads histories of stereotypes, it seems there is always a lag between the scholarly texts that exist to be quoted and the time one accesses these texts. This lag leaves the history ending some years prior to the reading, which could leave some readers feeling as if the worst of the stereotyping has passed since nothing recent was included. Likewise,

because this research concentrates on the connection between accent and stereotyping in film, it may leave the reader feeling as if these representations are disconnected from everyday life. Therefore, it may help the reader to see some of the examples of current stereotyping of West Virginia not in film.

During CBS's "March Madness" coverage of the 2005 NCAA Basketball Tournaments, West Virginia University's team made it to the "Elite Eight" for the first time since the 1950s. During the pregame show for the "Elite Eight" match-up between WVU and Louisville, taped segments on each team were shown with an introduction to the team, a bit about their previous games in the tournament, and interviews with team members. Background music was played throughout. Though contemporary fast-paced songs having no logical connection to Louisville were played during the segment featuring the Louisville team, the first song played during the introduction of West Virginia's team was the slow beginning to "Dueling Banjos" (the theme from *Deliverance*). The only logical reason for such a dramatic change in music style would be that someone involved in making the music choices felt that "Dueling Banjos" said something about West Virginia. Unfortunately, as Harkins (2004) explained, *Deliverance*'s:

> "…infamous scenes of sodomy at gunpoint and of a retarded albino boy lustily playing his banjo became such instantly recognizable shorthand for demeaning references to rural poor whites that comedians need to say only "squeal like a pig" (the command of one of the rapists to his subordinate victim) or hum the opening notes of the film's guitar-banjo duet to gain an immediate visceral reaction from a studio audience" (Harkins, 2004, 206).

Despite this poor choice for introductory background music, to CBS's credit, the rest of the songs played during the West Virginia pregame segment were fast-paced contemporary songs like those used consistently for the other team.

In March 2004, Abercrombie & Fitch started selling t-shirts that said "It's All Relative in West Virginia!" The not-so-subtle subtext of incest was obvious. Governor Bob Wise immediately responded by requesting the chain to cease sales of the t-shirt. Governor Wise was quoted as saying, "'Just remember, they're not laughing with us ... they're laughing at us,' Wise said. 'This is serious stuff. It is perpetuating a stereotype that is untrue, unfair, and I believe is scurrilous.'" (Kabler, 2004). Sales skyrocketed. In August 2004, Abercrombie & Fitch released a second t-shirt about the state. This time, subtlety was not apparent. This time, the slogan said: "West Virginia: No Lifeguard in the Gene Pool".

In 2003, Starbucks opened its first freestanding shop in West Virginia in the Barboursville area. For years prior to that store opening, there were Starbucks kiosk stores at West Virginia Welcome Centers in the Beckley area. Despite that, Jay Leno's monologue went like this: "'West Virginia just became the last state in the Union to get a Starbucks,' Leno said. 'The great thing about drinking Starbucks coffee in West Virginia is that you don't have to worry about staining your tooth'" ("Leno picks…", 2003).

During the Continental Tire Bowl football game between WVU and University of Virginia, UVA's "scramble band" gave a halftime performance of a parody of the television show "The Bachelor" in a way that was rife with West Virginia stereotypes. They showed a character to represent each school (WVU and UVA) vying for the bachelor. The UVA character was "smartly dressed"; whereas, the WVU character was

"flannel-clad, barefoot and square-dancing" (Argetsinger, 2003, B01). Governor Bob Wise officially complained saying, "This type of performance merely perpetuates the unfounded stereotypes that we in West Virginia are fighting so hard to overcome" (Argetsinger, B01).

Stereotypes are not simply unfair, they hinder an area or a group of people from being seen as viable options for business. Stereotypes of West Virginia also hinder the state's economic growth because they hold companies back from seeing West Virginia as a reasonable possibility for expansion. *The State Journal*, a West Virginia business newspaper, ran a year-long series examining the "biggest challenges that West Virginia faces." One issue addressed the state's image problems and their impact on West Virginia's economy:

> "'No question about it. We have an image problem,' said Gerald McDonald, president of the Huntington Area Development Council. 'It deals with education levels. It deals with whether we are a union or non-union state. It deals with all aspects of how we do business. If you look around, we are attracting companies, but we don't attract the signature companies, the big named companies…. We are viewed as remote and not connected to the mainstream. People don't want that'" (Gorczyca, 2003a).

As the examples above show, stereotyping is a problem for West Virginia. There is an understudied connection between stereotyping and accent. Lippi-Green (1997) states that "[*a*]ccent discrimination can be found everywhere in our daily lives. In fact, such behavior is so commonly accepted, so widely perceived as appropriate, that it must be seen as the last back door to discrimination. And that door stands wide open" (Lippi-

Green, 1997, 73). She also shows how mass media (especially entertainment media) use accent as a way to connote a host of stereotypical traits and how social institutions act to suppress certain types of accents in favor of a standard accent, which she calls the Language Subordination Process.

This thesis will concentrate on the interplay of accent, linguistic discrimination, and stereotyping as evidenced through portrayals of accented West Virginia characters in film and the perpetuation of stereotypes about West Virginia as connected to accent in those portrayals.

Rationale

Though Lippi-Green's (1997) work arises from sociolinguistics, the concepts inherent in the theory are closely tied to communication studies concepts, specifically intercultural communication and nonverbal communication. The concepts in Lippi-Green (1997) are relevant in intercultural communication because *ways of speaking* are one of the variables that distinguish one culture from another. Likewise, these concepts would be relevant in nonverbal communication because accent is a paralinguistic cue, and the ways that such cues affect communication is an area studied by nonverbal communication scholars. Stereotyping and the ways mass media perpetuates stereotypes are also areas of interest in intercultural communications and minority discourse studies. As such, the relationships between these two concepts (accent and stereotyping) found by Lippi-Green warrant discussion and examination in the field of Communication Studies as well.

Stereotype-confirming and stereotype-disconfirming information are both disseminated via communication. The more stereotype-confirming images and messages

about West Virginia are being spread via mass media, the greater the need for those who wish to promote alternate views of West Virginia to produce stereotype-disconfirming images and messages, including academic studies which examine the extent and types of stereotype-confirmation in mass media.

This study will concentrate on one segment of mass media (in particular, films) and portrayals of West Virginians. It will be modeled on a study conducted by Lippi-Green (1997) to see if her findings on accent in general can be extended to one type of accent in particular. Cavanaugh (2005) conducted similar research on one accent, Bergamasco Italian, and found support for Lippi-Green's (1997) findings.

Research to be Conducted

Following Lippi-Green's (1997) study of the treatment of accented characters in Disney feature-length animated films, this study will concentrate on the treatment of film characters who are associated with West Virginia to see if West Virginia characters who are portrayed as accented exhibit stereotypical traits more often than other characters. Lippi-Green found accented characters were shown to have less opportunity, be less likely to have a family or be educated, and more likely to be presented in a stereotypical fashion (though at times the stereotyping is subtle). "[*T*]he more 'negatives' a character has to deal with (gender, color, stigmatized language, less favorable national origin) the smaller the possibilities for success in the world for these characters. Even when stereotyping is not overtly negative, it is confining and misleading" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 101).

Lippi-Green (1997) found that accents are most often only evident in characters presented with stereotypical characteristics. Williamson (1995) studied representations

of hillbillies in film. Though his research does not cover West Virginia alone, the stereotypes we deal with in West Virginia are largely related to the hillbilly concept (as reviewed in Chapter Four). Harkins (2004) presented the most in-depth research on the icon of the hillbilly and its signification(s).

Lippi-Green (1997) shows the Language Subordination Process, the process by which certain accents are treated as subordinate to a standard accent, to be evident in films with accented characters. Within films, discussions between differently accented characters (i.e., one mainstream speaker and one stigmatized accent speaker), especially conversational exchanges with *speaking* as the subject, have shown the Language Subordination Process to be evident.

Lippi-Green also demonstrates that "[*l*]anguage and accent as symbols of greater social conflict are also found in serious dramatic efforts, on television and film" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 101). Wolfram (2000) argues that mass media has altered the way people view dialects or accents, having familiarized the general population with a wide variety of accents. However, if mass media consistently shows people (or characters) with a particular type of accent as having a narrow set of traits, the general population may be learning to see certain accents as indicative of certain propensities. Lippi-Green argues that accent has become a "very convenient and fast way to draw on a whole series of emotional social issues, and all of them in the spirit of conflict, from immigration and the rights and responsibilities thereof, to greater issues of dominance and subservience, race and economics" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 102).

RQ1: Are film characters associated with West Virginia more likely to exhibit a Southern Mountain accent when portrayed as Appalachian stereotypes than when portrayed in a nonstereotypical way?

Methodology

Following Lippi-Green's (1997) Disney study, coders were employed to determine accent types portrayed by characters in the films and textual analysis was employed to gather stereotype data. Connections between accented portrayals and stereotypic character portrayals were tabulated to determine relationships.

An exhaustive list of films that are set in West Virginia or have a West Virginian main character was gathered. From this universe, a population of ten films was drawn based on each film's exposure. The more popular or award-winning a film, the greater the number of people who may have been exposed to the portrayals in the film. Therefore, the economic or critical success of each film was criteria in determining its inclusion in the sample population.

Research Participants/Texts

This research was concentrated on relatively contemporary feature-length films where a West Virginia character figures prominently or the setting of the film is West Virginia. Only films released from 1970 to the present (2004) were considered. Rather than attempt to cover the whole pantheon of Appalachian characters (some of whom are from particular states; others are simply labeled "Appalachian"), film choices are limited to those with West Virginia characters or a West Virginia setting. This research also excludes documentaries, animated films, made-for-TV movies, and films that were not available to the public at the time of the study (i.e., no video distribution to date, no longer in print, etc.).

For this study, a purposive sample of ten films was drawn. The ten films were selected because they were widely distributed and widely associated with West Virginia.

An exhaustive list of all films associated with West Virginia (excluding documentaries, animated films, and made-for-TV movies) was compiled by conferring with Steve Fesenmaier, research librarian for the West Virginia Library Commission and noted expert on Appalachian films and West Virginia in film. (A list of all films considered is in Appendix A.)

Criteria

As stated above, all films had to have at least one main character expressly labeled as being from West Virginia or have a West Virginia setting. The more recent films on the list had to be on the national Top Ten for box office revenues for at least two weeks to be considered. These are the films that are most likely to be available for rental or on cable channels for quite some time after theatrical release ends. The less recent films had to be greater box office successes and/or award-winning films, as those distinctions make them more likely to be available for rental or to be aired on cable movie channels. The films chosen are listed with the most recent release first:

1. *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton!* (Luketic, 2004). Premiered January 2004 and spent two weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com). Was nominated for eight Teen Choice Awards, but won none (www.imdb.com).
2. *Wrong Turn* (Schmidt, 2003). Premiered June 2003 and spent two weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com).
3. *The Mothman Prophecies* (Pellington, 2002). Premiered January 2002 and spent three weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com).

4. *A Beautiful Mind* (Howard, 2001). Premiered December 2001 and spent fourteen weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com). Won numerous awards including four Academy Awards (www.imdb.com).
5. *Hannibal* (Scott, 2001). Premiered February 2001 and spent six weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues, the first three of those at number one (www.boxofficemojo.com). Won the ASCAP "Top Box Office Film" award in 2002.
6. *October Sky* (Johnston, 1999). Premiered February 1999 and spent three weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com). Won the Broadcast Film Critics "Top Family Film" award for 2000 (www.imdb.com).
7. *The Silence of the Lambs* (Demme, 1991). Premiered February 1991 and spent fourteen weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues, the first five of those at number one (www.boxofficemojo.com). Won numerous awards including five Academy Awards in 1992 (www.imdb.com).
8. *Blaze* (Shelton, 1989). Premiered December 1989 and spent three weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com).
9. *Matewan* (Sayles, 1987). Though neither a Hollywood film nor a top box office film, this independent film by John Sayles is the considered to be the top film about West Virginia, set in West Virginia, and filmed in West Virginia. It was nominated for an Academy Award for cinematography, won an Independent Spirit Award for the same category, as well as being nominated for a number of other Independent Spirit Awards. The film also won the "Human Rights" award from the Political Film Society, USA (www.imdb.com).

10. *The Right Stuff* (Kaufman, 1983). Premiered October 1983 and spent seven weeks in the national Top Ten in theatre revenues (www.boxofficemojo.com). Was nominated for eight Academy Awards and won four (www.imdb.com).

Procedures

Lippi-Green (1997) employed coders to view clips of all the characters in all of the available Disney animated films and code the characters for accent. A pilot study showed that coders had considerable difficulty with knowing what to place under the label "Appalachian accent," but coders did not have the same difficulty with Williams (1992, 1961) Southern Mountain accent label. So, accents were coded as Southern Mountain Speech, MUSE (Mainstream US English), or Other, with Other denoting accented speech but neither Southern Mountain nor MUSE. The coders employed were either native West Virginians or residents of the state who were used to hearing accented speech in West Virginia. All coders were either graduate students or professors in Communication Studies. Following Lippi-Green's methods, coders were shown film clips for each character. If there were discrepancies as to which label applied to a character, coders discussed their decisions until a consensus was reached.

By viewing the films stringently a list of speaking characters was drawn for coders to use. Cast lists could not be used because they often include characters that do not speak. Voices that were radio announcers or television announcers within those media in the films were also not coded as those were not characters. The total character population is shown below in Table 1. For films set in West Virginia (marked below with an asterisk), all characters were coded. However, for films set outside West Virginia, only characters purported to be from West Virginia were coded.

Table 1. Number of Characters Coded

Film Title	Listed Cast	Coded Characters
Win a Date with Tad Hamilton!*	43	26
Wrong Turn*	14	11
The Mothman Prophecies*	41	21
A Beautiful Mind	75	1
Hannibal	60	1
October Sky*	55	52
The Silence of the Lambs	60	7
Blaze	59	4
Matewan*	54	47
The Right Stuff	76	2
Total	537	172

Stereotyping and Character Data.

Following Lippi-Green's example, character data for all characters was gathered from the text of the films to see if stereotypical representations were more often paired with accented character depictions. Using Harkins (2004) and Williamson (1995), a list of stereotypic character traits was drawn (those traits are as described in Chapter 4). Separate from and without regard to accent coding, all films were screened carefully (with a minimum of three viewings per film for this variable alone). As a character displayed one of the traits listed, it was noted and recorded. Those characters who displayed a greater number of stereotypic traits can be said to have been more stereotypically presented than those who display fewer (or no) stereotypic traits.

Narrative data was drawn from the sample films in the form of conversations either about accent or stereotyping. The narrative data about accent was analyzed for connections to Lippi-Green's Language Subordination Process, Bourdieu's language strategies as discussed in Lippi-Green (i.e., strategies of subversion and strategies of condescension), and any other relevant communication theory as dictated by the data (i.e., uncertainty theory, accommodation theory, Clark's communicative burden, etc.).

Conversation about stereotype was analyzed to see how it connected to the existing stereotyping literature and to see what themes evolved about film representations of West Virginians and West Virginia.

Overview of Chapters to Follow

For the reader who may be unfamiliar with West Virginia or unfamiliar with research on accent and/or stereotyping, the following chapters provide a firm foundation for the concepts in this study and the connection of those concepts to West Virginia. As even academic texts often use the terms dialect and accent interchangeably, the differences between accent and dialect are discussed because this research concentrates on accent, not dialect. Much has been written about dialect in West Virginia, but very little has been written specifically about accent in West Virginia. As accents associated with West Virginia get to the very heart of this research, explication of West Virginia accents is necessary.

Accent has been correlated with stereotyping as *linguistic discrimination*—discrimination based on the way a person's speech sounds. While that would seem to be a simple matter to understand, the concepts that undergird Lippi-Green's descriptions of linguistic discrimination arise from the field of sociolinguistics and may be unfamiliar to the reader who is unfamiliar with sociolinguistics. Therefore, a full explanation of linguistic discrimination and its associated concepts follows the discussion of accent.

Stereotyping, like accent, is a well-known concept, but the communication processes that surround stereotyping may be unfamiliar to the reader. An understanding of stereotyping, as well as the stereotyping of West Virginia and the history of film stereotypes of those who live in mountains, is crucial for the reader to be able to fully

appreciate the findings of this research. As such, a full explanation of stereotyping, the history of stereotyping West Virginia, and the filmic stereotyping of those who live in mountains follows the discussions on accent and linguistic discrimination.

Once these conceptual and historical foundations have been laid, the findings of this research will be presented, first on a film-by-film basis then on a sample-wide basis. Implications of these findings and directions for future research follow the presentation of findings.

Chapter Two

Accent and Communication

If one is to study a thing, one must be clear what that thing is and how that thing functions. Accent, it would seem, is an easily understandable concept, but it is just as easily misunderstood. For example, there are those who believe that certain types of accents are more ungrammatical than others and, therefore, speakers with that accent should learn a new accent. As the section below on differentiating accent from dialect will show, grammar is a function of dialect, not accent. Speakers of dialect may learn to speak with more standard grammar, but they would likely do so with an accent that harkens the social milieu from whence they came. In this chapter accent is differentiated from dialect.

As dialect in West Virginia has been a subject of considerable study, a brief description of dialect in West Virginia follows. As accent is one of the subjects of this study and only limited scholarship on accent and West Virginia has been conducted, there is a brief discussion on what is known about accent and West Virginia. And, finally, a discussion of the functions and meanings of accent brings to light the social importance of accents and the way accent functions symbolically.

Differentiating Dialect from Accent.

The terms *accent* and *dialect* are often used interchangeably, as if they mean the same thing. As recent scholarship (notably Lippi-Green, 1997; Cavanaugh, 2005) demonstrates the ways in which accent serves as communicative and social cues along with the meanings conveyed by the existence of a stigmatized accent, it has become necessary to differentiate between what is meant by *dialect* and what is meant by *accent*.

Mayer (1988) defines dialect as "a variety of language that is distinguished from other varieties of the same language. It is used by a group of speakers in a certain area who are set off from others geographically and socially" (Mayer, 1988, 7).

Eisenson (1997) defines dialect as "a language system within a system that is related to a special cultural group or to a community of persons or an identifiable geographic or regional area…a variant of a hypothetical 'standard' of a language that despite differences is almost always mutually comprehensible to other dialect speakers" (Eisenson, 1997, 184). Eisenson also notes that regional dialects of American English are recognizable due to "differences in pronunciation (diction), vocabulary (word usage), and meaning of the same word form (spelling of words), and, to a lesser degree, of syntax (grammar)" (Eisenson, 1997, 184).

Lippi-Green (1997) differentiates accent and dialect. "Accents are loose bundles of prosodic and segmental features distributed over geographic and/or social space" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 42) wherein prosodic features include pitch contours, stress patterns, tempo, rhythm, lilting, etc., and segmental features are comprised of the sounds given for vowels or consonants.

Dialect and West Virginia

"There is an old Hindi proverb, *'language changes every eighteen to twenty miles'*" (McCrum, Cran, & MacNeil, 1997, 3). This proverb certainly holds true in West Virginia. West Virginia is home to a wide variation in dialect. Strong variations in speech are evident from county to county and, in some instances, from town to town (Woofter, 1927; Axley, 1928; Lopushansky & Lopushansky, 1929; Carpenter, 1933; Berrey, 1940; Kenny, 1940; Wolfram & Christian, 1976; Wolfram, 1976). West

Virginia's mountainous terrain served to limit travel between communities for many years. Because of this geographical isolation, one can hear a variety of dialects and accents in West Virginia (Carpenter, 1933). Dialects throughout the state, as it is with the rest of the United States, were formed by dialect convergence of the original (foreign) dialects of Europeans who settled the area (McCrum, Cran, & MacNeil, 1997).

Wolfram & Christian (1976) refer to the dialect of West Virginia (and parts of Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina) as Appalachian English (Wolfram & Christian, 1976, 7). Williams (1992) refers to the dialect of the same region as Southern Mountain dialect. Herman & Herman (1997) refer to the dialect in West Virginia as Mountain dialect and show it to be prevalent in the "Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina, the Cumberlands of Tennessee and Kentucky, the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and West Virginia…[*and*] the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas and Missouri" (Herman & Herman, 1997, 133).

The existence of an Appalachian dialect distinct from the dialect of the Southern United States is not wholly agreed upon. Some dialect maps show either Appalachian dialect or Mountain dialect in West Virginia and parts of other states; some do not. Those that do not separate either Appalachian or Mountain dialect show West Virginia partially in the Southern dialect and partially in the Northern dialect.

That the speech of many West Virginians is seen as different in a negative way is not a matter of debate. Because those who live in northern West Virginia have a more Northern dialect, dialect discrimination can be seen within the state. "Outside and

sometimes inside the state, West Virginia dialects are stigmatized, despite their linguistic equality" (Hazen, 1999).

Accent and West Virginia

Dialect, as discussed above, refers to situations where varieties of a language "differ in morphological structures, syntax, lexicon, and semantics" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 43). Accent, on the other hand, refers to situations where differences in varieties of a language "are restricted primarily to phonology (prosodic and segmental features)" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 43).

While much is written about the dialect of Appalachian speakers, little focus has been given to those features that pertain to accent alone. Williams (1961, in Williams, 1992) described a "liquid flow" assisted by the softening or dropping of hard consonants (such as, *g* endings). He differentiates the dropped *g* ending in *–ing* words from other Southern speech by differences in stress. Mountain speakers tend to speak the construction in an unstressed manner "com'n, a-fight'n, a-hoe'n, etc." (Williams, 1992, 17); whereas other southern-type accented speakers "tend to syllabicate *in'* more strongly, as in *com'in*, *writ-in*, *help-in*" (Williams, 1992, 17).

Some of the ungrammatical norms of mountain speech are attributed to a preference for maintaining a rhythmic quality, such as using *them* instead of *those* and using *hisn, yourn, hern,* and *ourn* instead of *his*, *your, her,* and *our,* according to Williams (1992), because "*m* is more melodic than *s* and more easily managed than *z*" (Williams, 1992, 18). Of the rhythm of mountain speech, Williams wrote:

"Forming the rhythmic patterns of the speech of the people of the Southern Mountains are low intonations, leisurely pace, and, in the matters of grammar and

> diction, that lack of self-consciousness which precludes the false starts and sputterings sometimes heard in the speech of the educated" (Williams, 1992, 17).

Williams (1992) also notes that such rhythm-enhancing constructions were often seen in the speech of educated mountain people who spoke more properly in most other respects. These educated mountain people could be said to have traces of a native mountain accents surfacing in their learned "mainstream" accents. Lippi-Green (1997) also discusses the phenomena surrounding native accents and acquired second accents.

She distinguishes first language accents (referred to as L1 accents) from second language accents (L2). L2 accents are generally informed by L1 accents, with the phonology of the native accent "breaking through" to be evident in the L2 accent. Lippi-Green likens an L1 accent to a "sound house" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 46-52). Each infant who acquires language draws "bricks" (sounds) from the sound houses the individuals around the infant while in the language acquisition process. As a result of this picking and choosing, as well as personal innovations and alterations, each person has a sound house that is unique, yet similar to that person's speech community. Children may acquire more than one sound house, but adults cannot.

> "The true ability to build second and third Sound Houses *past the language acquisition stage* is undocumented. It may exist: there are certainly rumors enough of such persons, who *as adults* acquire a second variety of their native language, or another language altogether, with absolute and complete native fluency. Persons who are capable of this would never let the phonology of their first language interfere with their second language, regardless of the topic being

discussed, or the amount of emotion brought to the table" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 51).

Functions and Meanings of Accent

The types of accent analysis discussed thus far show accent as *a thing* a person has or acquires but does not discuss *how accents function* in communication. As communication, Esling (1998) describes the importance of accent:

> "Accent defines and communicates who we are. Accent is a map which listeners perceive through their ears rather than through their eyes to 'read' where the speaker was born and raised, what gender they are, how old they are, where they might have moved during their life, where they went to school….Details of pronunciation conjure up stereotypes. A few consonants and vowels or the briefest of intonation melodies cause us to search our memories for a pattern that matches what we have just heard. This is how we place speakers according to dialect or language group" (Esling, 1998, 169-171).

Beyond simple judgments that people make based on dialect, there is a connection between discrimination and use of non-mainstream accents in the United States, including African-American Vernacular English, Chicano English, and Appalachian English (Purnell, Idsardi, & Baugh, 1999). As discussed previously, Lippi-Green (1997) shows that the use of dialect to inform discriminatory practices is not only seen as acceptable, but also is seen as appropriate.

Even the way researchers have traditionally approached presenting data "about racial and linguistic minority groups [*is*] suspect" (Goldstein, 2002, 53). Traditionally,

researchers have "collected, classified, and represented knowledge" (Goldstein, 2002, 55) about groups marked for difference to a mainstream audience. "In turn, this knowledge has been represented back, through the eyes" (Goldstein, 2002, 55) of mainstream readers to the members of the marked group. Edward Said (1994) calls this process the creation of a discourse about an "Other." To avoid "Othering" such groups, information about how the members of the marked group feel about their language, what it means to them, must be gathered either through questions or ethnography (Wassink & Dyer, 2004; Goldstein, 2002; Milroy, 2002; Schilling-Estes, 2002).

When such information has been gathered (such as Schilling-Estes, 2002, and Wassink & Dyer, 2004), it offers insight into why some speech communities show dialect convergence over time while others show dialect divergence. As Milroy (2002) explains:

> "[*A*]n ideological motivation underlies the long term maintenance of distinctive, often stigmatized, local norms in the face of pressures from numerically and socially more powerful speech communities; speakers want to sound (for example) Welsh, Irish, Northern English, New Zealand [*sic*], Canadian, African American, American Southern and unlike whatever social group they perceive themselves as contrasting with" (Milroy, 2002, 9-10).

Though traditional dialect research can provide information on what constitutes one dialect from another ("*accents as social practices*," Cavanaugh, 2005, 128) and ethnography can uncover what accent means for an accented speaker ("*accents as personal attributes*," Cavanaugh, 2005, 128), neither discusses how accent functions as a sign ("*accents as symbols*," Cavanaugh, 2005, 133). From a semiotic perspective, accent is not just the phonological qualities imbued in the spoken word nor is accent simply an

index through which a speaker may be connected to (or separated from) a speech community. Accents, from the perspective of semiotic ideologies, are simultaneously indexical objects which connect the accented individual to a group and are objects themselves. "Semiotic ideologies—distinct from the broader term 'language ideologies'—are the sets of beliefs that describe how and why meaning is achieved, and may include conceptualizations of what is significant behavior, who can be designated as actors, and which parts of the material world contain meaning" (Cavanaugh, 2005, 129). The potency of meaning imbued in accent is described in the following passage:

> "The connections between social stereotype or image of personhood and ways of speaking makes these sociogeographical stereotypes similar to what Agha (2003), drawing on Goffman (1974), has recently referred to as 'characterological figures,' that is, 'any image of personhood that is associable with a semiotic display of itself' ([*Agha,*] 2003, 243, fn. 8). This concept is useful in its linkage of semiotic display and projected personal image, as well as in its refusal to simplify this link as being reducible to 'identity.' Such figures are detachable from particular speakers and thus may circulate—in the mass media, and in everyday interactions. Here, I further expand this concept, discussing accents as involving *sociogeographical characterological figures,* linked to…social hierarchy of place" (Cavanaugh, 2005, 133).

On the relationship between mass media and the use of accents as symbol, Cavanaugh (2005) cites both Lippi-Green's (1997) study on accented representations in media and Feld, Fox, Porcello, & Samuels's (2004) "discussion of the adoption (or not) of the 'twang' in country music performances and recordings" (Cavanaugh, 2005, 131).

Cavanaugh's (2004) own research on Italian Bergamasco accents is used to show how the meaning of accents "are local in origin, but have become commodified and have long circulated on a national level" (Cavanaugh, 2004, 145). She finds that representations of the Bergamasco accent in Italian media have the following kinds of consequences for Bergamasco speakers:

> "…young Bergamasca women feeling they must choose between sounding feminine and sounding local, risking in the process being accused of having 'embroidered' their speech. Or they can result in older speakers sounding more provincial and ignorant or speakers of any age being accused of sounding narrow-minded and prejudiced against southerners" (Cavanaugh, 2004, 145).

From these studies, it has been shown that when an accented group of people are repeatedly represented as having a narrow set of characteristics, the accent associated with that group of people becomes symbolic for those characteristics. On the importance of the media in making accent simultaneously an index as well as a symbol of stereotype, Cavanaugh states:

> "Indeed, it is in the mass media that accents and stereotypes circulate most widely, and the continual and consistent reappearances of accent in mass-mediated context contributes to what Agha describes as 'a gradual sedimentation of habits of speech perception and production across particular social domains of persons' (2003, p. 269)" (Cavanaugh, 2005, 131).

From the above discussion, it should be clear that researchers have found connections between accent and discrimination (or stereotyping). This type of judgment

about people based on their speech is called *linguistic discrimination*, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Linguistic Discrimination

Lippi-Green (1997) refers to the phenomena surrounding the use of accent as a cue for stereotyping as linguistic discrimination, wherein certain accents (and those who speak them) are seen as more desirable than other accents (and those who speak them). Because conversational exchanges in the sample films used in this study were examined, some discussion of Lippi-Green's (1997) Language Subordination Process Model and its connection to communication theory is necessary. However, standard language ideology is a cornerstone on which the language subordination process is built, so some understanding of standard language ideology must precede this discussion. Then, a brief literature review of studies using Lippi-Green's work ends this chapter.

Standard Language Ideology

According to Trudgill (2000), Standard English is what a person sees in print, learns at school, and hears most often on the television. It is the type of English one sees in mass media newscasts, in television programs when a character is considered "normal," and that elementary English teachers have for decades tried to teach children of many different speech communities to speak if they were going to speak Proper English.

> "There is a general consensus among educated people, and in particular among those who hold powerful influential positions, as to what is Standard English and what is not—Standard English is, as it were, imposed from above over the range of regional dialects—the dialect continuum—and for this reason can be called a *superposed variety* of language" (Trudgill, 2000, 7).

In the United Kingdom, the history of this tradition has been traced by Mugglestone (2003), but there has not been a similar history drawn as completely for the United States. Lippi-Green (1997), does, however, provide a detailed discussion of educational dissemination of proper English in the United States. Milroy & Milroy (1991) suggest "that the chief linguistic characteristics of standardisation is suppression of optional variation at all levels of language—in pronunciation (phonology), spelling, grammar (morphology and syntax) and lexicon" (Milroy & Milroy, 1991, 30).

Linguists, sociolinguists, dialectologists, and communication scholars interested in dialect often write about accented American speech (African American Vernacular English, Appalachian English, etc.) in comparison with Standard American English (Wolfram & Christian, 1976; Mulac & Rudd, 1977; Eisenson, 1997; Purnell, Idsardi, & Baugh, 1999; Chambers, 2002). "American society remains entrenched in an ideology premised on the sovereignty of the standard variety and the linguistic subordination of vernacular varieties, particularly those associated with asymmetrical class and ethnic relations" (Wolfram, 2000).

Lippi-Green does not use the term "standard" because any discussion of "standard" American English will give the "standard" version primacy over any "non-standard" version (which can imply "substandard"). Instead, she employs the term mainstream (and notes that being non-mainstream still can hold negative connotations just as being mainstream can hold positive connotations). Neither does she use the term "American." She refers to what has historically been called Standard American English (SAE) as Mainstream US English (MUSE), which still appears to have favorable connotations.

Language Ideology

Ideology is an important notion for most critical theories. "An ideology is a set of ideas that structure a group's reality, a system of representations or a code of meanings governing how individuals and groups see the world" (Littlejohn & Foss, 2005, 318). *Language ideologies* are ideas that structure our notions surrounding language use:

> "…[*I*]deologies of language are not about language alone. Rather, they envision and enact ties of language to identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology. Through such linkages, they underpin not only linguistic form and use but also the very notion of the person and the social group, as well as such fundamental social institutions as religious ritual, child socialization, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling, and law" (Woolard, 1998, 3; in Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998).

Connecting language to the "very notion of the person," people use speech as a "signal" for who they are. It reflects where we come from; it is an integral part of who a person is. The first language accent we acquire we have no choice in whatsoever. We could have been raised with a standard accent, a privileged accent, or a stigmatized accent. Generally speaking, it is only the stigmatized accent that education, the media, etc., deem socially unacceptable. "…[*W*]hen we ask individuals to reject their own language, it is not the message, but the social allegiances made clear by that language which are the underlying problem…but we regularly demand of people that they suppress or deny the most effective way they have of situating themselves socially in the world" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 63). Dominant institutions and individuals with power "promote the

notion of an overarching, homogenous standard language which is primarily white, upper middle class, and midwestern" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 65).

Language Subordination Process Model

Lippi-Green (1997) calls the process whereby speakers of socially unacceptable accents are convinced that they need to change their accents the Language Subordination Process. Lippi-Green arrived at these conclusions through "analysis of a wide range of reactions or actions of dominant bloc institutions when they perceived a threat to the authority of the homogenous language of the nation-state" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 67). Lippi-Green's (1997) model for the language subordination process is comprised of eight "steps" by which non-mainstream language is subordinated to mainstream language. These steps appear to work more as postulates since not every instance of language subordination will go through all steps or any particular order of those steps. The table on the following page depicts the model as Lippi-Green (1997) presented it. Further discussion of each step follows the table.

Table 2. A Model of the Language Subordination Process

A Model of the Language Subordination Process
Language is mystified. *You can never hope to comprehend the difficulties and complexities of your mother tongue without expert guidance.* Authority is claimed. *Talk like me/us. We know what we are doing because we have studied language, because we write well.* Misinformation is generated. *That usage you are so attached to is inaccurate. The variant I prefer is superior on historical, aesthetic, or logical grounds.* Non-mainstream language is trivialized. *Look how cute, how homey, how funny.* Conformers are held up as positive examples. *See what you can accomplish if you only try, how far you can get if you see the light.* Explicit promises are made. *Employers will take you seriously; doors will open.* Threats are made. *No one important will take you seriously; doors will close.* Non-conformers are vilified or marginalized. *See how willfully stupid, arrogant, unknowing, uninformed, and/or deviant and unrepresentative these speakers are.*

(Source: Lippi-Green, 1997, 68)

Language is mystified. Spoken language is a "historically, structurally, and functionally fundamentally different creature" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 18) from written language. "…[*W*]riting and speaking are not just alternative ways of doing the same thing; rather, they are ways of doing different things" (Halliday, 1989, xv, in Lippi-Green, 1997, 19). Spoken language is seen as subordinate to written language in that institutional standards and training are concentrated on rules for the written word while "spoken language is taken for granted" (Milroy & Milroy, 1991, 65-66). Written language, and therefore the authority to claim use of *good written language,* is a codified, complex set of rules only available to those who have become educated and indoctrinated

on *legitimate* use. This "is countered by the realities of a world in which people do communicate with each other in non-mainstream languages and a variety of stigmatized accents" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 67) every day.

Authority is claimed. Language standards are institutionalized by an "interdependent web" comprised of educational systems, the media, corporate expectations, and the legal system. "Each of these institutions claims extraordinary knowledge about language and hence authority in matters of language. Each of them looks to the other for validation" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 68).

Misinformation is generated. The book in which Lippi-Green grounds, proposes, and warrants her theory on the language subordination process is filled with examples of types of misinformation about language that we are taught (both explicitly and implicitly). For example, we are taught that a way of speaking in a given situation is "appropriate" and others are "inappropriate." Like language, notions of propriety change over time. In one example Lippi-Green makes this point by contrasting a statement about the notion that "a woman should not contradict her husband " (Lippi-Green, 1997, 107) against the statement "it is inappropriate for a law student to ask a question in Hawai'ian Creole English" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 107). Obviously, the day of wide acceptance for the first statement has passed. The second statement, however, would be questioned by few "although the underlying issue, silencing of voices considered unworthy or unequal, is the same" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 107). That is, indeed, an important point to make.

Non-mainstream language is trivialized. "Non-mainstream accents and varieties of English can be handled in a number of ways in the subordination process. The most common one is trivialization, or humor" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 68). It could be argued that

at least part of Jeff Foxworthy's career is based on this. In his comedy routines about southern accents (redneck accents), Foxworthy will hold up a card with a "word" on it. The word "jeet" is one that he uses. For Foxworthy, "jeet" is part of the phrase "jeet yet" meaning “have you eaten” (The Southern Words Home Page, http://netsquirrel.com/crispen/word_i_to_l.html). The fact that words are conveyed as misspelling (the lay way to represent phonemic structure), implies ignorance on the part of the speaker (who is, in essence, speaking in misspellings) despite the fact that there is no grammatical irregularity in the statement "Did you eat yet?"

Conformers are held up as positive examples. The musical *My Fair Lady* (and the play *Pygmalion* on which the musical is based) could be an entertainment example of this postulate. Lippe-Green points to news stories (both print and televised) that showcase accent reduction programs and how they laud the accented people who attend such programs to become "standardized." A telling example is an article she used concerning one such program:

> "No matter how qualified a person is, a voice twisted by regional or ethnic influences can be a stumbling block socially and professionally. If others can't understand you or your words are too richly flavored with down-home spice, you could find all your skill and intelligence thwarted by a telltale tongue" (Kerr, 1994, in Lippi-Green, 144).

Explicit promises are made. Promises of better job opportunities, educational opportunities, and social opportunities "are usually merely implied, but there are occasions on which they are verbalized more clearly" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 69). Recently, Jenny Wiley Theater, in Eastern Kentucky’s Jenny Wiley State Park (Pike County)

started an accent reduction program for young actors and students interested in public speaking or communication. It is easy to understand why actors of any region may want to study accent to become more diverse, more marketable actors. However, “they are now considering an adult class because they received so many adults interested is losing their accents for the workplace” (Stanley, 2005, 1A). As with Lippi-Green’s (1997) examples of the way news agencies often do stories on accent reduction programs, Stanley (2005) reports that NBC News (national) sent a crew to Kentucky to cover the accent reduction program and interview local adults.

Threats are made. Threats, on the other hand, are more up front, "in which each of the dominant bloc institutions points to the next as proof that resistance is utterly useless" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 69). Stanley (2005) also reports that “[*e*]ven people who stay in the [*Eastern Kentucky*] region and have nothing to do with the performing arts, especially those in white-collar jobs, have had to learn to drop the accent on occasion or risk being looked down upon” (Stanley, 2005, 1A). More serious than being looked down upon is the threat that a person will not be able to get a good white collar job, especially if that job deals with customers and employees from other parts of the country. Lippi-Green (1997) explains how ‘dominant bloc institutions’ work together to pressure individuals with stigmatized accents to alter their accent: "Educators point to the expectations of the business sector; the judicial system points back to the educational system. The broadcast and print media, as well as the entertainment industry, reinforce the message in a variety of ways" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 173).

The way a person talks, a person's accent, is a part of their social identity. When that accent is associated with a disadvantaged or unappealing social group, pressure is

applied to lose or soften the socially stigmatized accent, lest others will think of that person as uneducated or any number of other unappealing character traits. In the extreme, that person will not be eligible for the same types of opportunity as those privileged to have grown up with a more "socially acceptable" accent.

Non-conformers are vilified or marginalized. This, according to Lippi-Green, "[*a*]t its most brutal…turns into personal attacks on whole groups of people. This is often done from *within* the community (Lippi-Green, 1997, 69)….. "Of course, the internal criticism has its genesis outside the community; it must be imported" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 250). For example, researchers have traditionally "collected, classified, and represented knowledge" (Goldstein, 2002, 55) about groups marked by difference to a mainstream audience…."In turn, this knowledge has been represented back, through the eyes" (Goldstein, 2002, 55) of mainstream readers to the members of the marked group.

Over time, members of the marked group begin to look toward certain group members as exemplary and, therefore, guilty of perpetuating the (mis)representation, *guilty of causing* others in the community to endure the associated stereotype (Fanon, 1967). The stereotype is projected onto a group by the outside/elite, is disseminated via mass media to the many (including the stereotyped minority), and, within the stereotyped community, is blamed on certain members of the community by other members of the community. This is a sort of distillation process wherein the stereotype is filtered to the masses, from the masses to the subgroup, then filtered by the subgroup to a subsubgroup. This would be the kind of thing we see within Appalachia wherein some people believe that the "real hillbillies" are in some small area within Appalachia, thus consenting to the

existence of hillbillies while rejecting the imposition of the notion on one's self or community.

Theories Connected to the Language Subordination Process

To understand how language subordination works on a larger scale, Lippi-Green (1997) explains that one must first understand how it works on a conversational level. She connects language subordination to two communication processes: accommodation theory and Clark's "cognitive model of the communicative act" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 70).

Accommodation Theory

Accommodation theory gives insight into the predisposition one has toward understanding. Thakerar, Giles, & Cheshire (1982) found that "listeners and speakers will work harder to find a communicative middle ground and foster mutual intelligibility when they are motivated, socially and psychologically, to do so" (in Lippi-Green, 1997, 70). They also found that when a listener/speaker finds accommodation to be disadvantageous, s/he "may diverge even farther from the language" (in Lippi-Green, 1997, 70) of the accented listener/speaker. Imagine a situation where two friends from the same language community with similar accents are relaxing on a park bench and having a conversation. A stranger walks up and asks them a question in a stigmatized accent. If one of the friends on the park bench decides to accept the burden, the mutual responsibility, for meaningful interchange with the accented person, the friend on the park bench will have a tendency to speak in a more formal, more proper style than that person normally would speak. The friend on the park bench may also tend to do so *more loudly* than that person normally would have with a strange speaker/listener who comes

from the same speech community as that person (as if *amplification* can bridge distance on the dialect continuum).

Clark's Cognitive Model of the Communicative Act

Clark's cognitive model of the communicative act is "based on the principle of *mutual responsibility*" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 70). Collaboration is at the heart of this model. Lippi-Green's language subordination model draws on Clark's notion of "communicative burden":

> "Many purposes in conversation, however, change moment by moment as the two people tolerate more or less uncertainty about the listener's understanding of the speaker's references. The heavier burden usually falls on the listener, since she is in the best position to assess her own comprehension" (Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986, 34; in Lippi-Green, 1997, 70).

Through research, Lippi-Green found that the opposite is true when speakers encounter foreign accents or stigmatized accents. "What we will see again and again in the case studies…is that members of the dominant language group feel perfectly empowered to reject their role, and to demand that a person of accent carry the majority of responsibility in the communicative act" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 70). Furthermore, the case studies also show that mainstream speakers tend to try *harder* to understand other mainstream speakers that they have difficulty understanding. Rather than rejecting their fair share of communicative burden in these instances when another mainstream speaker is "incoherent or unclear," they tend to "take other factors into consideration" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 70), such as what may have caused the speaker to be unclear.

Linguistic Insecurity

Labov's (1982) concept of linguistic insecurity is used "to describe how speakers of peripheralized languages subordinate and devalue their own language in line with stigmatization which originates outside their communities" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 174). Labov also connects linguistic insecurity as an explanation for "hypercorrection" which "refers to the errors speakers make when they attempt to target norms" while using an accent other than their native accent. A local example of this would be the long and hard "I" that some native southern West Virginians often learn to make in place of a short "I" they learned at home. This would be the same type of overstressed "I" lampooned during comic impersonations of Vice President Al Gore's speech mannerisms by *Saturday Night Live's* Darrell Hammond (though Gore is certainly not from West Virginia, this is the most widely known example of this type of "I" pronunciation).

Strategies of Condescension

Bourdieu's (1991) "strategies of condescension" are described as tactics "whereby an empowered individual—someone with social legitimacy in terms of employment and language and other kinds of authority—appropriates the subordinated language for a short period of time" (Lippi-Green, 1997, 208). Strategies of condescension are important here because they are likely to fall into the larger category of Bourdieu's strategy of subversion (Boudieu, 1991, 68-69), with subversion being a key element in Lippi-Green's model of the Language Subordination Process.

"Because class is central to Bourdieu's approach to language" (Myles, 1999, 879), it is applicable to Lippi-Green's study of accent's role in linguistic discrimination given the inherent role of accent in denoting social, cultural, or ethnic ties. Bourdieu's

description of speech acts explains his conception of how accent, social norms, social background, language, and meaning are intertwined:

> "Every speech act and, more generally, every action is a conjuncture, an encounter between independent causal series. On the one hand, there are the socially constructed dispositions of the linguistic habitus, which imply a certain propensity to speak and to say determinate things (the expressive interest) and a certain capacity to speak, which involves both the linguistic capacity to generate an infinite number of grammatically correct discourses, and the social capacity to use this competence adequately in a determinate situation. On the other hand, there are the structures of the linguistic market, which impose themselves as a system of specific sanctions and censorships" (Bourdieu, 1991, 38; in Myles, 2003, 884).

These sanctions and censorships are what drives one accent to become subordinated to/by speakers of another accent as detailed by Lippi-Green (1997). From Bourdieu's perspective, competence requires not only the desire to speak, the ability to speak grammatically, and the social capacity to speak influentially. Competence can be enhanced or impeded by the way a person shapes words. In this respect, accent can afford or deny an individual symbolic power (a central concept in Bourdieu's work), which Bourdieu describes as:

> "Symbolic power—as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world, and, thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained

> through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization—is a power that can only be exercised if it is *recognized*, that is, misrecognized as arbitrary. This means that symbolic power does not reside in 'symbolic systems' in the form of an 'illocutionary force' but that it is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e., in the very structure of the field in which *belief* is produced and reproduced. What creates the power of words and slogans, a power capable of maintaining and subverting the social order, is the belief in the legitimacy of words and of those who utter them" (Bourdieu, 1991, 170).

According to Bourdieu, as well as Lippi-Green, those who speak from a position of power/privilege can use accent strategically to maintain the social order. Strategies of condescension can involve adopting the subordinated accent of the audience (be it one or many). The goal of such a strategy can be either to gain favorable acceptance with those who speak with such an accent or to chide the speaker of the subordinated accent for the way they speak.

Other Studies Using Lippi-Green's Framework

Lippi-Green has used her theory in explaining/researching "ebonics" (African American Vernacular) and in a number of articles dealing with the German language. However, her theories have also been found useful to several other researchers.

Heilman (2004) researched the role of multicultural education addressing the needs of ethnic whites and the lack of treatment of the experiences of marginalized whites in such materials. "Without explicit curriculum that addresses the historical experiences, local culture, language, dialect, learning styles, school experiences, and even

popular cultural representations of marginalized ethnic white students, pre-service teachers can easily transmit cultural and social class bias and are at risk of neglecting or misinterpreting the needs of many students" (Heilman, 2004, 76). Heilman uses Lippi-Green's work to explain evidence in her research showing that some of these students, from poor, rural white backgrounds with accents marking them as "hoosiers, hicks, and hayseeds" in inner-city schools are discriminated against based on the way they talk.

Goldstein (2002) researched the usefulness of Lippi-Green's framework (as well as theories by Bourdieu and Norton) in an ethnographic playwriting workshop in which high school students wrote about their experiences with language (and with being accented and encountering accents) and found it to be useful. The difficulties in dealing with communication as a speaker with a nonnative (in this case, Chinese) accent described by the student play example fit cleanly with Lippi-Green's Language Subordination Process.

Greene (2003) explored how Appalachians in Eastern Kentucky perceived others' notions of their identity and the stigmatization of Appalachian English. Greene used a survey to gather data concerning the Language Subordination Process from participants. She found support for all but one step in Lippi-Green's process. Interestingly, the factor with which her results disagreed was: respondents did not see their accents as stigmatized nor feel discriminated against on the basis of their accents.

Cavanaugh (2005) found Lippi-Green’s (1997) study of media representations of characters with accents “suggests that the circulation of accents in the media is a rich arena for investigation” (Cavanaugh, 2005, 131). Cavanaugh (2005) conducted similar

research media representations of the Bergamasco accent (a northern Italian accent) following similar methods as Lippi-Green.

These studies point toward the usefulness of Lippi-Green's (1997) Language Subordination Process as a framework and the usefulness of Lippi-Green's lines of research into stereotyping media representations of accented characters.

Chapter Four

Stereotyping

As the previous chapters have shown, stereotyping is a relevant factor where accent and linguistic discrimination are concerned. Lippman's (1936) description of stereotypes as "pictures in our heads" is one of the most well-known simple definitions of stereotype. Gudykunst & Kim (1992b) write that "Stereotyping is a natural result of the communication process. We cannot not stereotype. Anytime we categorize others our stereotype of that category is activated" (Gudykunst & Kim, 1992b, 133). Stereotypes reside along a continuum anchored by positive and negative. They are the categories in which we place people.

This chapter concentrates on stereotyping in two ways. First, the process of stereotyping and how this process leads to stereotype-based expectancies that affect communication will be discussed. Then, a detailed discussion of stereotyping as it pertains to West Virginia and to film representations of people who live in mountains follows.

The Process of Stereotyping

Three key aspects of stereotypes were identified by Hewstone & Brown (1986). First, people are put into categories, "usually on the basis of easily identifiable characteristics such as sex or ethnicity" (Hewstone & Brown, 1986, 29). Second, a set of characteristics is attributed to all members of a category. And, third, that same set of characteristics is attributed to individual members of a category.

Stereotypes generally fall into two categories: normative and nonnormative (Vassiliou et al., 1972). A normative stereotype is a way of thinking about a group of

people that is learned from movies, television, books, historical events, and education. In other words, it's what we think of as "normal" for a group of people we only know about from mediated sources. A nonnormative stereotype is a way of thinking about a group of people that is not learned from a mediated source. With this type of stereotype a person isn't familiar with the group to which another person belongs and tends to assume that the other person and their group must be basically like himself or herself.

Hewstone & Giles (1986) studied the stereotyping process and found that there are at least four basic generalizations about the way stereotypes are formed in the mind: “First, stereotyping is the result of our tendency to overestimate the degree of association between group membership and psychological attributes” (in Gudykunst & Kim, 1992a, 93). When an individual’s knowledge of the other person’s group is derived from media representations of the group with which the individual associates the other person as having certain attitudes, beliefs, and norms, the individual will tend to extend the attribution of the media-projected attitudes, beliefs, and norms onto the other person.

“Second, stereotypes influence the way we process information” (in Gudykunst & Kim, 1992a, 93). In this respect, researchers have found there is a tendency to remember unfavorable information about people who do not belong to the same group we do and to remember favorable information about people who belong to the groups we do, which affects one’s interpretation of messages.

“Third, stereotypes create expectations regarding how members of other groups will behave” (in Gudykunst & Kim, 1992a, 93). This causes one to not only assume we know how another will act, but also causes one to look for cues that our expectations are correct.

"Fourth, our stereotypes constrain others' patterns of communication and engender stereotype-confirming communication. Stated differently, stereotypes create self-fulfilling prophecies" (in Gudykunst & Kim, 1992a, 93). This leads one to not only see evidence that confirms the stereotypic belief, but also leads one to ignore evidence that disconfirms that belief.

Stereotype-Based Expectancies

Stereotype-based expectancies influence how we perceive others and vice versa. Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvulo (1990) "define a stereotype as a cognitive structure containing the perceiver's knowledge and beliefs about a social group and its members" (Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvulo, 1990, 135). This prior knowledge and belief, whether gained via mass media or personal experience, creates expectations about how members from a group about which we hold a stereotype will be.

"Stereotype-based expectancies operate as initial and tentative hypotheses that are then to be assessed—to be confirmed or disconfirmed in light of subsequent information" (Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvulo, 1990, 143). But, these expectancies/hypotheses also shape the type of information a perceiver seeks to either validate or negate the expectation and how the perceiver processes that information, thus making them tend to be self-fulfilling prophecies.

Research has shown that a number of strategies can undermine this process and negate the self-fulfilling prophecy. Hilton & Darley (1985) found that "targets who were made aware of a perceiver's negative expectancy were successful in modifying the perceiver's perceptions of them on that attribute. Similarly, if the perceiver anticipates working with the target person (Darley, Fleming, Hilton, & Swann, 1988) or is motivated

to form an accurate impression of the target (Neuberg, 1989)" (Hilton & Darley, 1985; in Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvulo, 1990, 151), then the perceiver is less likely to hold fast to the initial expectancy.

Similarly, Hill & Augoustinos (2001) found that at a group level, training that included members from both the stereotyped group and a more 'mainstream' group could be successful in changing the attitudes and stereotypes held against the stereotyped group. For this to be successful, "for stereotype change to occur, stereotype-disconfirming information must be dispersed" (Hill & Augoustinos, 2001). When mass media consistently portrays any group stereotypically, they are doing the opposite—they are confirming and upholding stereotypes.

Stereotyping and West Virginia

As West Virginia is the only state wholly within Appalachia, Appalachian stereotypes are also West Virginia's stereotypes. From the earliest written documents to the present, people who chose to live in mountainous regions have been marked for difference, often in negatively stereotypical ways (Cunningham, 1991). West Virginia's history of having a negative stereotype is particularly strong. West Virginia came to statehood during the Civil War, separating from Virginia following Virginia's secession from the United States, a move that was met with positive press in the northern states, negative press in the southern states, and both positive and negative reactions within West Virginia (Lang, 1895).

Following the Civil War, the first years of statehood were met with much bad press. Other states attempted to force dissolution of West Virginia in part or in whole through lawsuits (Smith, 1929). The depth to which West Virginia was vilified is

exemplified by, “Henry A. Wise’s post-war declaration that West Virginia was ‘a bastard child of a political rape’” (Stealey, 1993, 7), a phrase that was still in parlance at the time of the Mine Wars in the 1920s (Steel, 1995, 42).

West Virginia again gained national recognition during the local color movement of the 1870s and 1880s in American reporting. This movement spawned “a new self-contained image linked to a specific geographical locale—the dualistic icon of the hillbilly-mountaineer” (Harkins, 2004, 29). Local color pieces were written for magazines whose audiences were urban and upwardly mobile. The point of these pieces was to feature a little-known or out-of-the-way place with an emphasis on the peculiarity of local inhabitants. This movement exemplified Said’s (1994) notion of creating a discourse of an Other (a thread that runs throughout stereotypical literary and mass media depictions of a people). Of this movement, Harkins (2004) writes:

> “In the age of faith in American, and more generally Western, intellectual, cultural, and social superiority over the other ‘races’ of the world, these writings were designed to show not cultural differences so much as cultural hierarchy—to celebrate modernity and ‘mainstream’ progress and values by emphasizing the inferiority and alien nature of alternative cultures and societies, be they exotic, picturesque foreign locales and peoples or ethnically and geographically distinct societies in the United States….It was in this context that a coherent place—‘Appalachia’—and a unique people—the Appalachian ‘mountaineers’—reached national consciousness. Between 1870 and 1890, local colorists published over ninety travel sketches and 125 short stories about the region,” (Harkins, 2004, 29-30).

These writers presented the male mountaineers as illiterate, moral, proud, melancholy, poor whites living at a slow pace in the "perpetual past" in the isolated backwoods (Harkins, 2004). Even the anatomy of mountaineers was presented as different: long boned with angular/contoured faces and "harsh features" (Harney, 1873). The female counterpart to the mountaineer also began to take on the familiar stereotypes that have been portrayed female Appalachians for decades to follow: "the beautiful but ignorant mountain lass; the overworked and crudely attired drudge who struggles to care for her oversized family; or…the bonneted, toothless crone who lives out her remaining years smoking a corncob pipe awash in a haze of melancholia" (Harkins, 2004, 32-33).

During the 1880s and the 1890s, these local color images of Appalachians started to shift in a more negative direction to be "not just out of step with but actually…a threat to civilization" (Harkins, 2004, 34). Lawlessness, moonshining, and feuds began to figure prominently in the national representations of the Appalachian mountaineer, as the mountaineer icon began to shift toward a hillbilly-mountaineer icon. It was during this period that West Virginia again came to the attention of national newspapers in stories about the Hatfield-McCoy feud.

The Hillbilly

"Of all the conflicts in the southern mountains, none fired the public imagination more than the Hatfield-McCoy feud" (Harkins, 2004, 36). The images of "Devil Anse" Hatfield in his wide, floppy brimmed hat with a long beard and a rifle in his hands, Williamson (1995) argues, may have served as the prototype for the hillbilly in films. The fictional novels of mountain feuds inspired by the Hatfield-McCoy feud, cemented the hillbilly as an icon with certain qualities: "a surly disposition, bare feet, long scruffy

beard, suspender clad overalls, shapeless oversized felt hat, moonshine jug or flask, and long-barreled rifle" (Harkins, 2004, 39).

Harkins (2004) traces the word "hill billy" to the 1900s in Arkansas, over the next decade the label spread to other states but did not become widely used until 1915 and did not have a single standard spelling until the 1930s. Wide dissemination of the term began in 1915 with some of the earliest movies. Both Harkins (2004) and Williamson (1995) discuss the prevalence of silent movies about hillbillies. It was during this period that the violent, lawless aspects of the hillbilly stereotype began to be extended to "manly gun-toting women" (Harkins, 2004, 59) as well. As is often the case with films, with popularity, parody followed and the dimwitted, overexcited hillbilly clown came forth.

Harkins (2004) also traces another aspect of the hillbilly icon—inbreeding—to a surprising beginning. In a 1914 pamphlet written by a North Carolina minister, the author "praises their Anglo-Saxon purity and generally strong work ethic and acknowledges the extreme hardships of their mountain existence, as well as the excesses of the prevalent stereotype…[*then*] regularly refers to them as unhealthily inbred and insular, quick to take offense, and 'peculiar'" (Harkins, 2004, 64).

From the 1900s into the 1920s, the unionization movement in West Virginia gained national attention as the West Virginia Mine Wars. Harkins (2004) discusses how industrialization, strikes, and absentee ownership helped to transform the mountaineer image into the hillbilly image. Social reformers' critiques of company town practices (low pay, poor living conditions, dangerous working conditions, and the employment of children) began to circulate nationally.

> "In response, industrialists launched a public relations campaign designed to illustrate the backward and unhealthy life ways of hill people and the supposed advantages of town life and to present themselves as agents of benevolence" (Harkins, 2004, 56).

Efforts on the part of the UMW's unionization movement, including the speeches of Mother Jones, likely furthered the publicized images of West Virginians that served to feed this kind of stereotype, though Mother Jones's intentions in West Virginia were stated to be on behalf of gaining better working conditions and wages for the miners. Mother Jones was a public speaker who traveled the United States fighting for better working conditions for a number of groups. She was masterful at gaining publicity for herself and her causes (Tonn, 1996). As well as speaking for strikers, she spoke at national union gatherings and at ticketed events in large northern cities (Steel, 1988; Tonn, 1996). Her descriptions of the West Virginia miners and West Virginia further publicized West Virginians as poor, ignorant, too lazy to fight without agitation, and living with unfair laws and scrupulous lawman (another form of lawlessness), despite her goal of bettering the conditions that faced West Virginians (text of speeches in Steel, 1988), as they were the only descriptions offered. The most well-known quote from Mother Jones on West Virginia is, "There is never peace in West Virginia because there is never justice. Injunctions and guns, like morphia, produce a temporary quiet… When I get to the other side, I shall tell God Almighty about West Virginia" (Jones, 1925, 235).

Also in the 1920s, the "farcical tradition in much early country music" (Harkins, 2004, 76) and film comedies featuring hillbillies brought the "buffoon" and "bumpkin" aspects of the hillbilly stereotype forward. By the 1930s, cartoons began to further

cement certain tropes of the hillbilly stereotype. Paul Webb's "The Mountain Boys" cartoon series in *Esquire* magazine continually showed the titular family with the qualities of "social isolation, physical torpor and laziness, filth and animality, comical violence, and utter ignorance of modernity" (Harkins, 2004, 105). Webb's hillbilly males were also backward, unclean, sexualized, and sometimes having incestuous boundary-crossing overtones (like showing the boys peeking at their grandmother in her underwear). His hillbilly females were "perpetually pregnant and fertile" (Harkins, 2004, 107), married at a young age, and hard working (because the men were lazy).

Harkins also cites magazine articles and medical journal articles of the 1930s further spreading the belief that people who lived in mountain communities were unclean, inbred, incestuous, and illegitimate. These 'more legitimate' articles gave credence to the images portrayed in *The Mountain Boys* and later portrayed in *Snuffy Smith* and *L'il Abner*.

Where DeBeck's *Snuffy Smith* focused more on the differences between mountain folk and other people, Al Capp's *L'il Abner* showed the "mountain village of Dogpatch as a fantastical setting for morality tales that exposed what he saw as humankind's venality and cruelty" (Harkins, 2004, 125) functioning as political and social satire. With the character of L'il Abner came the image of a young, good-looking, strong, naïve, nonmaterialistic, and morally pure hillbilly male. The Mammy Yokum character's desire "to protect her family and community…[*and her*] unalloyed common sense that can cut through the duplicity and confidence scams of city slickers" (Harkins, 2004, 132) is an archetype seen again and again for hillbilly mother figures. The buxom Daisy Mae character inspired numerous later representations of hillbilly females who are seen as

innocent, pure of heart, naïve, and beautiful. The other characters that populate Dogpatch are physically grotesque:

> "They walk around barefoot and in rags, think only of sex and food, and are utterly ignorant of and confused by the modern world beyond their mystical realm. Embracing myriad stereotypes about mountaineer primitiveness, Capp based countless episodes on the Dogpatchers' supposed filth, sloth, sexual promiscuity, bestiality, and social and cultural backwardness" (Harkins, 2004, 133).

With the advent of television, the number of television series from *The Real McCoys* to *The Beverly Hillbillies* (and its spin-offs) to *The Andy Griffith Show*, brought the hillbilly icon and its associated tropes into the American consciousness more often than any other media (Harkins, 2004). Alongside these fictional depictions, news coverage of Johnson's "War on Poverty" and the televised documentary *Christmas in Appalachia* most often showed only the most impoverished portions of Appalachia (Evans, Santelli, & George-Warren, 2004).

The Movies and the Mountains

J. W. Williamson's (1995) book *Hillbillyland: What the Movies Did to the Mountains and What the Mountains Did to the Movies* offers the most extensive look to date at filmic stereotyping of people who live in mountains. Williamson's conception of the hillbilly extends beyond the geographic bounds normally associated with the stereotype. For Williamson:

> "The hillbilly lives not only in the hills but on the rough edge of the economy, wherever that happens to land him….we [*the middle class audience*] take secret

> pleasure in the trashing of hallowed beliefs and sacred virtues—not to mention hygiene. Secret pleasure is guilty pleasure, and guilt begs containment. So we have made the hillbilly safely dismissable, a left-behind remnant, a symbolic non-adult and willful renegade from capitalism….Free of our squeamishness, the hillbilly thrives in squalor. He's the shadow of our doubt. And he is most frequently, male. Even as a she, the hillbilly is often a mock male. As a man or a woman, he/she stirs ambiguity about what is 'natural,' whips us between our patriotic belief that sheer gonads built the Republic and our terror that sheer gonads might also rape the last living organism on the planet" (Williamson, 1995, *ix*).

Williamson (1995) offers a typology of stereotypical characterizations of mountain people and hillbillies in film. The bulk of his book concentrates on male character types, with only one chapter devoted to female character types. His system of labeling these archetypes is creative, but his labels do not lend themselves to easy use without explanation. A detailed explanation of the types laid out by Williamson follows.

The Hillbilly as Fool – This is the bumpkin-type of hillbilly played in comedies; one who isn't familiar with modern ways. Ingratiating, unintelligent, and happy-go-lucky this type of characterization was seen in Gomer Pyle on television.

The Hillbilly as Priapus – This is the sex-obsessed type of hillbilly also played in comedies. "The hillbilly milieu as a paradise of unbridled lust is practically an industry standard in much soft-core porn" (Williamson, 1995, 62).

The Coonskin Cap Boys – This is the type of "man who penetrates the frontier and is intimate with natural chaos" (Williamson, 1995, 73). This type of character is based on Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett.

The Hillbilly as Social Bandit – Williamson bases this archetype on Jesse James and also comically refers to this type of character as "rube-in-hoods" (Williamson, 1995, 102). Though filmed long after Williamson wrote his book, a modern example of this archetype would be the "heroes" in the film *O, Brother Where Art Thou.*

The Good Old Boys – This type of character is exemplified by the males in movies like the films *Thunder Road, Smokey and the Bandit* and the television series *The Dukes of Hazard*. These characters are similar to the social bandits discussed above, but are not career criminals. Instead, their fun just happens to be against the law—a sort of social bandit without a victim. Bootlegging, moonshining, fast cars, car races, and car chases with the law, are all staples of these types of movies. Williamson extends this category to include any movies involving NASCAR.

More than Dogpatch: The Mountains as Monstrous. Movies in this category include *The Mountain Men, Deliverance, The Evil Dead*, and *Pumpkinhead*. "These movies don't just reflect our fear of nature; they actively teach that fear with the subverting thought that nature can easily have us for supper…So don't go beyond where the pavement ends" (Williamson, 1995, 151). The heroic men who populate these movies are heroically brave and virtuous. These hero characters (hero mountain men) are the same as those in *Next of Kin* (and Williamson extends this heroic type to the Clarice Starling character in *The Silence of the Lambs*). The villainous men who populate these movies are indeed monstrous, as with the hillbillies in the infamous rape scene in

Deliverance and the villain in *Cape Fear*—in either case the hillbilly who knows no sexual bounds. *Deliverance* also show a different type of hillbilly as monster—the product of inbreeding.

The Mama's Boys – Though this type of character is a boy-man imbued with goodness, "every one of these stories ends with a living affirmation of the necessity to be very, very dangerous" (Williamson, 1995, 173) generally in order to protect family or country. *Sergeant York* is given as an example of this archetype.

Though Williamson's (1995) treatment focuses mostly on male character types, he offers five character types for female hillbillies in the one chapter devoted to female characters. Williamson's "hillbillyland" is a place where women have the freedom to *be* men: i.e., tote guns, fight back, cross-dress, and even live as a man. But, this "democracy" is a sham/shame in that it is a "democracy of violence" fraught with physical danger, a "democracy of victimization" from which depictions of poverty and injustice are spread, and a "democracy of sexuality" wherein buxom women can achieve a type of equal status.

The Uppity Woman – The first type given and the first portrayal of a hillbilly woman on film, was an uppity woman who would brandish a gun, fight like a man in a feud or earn a living (sometimes running a moonshine still) if no men were present to do either for her. This archetype, of course, is "cured" and restored to womanhood by marrying and moving into a town.

The Cross-Dresser – The second type was a cross-dresser who both dressed and lived as a man. The cross-dressers in early films, much like the uppity women, were "cured" by either getting married or reverting back to a typically female role with

typically female dress. In the later films, cross-dressers were often scapegoats or comic characters later corrected by marrying a man of wealth and status who dressed her in the finest women's clothes.

The Mannish Misfit – From the late 1950's to the present, female hillbilly characters are more often portrayed as one of three types. The first stereotypic character type is a mannish misfit who may cross-dress or simply be unpreened and who wields power over a man or men (often in simply telling them what to do). Order in these instances is restored by a man taking control from her (often by putting her in her place) and/or restoring her to feminine duties and ways (in this case, though, it is not portrayed as a happy ending).

The Poverty Mama – The second type is the poverty mama who leaves the hills for an urban area (often after poverty has forced the move) and, despite her lack of formal education, "teaches goodness to the urban rich anyway" (Williamson, 1995, 247). These characters have more recently been sometimes portrayed as getting rich themselves while away from the hills. Whether rich or not, by the end, normalcy is restored when the poverty mama moves back to the hills. *Coal Miner's Daughter*, though an exceptionally well-received portrayal, fell into this category.

The Burlesque – The third type is burlesque wherein a buxom beauty in the entertainment industry can gain wealth, prestige, and even a bit of respect despite displaying a grotesque voluptuousness all the while. The dancer Blaze Starr and singer Dolly Parton are examples of this type, and they will not be restored to order as it was known before. Williamson ends by musing that this type may well be "a highly

successful hillbilly scapegoat…easily marginalized and controlled" (Williamson, 1995, 261).

Though there are a wide variety of characteristics in Harkins's (2004) history of the hillbilly as an icon and a number of different character types of hillbillies discussed in Williamson's (1995) study of mountain people in film, they are still nonetheless both discussing typical hillbilly stereotypes. And, after all, stereotypes do not reflect the rich differences that can be found in real West Virginia communities. In the foreword to *Back Talk from Appalachia: Confronting Stereotypes* (Billings, Norman, & Ledford, 1999), Ronald Eller refers to this need to change the images perpetuated about Appalachians:

> "…not only do the prevailing images of Appalachia blame the victim for Appalachia's problems, but they trivialize complex political and economic issues facing the region to the level of personality traits and cultural quirks. Moonshiners, welfare cheats, coal miners and other Appalachian "types" distance us from the political and economic realities of the region….[*and*] obscures the diversity of conditions, relationships, and cultures within Appalachian society itself—diversity of race, gender, and class as well as diversity of religion, education, and history….How we see ourselves, as individuals and as a region, is shaped in part by how others see us. Confronting stereotypes, understanding the motivations and ideologies that generate them, is an important initial step toward self-determination—toward empowerment and the ability to shape an alternative future" (Eller, 1999, in Billings, Norman, & Ledford, 1999).

Chapter Five

Findings

All of the concepts discussed in the previous chapters—accent, linguistic discrimination, stereotyping, and film representations of people who live in mountains—were factors in this study (as described in Chapter One). The findings for each of the ten films in the sample population are discussed on a film-by-film basis. An overview of all films follows, giving sample-wide findings. For each film, data are presented in three sections: accent, stereotyping, and a summary showing the relationship between accent and stereotyping. In the overview of all films, tables are used to show accent data and the relationship between accent and stereotyping across the sample. In addition, a thematic analysis of the body of ten films is presented.

Findings for Individual Films

The data for each film in the sample follows. Films are listed in chronological order of release date, with the most recent listed first. Data analysis for each film is presented in three sections: accent, stereotyping, and a summary of the relationships between accent and stereotyping.

Win a Date with Tad Hamilton! (Luketic, 2004)

Accent. Of the 26 speaking characters in this film, 4 were found to have Southern Mountain accents, 19 were found to have Mainstream US accents, and 3 were found to have other accents. Many of the characters purported to be from West Virginia were coded as having Mainstream US accents. No main character was coded as having a Southern Mountain accent or other accent.

Stereotyping. Being a romantic comedy for a teen audience, stereotypes abound in this film. However, the characters coded as having Mainstream US accents are more stereotypically drawn than those with Southern Mountain accents. Characters with other accents were marginal but all displayed some stereotypic quality.

Of the four characters that coders scored to have Southern Mountain accents, only one was on screen long enough to gather a substantial amount of data. That character, a hotel clerk, was stereotypical and fits Williamson's (1995) category of *hillbilly as fool.* He is played as an ingratiating, overexcited, unintelligent, comic foil. The other three Southern Mountain accented characters are only on screen for less than a minute, and all are in the same scene. The only information that could be gathered about these three characters was that two had low-paying jobs: a waitress and a cook. The third was a diner customer.

The characters coded with other accents were bartender, a maid, and a grocery store clerk. The bartender is stereotypical in being poorly dressed, exudes sexuality, and displays a kind of greater knowledge of the nature of man that Lippi-Green (1997) says is associated with common folk in the South; however, the same could be said for the stereotype of bartenders. The maid and grocery store clerk character were only on screen for less than a minute, so little information about could be gleaned. However, the Albanian maid was grumpy and frumpy, and the African-American grocery store clerk did shout out the obligatory, "You go girl."

As stated before characters who were unaccented displayed more stereotypical traits than did the accented ones, but most of these were main characters. Rosalee Futch, the West Virginia girl who wins the date with Tad Hamilton, is a type of Daisy Mae (with

more education and less buxomness). She is beautiful, pure of heart, innocent, naïve, and in an extended scene shown to be out of step with modernity (though this scene may be aimed at making California seem to be out of step with normalcy). She also displays common sense, is literate, and could be representative of any "small town girl" by movie standards.

Cathy Feely, Rosalee's best friend, is a sex-obsessed, overexcited, clownish buddy sidekick. And, Rosalee's father is overly ingratiating and tries to act like a movie industry insider in almost a Jethro Bodine kind of way: wanting to discuss industry tidbits he's read in *Variety* with Tad without knowing that they are tidbits that wouldn't interest an actor.

However, the Hollywood characters in this film fare just as poorly. Tad Hamilton is the stereotypical playboy actor. And, his agent and manager are perhaps the most stereotypical characters of the film.

West Virginia plays the opposite of Hollywood in this film and is representative of small town America. This is certainly a step ahead of the way West Virginia is portrayed in the bulk of the other films in this study. Conversational data from the film support this notion:

Tad: Tell me again why you're making me have dinner with an Okie?
Richard: Because she's wholesome, wholesome as the amber waves of grain. And, she's not an Okie, she's from West Virginia.

. . . . .

Richard: A person like you cannot have a relationship with a person from Montana…
Tad: West Virginia
Richard: West Virginia…whatever it is…Your values are different… For example, she has them.

Summary: Six Mainstream US accented characters, one Southern Mountain accented character, and three other accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 100% of the other accented characters stereotypical, 32% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical, and 25% of the Southern Mountain accented characters stereotypical.

Wrong Turn (Schmidt, 2003)

Accent: Of the eleven speaking characters in this film, eight were found to have Mainstream US accents, two were found to have Southern Mountain accents, and one was found to have an other accent. This film was set in West Virginia. All of the Mainstream US speakers were purported to be from outside West Virginia.

Stereotyping: The eight Mainstream US accented teens represent "teen movie" normalcy. The two Southern Mountain accented characters are both stereotypical. One is an unkempt trucker who is quick to take offense at one of the "hero outsider" characters being in a hurry, and shows disdain for the young man's neat appearance. The other is a rundown ramshackle gas station proprietor who is a model of hillbilly stereotyping—missing teeth, wearing overalls, is dirty with unwashed, uncombed hair and is swigging on a bottle of Pepto-Bismol while the audience can hear the sound of flies buzzing around him (and see him halfheartedly swat them away). He also is unhelpful, shows some contempt for the young man, and is quick to take offense. (It is worth noting that there are three West Virginia characters portrayed as murderous hillbilly cannibals suffering from inbreeding-related psychosis, but they are bereft of language and, therefore, fall outside the scope of this study.)

This film is a gory horror film premised entirely on stereotype. This movie begins with a montage that sets the scene of the movie in West Virginia and grounds the horror to come on the worst of stereotypes: murderous psychotic inbred hillbillies. The montage is a series of disturbing images and a series of passing maps, newspaper headlines, medical texts, and missing person flyers or newspaper stories that set the tone for all the horrors to follow. The series of words that pass the screen alone serve to make the point where this film is leading. In order, they are: West Virginia, mountains, mountain men legend endures, myth takes on new, dating back to the late 1950s, facial deformity caused by inbreeding, deformity by inbreeding, genetic mutation, resistance to pain, wrong turn, inbreeding, inbred-related psychosis, strength, missing, rafters vanish, violent outburst, missing person, hiker disappears, local girl missing…"

Conversational exchanges that support stereotyping in this movie are:

Jessie: Oh, wait guys this road isn't on here.
Carly: That's because you don't have the redneck world atlas.

. . . . .

Scott: Maybe we should keep walking.
Carly: What, the next house is going to have a white picket fence?

. . . . .

Jessie: Hey, hey, what are you doing?
Chris: I was going to see if they had a phone. You guys can wait out here if you want.
Jessie: You can't just go barging into someone's house like that.
Scott: Hey, yeah, cause you know, I'm just thinking: West Virginia, trespassing—not a great combination.
Carly: Look, I need to pee.
Scott: Well, I need to remind you of a little movie called *Deliverance*.

. . . . .

Scott: I read in *Newsweek* how economically depressed places are like breeding grounds for all kinds of apocalyptic visionaries….not nice people.

This movie blends the horrors of *Deliverance* with the horrors of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. As with *Deliverance*, a film that has no connection with West Virginia, this film would fall under Williamson's category of *The Mountains as Monstrous*.

Summary: No Mainstream US accented characters, two Southern Mountain accented characters, and no other accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 100% of the Southern Mountain accented characters, 0% of the other accented characters stereotypical, and 0% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical.

The Mothman Prophecies (Pellington, 2002)

Accent: Of the 21 speaking characters in the movie, 8 were found to speak with Southern Mountain accents, 8 were found to speak with Mainstream US accents, and 5 were found to speak with other accents. This film was set in West Virginia and loosely based on true events, but all characters were fictionalized. All characters purported to be from West Virginia were found to have accents (8 Southern Mountain and 2 other).

Stereotyping: Seven characters in this film display stereotypical traits. Six of the West Virginia characters have stereotypical qualities. Five of these were found to have Southern Mountain accents. All five of these are poorly dressed (sometimes in mismatching clothing) and unpreened (often having dirty or unkempt hair). The females in this category appear to wear no makeup and show no concern for personal appearance other than being clean. Of the West Virginia characters, the Gordon Smallwood character displays more stereotypical traits than the others. In the first scene he is in, he greets a stranger at the door with a rifle, he is surly and quick to take offense, overexcited

at times (melancholy at other times), appears uneducated, as well as being unkempt and poorly attired.

One of the West Virginia characters was found to have an other accent, and she is portrayed with different stereotypical qualities: somewhat masculine, melancholy, proud, moral, and wielding power over men. One of the characters not from West Virginia who was found to have an other accent is a stereotypical academic whose subject includes unexplained mysteries.

In two passages of narrative data, the stereotypical off-the-beaten-path image of West Virginia is prominent:

Connie: What are you doing here?
Mr. Klein: Driving through.
Connie: We're not on the way to anywhere, Mr. Klein.

. . . . .

Ed: You're kidding? Something of national interest in West Virginia?

Narrative data from the film offers the first example of using accent as a symbol in a linguistic strategy to confront stereotyping (the first passage below). This appears to be an example of Bourdieu's strategies of condescension from a different angle—the adoption of a stronger version of one's own accent to chide the nonaccented Other into seeing that he or she was approaching a wrongful stereotype.

Connie: I grew up right over that hill.
Mr. Klein: On a farm.
Connie: (adopting a stronger, more mountainesque accent than her usual "other" accent in the film) Shucks, no, a real live house. We had indoor plumbing and everything.
Mr. Klein: Sorry.
Connie: We even had shoes for church and schooling and things.

Two further conversational passages are directly stereotype-disconfirming:

Connie: I recognize you….*DC Review*.
Mr. Klein: You watch that?
Connie: We're not all bumpkins.

. . . . .

Connie: The past few months, people have been coming up to me and reporting that they've been seeing strange things, and I'm not talking about the town speed freak. I'm talking about good, honest churchgoing people.

Summary: Five Southern Mountain accented characters, two other accented characters in this film, and no Mainstream US accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 63% of the Southern Mountain accented characters stereotypical, 40% of the other accented characters stereotypical, and 0% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical.

Hannibal (Scott, 2001)

Accent: The only West Virginia character featured in this film is Clarice Starling, and the character was found to have a Southern Mountain accent.

Stereotyping: Unlike the female hero role of Clarice Starling in *The Silence of the Lambs*, this film portrays a fallen hero succumbed to the unfairness of bureaucracy and sought like a prize by several nefarious characters, including Hannibal Lecter. Stereotypical qualities this Clarice shows include the being proud, melancholy, beautiful but unpreened, gun-toting, and somewhat masculine. And, as with *The Silence of the Lambs*, "her further struggle during the course of the movie is partly against her own West Virginia mountain heritage, which both defines her and limits her" (Williamson, 1995, 156).

Narrative data on stereotyping from this movie does not involve her accent. Rather, these exchanges involve stereotypes in a straightforward fashion.

Hannibal: (in a letter) What is worst about this humiliation, Clarice? Is it how your failure will reflect on your mommy and daddy? Is your worst fear that people will now and forever believe they were indeed just good old trailer camp tornado bait white trash and that perhaps you are too?

. . . . .

Hannibal: People don't always tell you what they are thinking. They just see to it that you don't advance in life.

. . . . .

Clarice: Paul, what is it with you? I told you to go home to your wife. That was wrong?
Krendler: Don't flatter yourself, Starling. That was a long time ago. Why would I hold that against you? Besides, this town is full of cornpone country pussy.

Summary: The one character in this film purported to be from West Virginia was found to display both a Southern Mountain accent and stereotypical qualities.

A Beautiful Mind (Howard, 2001)

Accent: Based on the life story of West Virginia native and Nobel Prize winner John Nash, this film only features one West Virginia character: Nash. This character was coded as having an other accent.

Stereotyping: The film concentrates on Nash's training at Princeton University, his life coping with schizophrenia after leaving Princeton, his eventual return to Princeton as faculty, and his acceptance of the Nobel Prize for Economics. As such, his connections to West Virginia play only a minimal role with setting his character early in the film. Other than one scene where he is depicted as barefoot in a library, any stereotypical traits he displays could just as easily be attributed to a 'genius bordering on

insanity' stereotype as one associated with West Virginia, for example, he is socially backward. This trait could be attributed to either category.

Though neither Williamson (1995) nor Harkins (2004) discusses insanity as an aspect of the stereotypes associated with Appalachia or the mountains, there is a long-running history of depictions of mountain people as "crazy" (Metcalf, 1991). However, there is a difference between being crazy (in the sense that the things one does are zany or make no sense) and being mentally ill; one could be said to be a personality trait, whereas the other is an illness. John Nash, by any measure, is a unique individual and cannot be said to be a stereotype. No narrative data supported stereotyping in this film, other than brief mention of poverty in West Virginia.

Summary: The one West Virginia character in this film was found to have an other accent and was not found to be stereotypical.

October Sky (Johnston, 1999)

Accent: Of the 52 speaking characters in this film, 22 were found to speak with a Southern Mountain accent, 23 were found to speak with a Mainstream US accent, and 7 were found to speak with other accents. Based on the biographical book *Rocket Boys* by West Virginia native Homer Hickam, this film was set in the 1950s in a coal mining town in southern West Virginia. The film focuses on four high school boys who, inspired by Sputnik, teach themselves how to build rockets and win the national science fair. A second focus of the film is the Hickam family's life and experiences with the coal industry.

Stereotyping: Of the four "rocket boys," all are presented with a small number of stereotypical features in that they are all poor and white, but these are not standout traits

in this film as the entire town is depicted as poor. Two of the rocket boys, Homer and Roy Lee, are shown as having a number of stereotypical traits. Homer is poor (but proud) with a strong work ethic, naïve, melancholy, backward with girls, and has quit school to go to work in the coal mines so that his family can continue to live in their company-owned house when his father is injured and cannot work for a period of time. The Roy Lee character often serves as comic relief presenting some of the *hillbilly as fool* (Williamson, 1995) characteristic. Roy Lee is also shown shooting a rifle, having a surly disposition, and sex-obsessed. All four of the boys discuss the social isolation of Coalwood and mention "the outside world."

The character of Homer's father, John Hickam, is shown as a coal miner who is surly, quick to fight, and melancholy. Homer's father is also shown to be proud and brave. Roy Lee's stepfather is also a coal miner and the "town drunk" who beats his stepchild. Homer's mother and his science teacher are shown as stereotypically strong females who are willing to fight back with men and extremely protective of the boys. Thirteen of the 52 speaking characters in this film are coal miners. One minor character is a moonshiner (whose moonshine the boys use as a liquid binder in their rocket fuel).

There are numerous conversational exchanges about the only future for young people in Coalwood being in the coal mines and discussion of the "lucky few" who may "get out on a football scholarship". These exchanges are generally concerned with showing that the boys do not need education. As that was an ugly truth in the West Virginia coalfields in the 1950s for most coal mining families, it is not presented here as a stereotype. The same type of exchange today, especially in light of West Virginia's

PROMISE Scholarship Program, would be stereotypical. That being accounted for, there is only one exchange in dialog that pertains to negative stereotyping:

Homer: We should be trying to get in that science fair instead of sitting around here like a bunch of hillbillies.
Roy Lee: I've got some bad news for you, Homer. We are a bunch of hillbillies.

This exchange is an example of the way that some West Virginians find it acceptable to call themselves and others close to them "hillbillies" but do not accept outsiders using that word in respect to them, as exemplified in this quote:

> "Like other provincials or nations within nations (Quebecois, Tyroleans, Manhattanites, and Scots come to mind), we appreciate our own distinctiveness, our language and folkways, and even take humorous pride in our provincial worldview. For example, we may affectionately call ourselves hillbillies, but we resent it when outsiders stereotype us that way." (Thorn, 2004, 1D).

Summary: Seven of the Southern Mountain accented characters, no other accented characters in this film, and no Mainstream US accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 32% of the Southern Mountain accented characters stereotypical, 0% of the other accented characters stereotypical, and 0% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical. If one were to consider coal miners as a stereotype for West Virginia (as discussed by Eller (1999) due to overrepresentation of this occupation in mass media), then ten of the Southern Mountain accented characters (or 45%), two of the Mainstream US accented characters (or 9%), and three of the other accented characters (or 43%) were stereotypical.

The Silence of the Lambs (Demme, 1991)

Accent: One main character (Clarice Starling) is depicted as being from West Virginia and was found to have a Southern Mountain accent. In addition, two scenes are presented as being set in West Virginia. Clarice Starling and the speaking characters in the two short West Virginia scenes were coded for accent. Of the eight characters coded in this film, five were found to speak with a Southern Mountain accent, one was found to speak with a Mainstream US accent, and one was found to speak with an other accent. The characters in this film are fictional.

Stereotyping: As earlier discussed, Williamson (1995) places the Clarice Starling character as a female version of the type of heroic man that populates the *mountains as monstrous* type movies, except the monster she faces is not in the mountains and her struggle "is partly against her own West Virginia mountain heritage, which both defines her and limits her" (Williamson, 1995, 156). In that respect, the Clarice Starling character could be said to be stereotypical, only instead of being male she is a somewhat masculinized female. As is true with this type of hero, she is moral, brave, ethical, and strong. Of the other West Virginia characters in this movie, only one is presented stereotypical traits: The sheriff is shown as having a surly disposition and to be unwelcoming and insular.

Narrative data from the film concerning accent includes one of the most well-known movie quotes about accent (shown on the following page).

Hannibal: You know what you look like to me, with your good bag and your cheap shoes? You look like a rube. A well scrubbed, hustling rube with a little taste. Good nutrition has given you some length of bone, but you're not more than one generation from poor white trash, are you, Agent Starling? And that accent you've tried so desperately to shed? Pure West Virginia. What's your father, dear? Is he a coal miner? Does he stink of the lamp? You know how quickly the boys found you... all those tedious sticky fumblings in the back seats of cars... while you could only dream of getting out... getting anywhere... getting all the way out to the FBI.

Bordieu's (1991) “strategies of condescension” is evident in this scene. Hannibal Lecter, though incarcerated, is empowered by a vast store of knowledge and an almost superhuman ability to read a person’s secrets by looking at them (by reading nonverbal cues). One of the elements of horror and fascination brought by the Hannibal Lecter character’s knowledge and people-reading abilities is his ability to seemingly at a glance *know* the other person’s darkest secrets. In the above passage he, “appropriates the subordinated language [*i.e., Clarice’s accent*] for a short period of time" (Lippi-Green, 208). The language of the passage fully supports the notion that he is doing so to show his power over Clarice.

In the part of the movie set in the West Virginia funeral home, there is a scene where Clarice is made uncomfortable by a group of West Virginia deputies standing and watching her. She speaks to them with a stronger accent or, as the term in accommodation theory would be for this type of talk, *converges* with their local speech norms to get them to leave out of respect for the dead girl and the dead girl’s family.

Clarice: Uh, ‘scuse me. ‘Scuse me, gentlemen. You officers and gentlemen, listen here now. Uh, there’s things we need to do for her. I know that y’all brought her this far and that her folks would thank you if they could for your kindness and sensitivity, but now please go on now and let us take care of her. Go on now. Thank you. Thank you.

Her accent is evident throughout the film, but more lightly than presented in the above scene. Her education and high marks at University of Virginia being discussed in prior scenes, along with her markedly better grammar and diction in prior scenes, make this scene stand out as one where accent is clearly being used to add meaning and create connections.

Summary: Of the seven West Virginia characters, one of the Southern Mountain accented characters, one other accented characters in this film, and no Mainstream US accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 20% of the Southern Mountain accented characters stereotypical, 100% of the other accented characters stereotypical, and 0% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical.

Blaze (Shelton, 1989)

Accent: One main character (Blaze Starr) is depicted as being from West Virginia. In addition, two scenes are presented as being set in West Virginia. Blaze Starr and the speaking characters in the two short West Virginia scenes were coded for accent. All four characters coded for this film were found to speak with a Southern Mountain accent. This film is based on an autobiographical book about the West-Virginia-born stripper Blaze Starr (born Fanny Belle Fleming) and her romantic relationship with Louisiana Governor Earl Long.

Stereotyping: The four speaking characters purported to be from West Virginia are Blaze Starr, her mother, sister, and brother. Blaze Starr is not only a stereotypical character, she is the inspiration for *The Burlesque* category in Williamson's (1995) typology of mountain characters in film. Through burlesque, Blaze has power over men which she uses to demand respect in real life. This type of power Williamson (1995)

terms a “democracy of sexuality” wherein buxom women can achieve a type of equal status. In the very early scenes of the film, Blaze is a type of Daisy Mae character: buxom, beautiful, pure of heart, and naïve. However, she quickly changes to her burlesque character.

Her mother, sister and brother are only shown in the parts of the film set in West Virginia. Their house looks like the stereotypical shack with a shed and coal pile in the yard. Their clothes are not rags, but they are humbly attired in what looks like Depression-Era dress during the 1950s. Her mother is the overworked and fertile type of female hillbilly character discussed by Harkins (2005), complete with a baby on her hip, a yard full of children and, though mentioned, no father in sight. In one scene, Blaze gives her mother a mink coat; in the next scene, the mother is shown wearing the mink while cutting potatoes into a boiling stew. Her sister and brother are shown as stereotypical overexcited children of a hillbilly brood.

Narrative data in this film supports the mother’s distrust of outsiders and lack of refinement, while yet possessing a deeper understanding of the ways of urban conmen. A conversational exchange between Blaze and Earl Long also shows the strength her character possessed.

Mama:	Now, baby doll, you will be careful won’t you? I mean you do understand about life and everything?
Belle/Blaze:	I know all about boys, mama.
Mama:	Yeah, but you gotta be careful of men.
Belle/Blaze:	Well, I thought I was looking for a man.
Mama:	Well, you is. It’s complicated. I mean there ain’t too many good ones out there like your daddy. And what you gotta do is….aw, you gotta just sort it out for yourself. But there is one thing I can tell you: Never trust a man who says trust me.

. . . . .

Blaze: Can I trust you?
Earl: Hell, no!
Blaze: No. What a wonderful thing to say.
Earl: …I do have a weakness for tough-minded, iron-willed, independent women, with big hooters.

Summary: All four speaking characters found to speak with Southern Mountain accents were stereotypical in this film.

Matewan (Sayles, 1987)

Accent: Of the 47 speaking characters in this film, 28 were coded as having Southern Mountain accents, 12 were coded as having Mainstream US accents, and 7 were coded as having other accents. This film is based on the historical Matewan Massacre in 1920. The Matewan Massacre took place during the West Virginia Mine Wars that ranged from the 1900s to the 1920s. During this period, another aspect of stereotyping of West Virginians began to circulate nationally.

The miners that populate *Matewan* are the type of miners described by Mother Jones and tainted by the public relations campaigns of industrialists mentioned by Harkins (2005). They live in a "democracy of violence" as described by Williamson (1995).

Stereotyping: Though based on historical events, four fictionalized characters were based on actual persons; the rest of the characters were wholly fictional. Of the 18 speaking coal miner characters, 12 are native whites, 5 are African-Amerian, and 1 is an Italian-speaking immigrant. For each of these three types of miners, there are large scenes with larger groups of men representing all three ethnic groups. According to Harkins (2004), hillbilly stereotypes are white and nonimmigrant. All of the miners are poor, live in awful conditions, and are often shown to be dirty. Ten white miners are

shown to be poor, proud, quick to fight, armed (mostly with long rifles), and uneducated. All five of the African-American miners are shown to be poor, proud, uneducated, but not as quick to fight. As the Italian miners speak in Italian, save one who speaks in broken English, education levels were impossible to gauge from speech; however, they are also poor and not as quick to fight.

Two of the white miners were very young. Though both of their ages were not made explicit (one was aged 14, the other's age was unstated), both were still being raised by widowed mothers and both demonstrate the characteristics of Williamson's (1995) *Mama's Boys* typology—according to Williamson (1995), the *Mama's Boy* does rise to the occasion to protect his family's rights, often violently. Both of the widowed mothers are protective, but one is the hardworking, gun-toting willing-to-fight variety and the other is more the melancholy crone type (often seen sitting forlornly outside her tent and grumbling about the foreigners in the neighboring tent) described by Harkins (2004).

The six speaking characters representing Baldwin-Felts agents are shown to be violent and unfair, but only two of the Baldwin-Felts agents were portrayed stereotypically. These agents, Hickey and Griggs, play central roles and are portrayed as villainous thugs, enjoying the power to perpetrate violence against the coal miners and local people alike.

The Bridey Mae character is shown as stereotypically overeager to get a man, poor, gullible, and uneducated. Her friend (not named) is employed to write a letter for Bridey Mae. Though her friend is more educated, her education is limited and Bridey Mae's letter is limited to words the letter writer can spell.

The town police chief is shown to be moral, proud, insular, and a protector of the miners who was willing to be violent. Even when not violent, he is shown with a surly disposition. The town mayor is shown to be somewhat backward, but still armed, brave, proud, and willing to fight.

The Hardshell Preacher character may represent another kind of Appalachian stereotype. His style of speaking, the material he chooses to preach, and the fact that he is shown to be against any talk of fair wages or anything that would upset the company town order all speak to another kind of Appalachian stereotype not detailed by Williamson (1995) or Harkins (2004)—the frightening preacher.

Two speaking characters are an old mountain couple who find an injured miner and take care of him. They are both shown to be uneducated, socially isolated, and surly. Two other speaking characters are stereotypical mountain men who would fall under Williamson's (1995) category of *Coonskin Cap Boys*. Though they wear the felt hat of the hillbilly, these characters "penetrate the frontier and are intimate with natural chaos". These two "hill people," as the film refers to them, are out of step with modernity, crudely attired (with one wearing the classic hillbilly rope belt despite the fact he is wearing bibbed overalls), uneducated, melancholy, quick to take offense, and live in social isolation. A conversational exchange about these characters exemplifies how those who would be stereotyped as hillbillies by the outside consider certain others in their area to be the "real hillbillies," as discussed previously:

Kenahan: They miners?
Mrs. Elkins: No. You'd never find them folks near a hole. They had most of their land stole by the company.
Bridey: They's hill people.
Mrs. Elkins: Well, foothill people really. Your genuine hill people, they can be dangerous.

Narrative data that supports stereotyping includes:

Kenahan: When do we get to Matewan?
Conductor: Oh, you don't wanna go there, Mister. Ain't nothing but crazy people.

. . . . .

Hickey: I think that you are real pretty. You know that, Bridey Mae.
Bridey Mae: Thank you.
Hickey: Don't you think she's pretty Griggsy?
Hickey: You are the best looking mountain trash I've seen in a long while, and we'll see you around.
Hickey: Let's roll, Griggsy. The sooner we get out of this shithole, the better.

. . . . .

Griggs: Damn hillbillies always gotta do it the hard way.

. . . . .

Griggs: Lord relies on little shits like this one to spread His Word. I don't want no truck with Heaven.
Hickey: And as for Hell, we've been to West Virginia.

Summary: Fifteen of the Southern Mountain accented characters, four of the Mainstream US accented characters, and no other accented characters were stereotypical in this film, making 54% of the Southern Mountain accented characters stereotypical, 33% of the Mainstream US accented characters stereotypical, and 0% of the other accented characters stereotypical. If one were to consider coal miners as a stereotype for West Virginia (as discussed by Eller (1999) due to overrepresentation of this occupation in mass media), then 21 of the Southern Mountain accented characters (or 95%), 5 of the Mainstream US accented characters (or 39%), and 5 of the other accented characters (or 71%) were stereotypical.

The Right Stuff (Kaufman, 1983)

Accent: One main character (Chuck Yeager) is depicted as being from West Virginia and was found to have an other accent. Additionally, the real Chuck Yeager plays a character named Fred in one scene. This character was found to have a Southern Mountain accent. This film is based on the novel *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe. The film recounts the Air Force test pilots at Edwards Air Force base during the Cold War, the beginning of the space program at NASA, and the missions of the Mercury astronauts.

Stereotyping: As a biographical film, Yeager's character cannot be said to be drawn stereotypically. However, he does embody that pioneer-type character that Williamson (1995) labeled as the *Coonskin Cap Boys* in that he is a pioneer and is intimate with natural chaos. He is also shown to be brave, nonmaterialistic, and possessing wisdom rooted in common sense. The fact that he did not go to college is portrayed prominently in the scene where the real Yeager plays Fred.

Fred is a stereotypical character, in the vein of the *Hillbilly as Fool* typology set down by Williamson (1995). Fred mugs while listening over the shoulders of the men who've come to look at test pilots as possibly becoming the first astronauts. He is dressed sloppily with a goofy hat pulled down too far on his head.

Summary: Both characters coded for this study were found to be stereotypical: one speaking with a Southern Mountain accent; the other speaking with an other accent.

Overview of All Films

In the following section, the data for the sample-wide findings from this study will be discussed in three parts: accent, stereotyping, and thematic analysis. The accent

overview will present the accent data for all films in one table. The stereotyping overview will present the number of stereotypic characters by accent (therefore, showing relationship between accent and stereotyping) for all films in two tables: one that excludes characters with the sole stereotypic characteristic of "coal miner" and one that includes such characters. The thematic analysis that follows the data sets looks at the sample body of films from a broader perspective in stereotyping, i.e., how central themes (such as economic, educational, etc.) in the stereotypical characteristics drawn from Harkins (2005) and Williamson (1995) were treated overall.

Accent Overview

Table 3 shows the total number of characters separated by accent for all films. Of a total number of 172 characters coded, 75 (or 44%) were found to have Southern Mountain accents, 71 (or 41%) were found to have Mainstream US accents, and 26 were found to have other accents.

Table 3. Overview of Accent Data

Film	Southern Mountain	Mainstream US	Other	Totals
Win a Date with Tad Hamilton	4	19	3	26
Wrong Turn	2	8	1	11
The Mothman Prophecies	8	8	5	21
A Beautiful Mind	0	0	1	1
Hannibal	1	0	0	1
October Sky	22	23	7	52
The Silence of the Lambs	5	1	1	7
Blaze	4	0	0	4
Matewan	28	12	7	47
The Right Stuff	1	0	1	2
Totals	75	71	26	172
Percentages	44%	41%	15%	

Stereotyping Overview

Tables 4 and 5 show the number of stereotypic characters grouped by accent in all films in the sample. The two tables differ in that Table 4 excludes characters where the sole indicator of stereotype was the occupation of coal miner and Table 5 includes such characters. This manner of presentation was chosen because there may be those who feel that including coal miner as a stereotype (especially in a sample where 20% of the films centered on coal mining towns) would skew the stereotyping numbers higher. And there may be those who question whether coal miner should be considered a stereotype because there are certainly West Virginians who are coal miners. Coal miner as a character indicative of West Virginia is considered a stereotype because of overrepresentation in media, as indicated by Eller (1999). Overrepresentation of any aspect of a people leads to limiting and confining what others believe of that people. In other words, it leads to ignoring the fact that there are areas in West Virginia where a person would be more likely to be in the chemical industry (Charleston, Dunbar, and Nitro, for instance), the automotive industry (Eleanor), or a university professor (Huntington and Morgantown, for instance) than they would be likely to be a coal miner.

As shown in Tables 4 and 5, characters found to have Southern Mountain accents in this sample were stereotypic more often than characters found to have Mainstream US or Other accents, regardless of whether coal miner was considered a stereotype or not. Moreover, rather than skewing the stereotyping numbers higher, the inclusion of coal miner actually reduced the percentage of stereotypic Southern Mountain accented characters in relation to the other two accent categories.

Table 4 shows the totals and averages for stereotypic representations per film by accent type and excludes the occupation of coal miner as a sole indicator of stereotype. Table 5 shows the same data as Table 4, but includes characters portrayed as coal miners (but without other stereotypic traits).

Table 4. Overview of Stereotyping Data (does not include coal miners)

Film	Southern Mountain	Mainstream US	Other	Totals
Win a Date with Tad Hamilton	1	6	3	10
Wrong Turn	2	0	0	2
The Mothman Prophecies	5	0	2	7
A Beautiful Mind	0	0	0	0
Hannibal	1	0	0	1
October Sky	7	0	0	7
The Silence of the Lambs	1	1	0	2
Blaze	4	0	0	4
Matewan	15	4	0	19
The Right Stuff	1	0	1	2
Totals	37	11	6	54
Percentages	69%	20%	11%	

Table 5. Alternate Overview of Stereotyping Data (includes coal miners)

Film	Southern Mountain	Mainstream US	Other	Totals
Win a Date with Tad Hamilton	1	6	3	10
Wrong Turn	2	0	0	2
The Mothman Prophecies	5	0	2	7
A Beautiful Mind	0	0	0	0
Hannibal	1	0	0	1
October Sky	10	2	3	15
The Silence of the Lambs	1	1	0	2
Blaze	4	0	0	4
Matewan	21	5	5	31
The Right Stuff	1	0	1	2
Totals	43	14	14	74
Percentages	62%	19%	19%	

The percentages shown in both Tables 4 and 5 represent the percentage of stereotypic characters per accent category. From these tables a clear answer to the question posed by this research can be found:

> RQ1: Are film characters associated with West Virginia more likely to exhibit a Southern Mountain accent when portrayed as Appalachian stereotypes than when portrayed in a nonstereotypical way?

Both tables show clear and strong support in this sample for Lippi-Green's (1997) finding that accented characters are more often shown as stereotyped characters.

Thematic Analysis

In working with the list of stereotypic traits drawn from Harkins (2004), it became evident that these traits grouped under certain themes: educational, dispositional, social, physical, sexual, ethical, and economic. Looking at the body of films in this sample in light of these seven categories offers another level of understanding about stereotyping found in films in this sample.

Educational: Leaving West Virginia is key to the success of main characters in six of the ten films: *The Right Stuff, Blaze, The Silence of the Lambs, October Sky, Hannibal,* and *A Beautiful Mind*. Of the films that depict the main characters staying in West Virginia, only one hints at a happy ending (*Win a Date with Tad Hamilton* [and it should be noted that it was made clear that the happy couple in this romantic comedy would be leaving West Virginia to attend college in Virginia]) while the other three show warlike struggles (*Matewan*), disaster (*The Mothman Prophecies*), and murder (*Wrong Turn*). This would seem to be evidence of a running theme in this sample of films that depict West Virginia characters—a theme that success and happiness more often comes from escaping both West Virginia and poverty via exceptional bravery, brains, or breasts.

Educational opportunities are shown as limited in both films depicting coal mining communities (*Matewan* and *October Sky*). When West Virginia characters are shown going to college or their college background is mentioned, the universities they go to are most often out of state (with the only exception in these ten films being the brother's football scholarship to WVU in *October Sky*).

Dispositional: The dispositions of West Virginia characters in these films often run along stereotypical lines, with proud and melancholy being the most often displayed. While shown as more surly and quick to fight in earlier films (and films set in earlier times), the qualities of good, decent, and wholesome tend more to be shown in more recent films (with the notable exception of *Wrong Turn*, wherein West Virginia characters are shown as anything but). The accumulation of these dispositional traits across the entire sample could easily lead those who are not familiar with West Virginians to believe that West Virginians are difficult to get along with. This would run counter to research conducted for and published by the West Virginia Division of Tourism, where "warm, friendly people" was found to be a strength in travelers' experiences of West Virginia (www.callwva.com). The only film that showed West Virginians as predominately friendly was the most recent film, *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton*.

Social: West Virginians being "out of step with modernity" and "ignorant to the ways of the city" runs in at least part of nine of the ten films (with *The Right Stuff* being the exception). In two films (*Win a Date with Tad Hamilton* and *The Mothman Prophecies*), the concept of being "out of step with modernity" was reinforced by nonverbal visual cues in scenes where characters who traveled into West Virginia were

shown staying in motel rooms that were out of step with the times. In both films, these motel rooms were poorly maintained with older, rundown furnishings and amenities.

West Virginians in this sample were also often shown as insular, backward, and unwelcoming of outsiders. As with the point above, the overall picture of West Virginians (especially those living in West Virginia) in this sample is not an inviting one. Rather, the old local color themes of West Virginia as "a strange land and a peculiar people" (Harney, 1873) and West Virginians as "our contemporary ancestors" (Frost, 1899) are still evident in these films.

Physical: In five of the films in this sample, West Virginians are often crudely attired with unkempt hair and clothing that appears either outdated or mismatched (*Matewan*, *Blaze*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, *Wrong Turn*, and *The Silence of the Lambs*). West Virginia women in these films wear little or no makeup unless the character is sexualized or sex-obsessed. In three of the films in the sample, West Virginians are shown with rifles (*Matewan*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, and *October Sky*). Two of the films (*Wrong Turn* and *Matewan*) show characters dressed as stereotypical hillbillies.

Sexual: Most often West Virginians in this sample are asexual. West Virginians are only shown as sexual beings in two films (*Blaze* and *The Mothman Prophecies*), but in each of these only one couple is so. In two films (*Win a Date with Tad Hamilton* and *Matewan*) at least one female character is shown as sex-obsessed or man-obsessed, but neither of these characters acts on those tendencies. In *Wrong Turn*, they are both asexual and inbred. From any angle, this does not show a view of West Virginians as normal in this regard across the sample.

In the entire sample of ten films only six married couples are shown. *October Sky*, *The Right Stuff*, and *A Beautiful Mind* each show one married couple that included at least one West Virginia character and the couple stayed together. In *The Mothman Prophecies* the one West Virginia marriage ends in separation and suicide. In *Matewan*, the one marriage between West Virginians ends with the husband being killed in the Matewan Massacre and one marriage between Italian immigrants is shown. In *Blaze*, that Blaze's parents' marriage is mentioned, but a father is never seen. Most often, West Virginia parents are shown as widowed or single with no discussion of whether a spouse exists. This also supports a point made by Lippi-Green (1997) that accented characters are less likely to be shown as married.

Ethical: A strong work ethic is shown in the characters in six films in the sample (*October Sky*, *Matewan*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Hannibal*, *Blaze*, and *The Right Stuff*). West Virginians are shown to be moral in *October Sky*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Hannibal*, *The Mothman Prophecies*, *The Right Stuff*, and to some extent *Matewan.* This positive stereotype, however, is tinted by the tendency toward violence, lawlessness, or striking shown in a number of films in the sample. Violent tendencies are prominent in both *Matewan* and *Wrong Turn*, and to some extent in *The Mothman Prophecies* and *October Sky*. Lawlessness abounds in *Wrong Turn*, and moonshining is shown in *October Sky*. And, striking workers is a theme in both of the films that feature work-related stories (*October Sky* and *Matewan*). Considering the fact that West Virginia consistently has one of the lowest crime rates in the nation (www.census.gov), this tendency toward lawlessness and violence would seem to be a distorted image.

Economic: West Virginians are shown as predominately poor in *Matewan*, *October Sky*, *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton*, *Blaze*, and *The Silence of the Lambs*. In *The Mothman Prophecies* there are few indicators of what types of jobs (from which one can infer whether a job would be low-paying or not) or types of homes characters have. Nonetheless, their clothing and unkempt appearance would seem to indicate lower class status at a minimum for most of the West Virginia characters.

The shoddy motel rooms discussed above would indicate a poor economy in the towns where those motels are operating. In *The Mothman Prophecies*, the from-out-of-town main character goes to what appears to be a junk shop to buy a used answering machine, as if no stores exist nearby where a modern answering machine might be purchased.

In *Wrong Turn*, one character refers to West Virginia as "economically depressed." The gas station in the same film is little more than a ramshackle shed without a functioning telephone. And, the home of the murderous inbred cannibals is beyond impoverished, filthy, and full of junk.

While it is true that West Virginia is not an economic powerhouse, consistently presenting West Virginians as poor and West Virginia as lacking in modern amenities is a distorted image. The US Census Bureau's statistics on percentage of person's living below the poverty level (http://www.census.gov/statab/ranks/rank34.html) shows 16 percent of West Virginians live below the poverty level. Showing the bulk of West Virginians as impoverished ignores the other 84 percent of West Virginians who do not live below the poverty level.

Discussion and Directions for Future Research

This research found support for Lippi-Green's (1997) findings that accented characters in film were more likely to be portrayed with stereotypic traits than unaccented characters. Though Lippi-Green (1997) concentrated on accent in general, this study, like Cavanaugh (2005), found that the same correlations could be made from a sample concentrating on an accent associated with a particular US state: West Virginia. Accent is shown to be symbolic, more often acting as a cue for a number of stereotypic traits associated with those who would speak with that accent. Moreover, narrative data from these samples also showed support for the notion of linguistic discrimination.

In the sample population of ten films, stereotyping was not always immediately evident (*Wrong Turn*, of course, being an exception with clear reliance on stereotype for storyline). However, by concentrating on the variables of accent and stereotypic character traits, relationships were strong between accented depictions and characterizations that include stereotypic traits. Whenever people who do not know any West Virginians or have not been to West Virginia repeatedly see a set of characteristics ascribed to West Virginians in mass media, it limits the way they will see West Virginians and West Virginia. Mass media supplies the types of information about a place that are available to people who do not know of that place or its residents by firsthand experience. For instance, West Virginian characters in this sample were most often portrayed as poor (or having risen above poverty by leaving West Virginia). Though West Virginia does have one of the lowest average income rates in the US, by no means are all West Virginians poor (as discussed earlier 16 percent of West Virginians live below the poverty level, while 84 percent do not). Likewise, education levels and

educational opportunities for West Virginian characters in this sample were portrayed as limited and, in turn, these characters most often had low-paying jobs. In truth, more West Virginians than ever before are attending college and there are a variety of higher education institutions in the state's university system that educate West Virginian, out-of-state, and international students. In fact, according to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the rate of West Virginia students who attend college (59.4 percent) now exceeds the national average (56.7 percent) (WVHEPC, 2004, 13).

Mass media's perpetuation of stereotypes fosters stereotype-based expectancies. Stereotype-based expectancies can limit the types of information a stranger will attend to when interacting with members of a stereotyped group, causing the stranger to pay more attention to any stereotype-confirming details and to ignore any stereotype-disconfirming cues. This leads to the types of questions so many West Virginians encounter when they interact with people who are not personally familiar with West Virginia for the first time. Upon answering the question *where are you from* with *West Virginia*, it is not uncommon for the West Virginian to be asked such demeaning questions as: *Did you have shoes when you were growing*? *Did you use an outhouse*? *Why don't you talk funny*? And, the ever-popular: *But, you have teeth*?

The limits of stereotype-based expectancies creating self-fulfilling prophecies come to bear not only on intercultural encounters between individuals, but also come to bear on the economic viability of the region. This is exemplified by the following account of one company executive who chose to move his company to West Virginia:

> "When Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe announced a few years ago that it was West Virginia bound, the law firm met with one reaction: disbelief…'All of the

> other firms said this was not a good idea,' said Orrick Chairman and CEO Ralph Baxter Jr. 'They said moving these support services away from lawyers would be very hard if not impossible to do. The other comments we heard were stereotypical comments about West Virginia…. There were all sorts of comments that West Virginia was not up for this sort of thing'….'The stereotype problem is a big hurdle for West Virginia,' he said. 'Countless opportunities don't arrive in West Virginia because all people think they know are the stereotypes. The true story of West Virginia is never heard'" (Gorczyca, 2003b).

Directions for Future Research

Cavanaugh (2005) points to Lippi-Green's (1997) study of stereotyping and accents in media as an area rich with research possibilities. The study in this paper is modeled on Lippi-Green's (1997) study of the connection between accented characterizations and stereotypic presentations in film. By concentrating on West Virginia characters and a particular type of accent associated with the region, one is able to connect the occurrence of that accent in media with the occurrence of a known set of stereotypic characteristics historically attributed to West Virginia. This type of research applied to other types of media (television shows, made-for-television movies, sports programs, etc.) would be beneficial in offering a fuller picture of the ways in which West Virginia is stereotyped in media. This line of research would be beneficial for other accented stereotyped groups. Knowledge of what types of, how much, and where stereotype confirmation is disseminated about a group of people can enable that those who wish to fight for stereotype change or stereotype disconfirmation to do so more effectively.

In the area of stereotype change, Hill & Augoustinos (2001) found stereotype reduction or stereotype change to be most effective when stereotype-disconfirming messages and images were used. Serious rhetorical study of the messages and language used to support stereotype and how those match with reality-based information (government reports, for example) would enable those who seek stereotype change to better address and work toward changing the realities that are stereotype-confirming and to disseminate truths when realities are stereotype-disconfirming. Simply addressing the unfairness of stereotyping is not enough to bring about change.

Research on the connection between accent and stereotyping, has become area of research that is of increasing interest. To date, such studies have looked at these connections as portrayed in media (Lippi-Green, 1997; Feld et al, 2001; Cavanaugh, 2005). This line of study seems ripe for field or laboratory research. Greene (2003) used surveys to test Appalachian-accented speakers perceptions of how others stigmatize the Appalachian accent to find support for Lippi-Green's Language Subordination Process. A similar study (with a much differently worded questionnaire) to gather information from public school teachers about their experience with teaching accented children could bring to light *how accent is treated* in our school systems and foster discussion about *how accent should be treated*.

Heilman (2004) looked at the need to include "marginalized ethnic whites" who are marked as different by accent in multicultural learning programs. Research designed to look at whether our current school curricula are adequately preparing our public school students for a world that attributes a set of social meanings to the very way they sound

would be warranted. This is no small matter. This gets to the heart of whether our school systems adequately meet the communication training needs of students.

Similarly, building on Heilman's (2004) research, it would be beneficial to see if the inclusion of training in intercultural communication, specifically Gudykunst & Kim's (1992a, and 1992b) notions about communicating with strangers, Billig's (1987) notions of categorization and particularization, and Langer's (1978) mindfulness, would foster a greater ability to overcome stereotype-based expectancies in interactions with strangers.

Accent itself, as opposed to dialect, has recently become a subject of a number of studies. Accent as symbolic, or as a *sociogeographical characterological figure* (Cavanaugh, 2005), has only very recently become a subject of study. This line of research is ripe for study from many angles. Researchers interested in this topic area may benefit from incorporating empirical methods in laboratory settings to gather what types of meanings participants associate with samples of accented speech. The benefit of laboratory study in this instance would be the researcher's ability to control the grammatical content of the accented speech samples and to gather information from the participants about what they believe can be known about a person who speaks with an accent simply by the accent's existence. If such studies were conducted in conjunction with naturalistic studies using confederates, the findings would have much to add to what is known about accents as symbols and how accent affects communication.

Five of the films in this sample were based on true stories (*The Right Stuff, Blaze, Matewan, October Sky,* and *A Beautiful Mind*); five were fictional stories (*The Silence of the Lambs, Hannibal, Wrong Turn, The Mothman Prophecies,* and *Win a Date with Tad Hamilton*). Future research may want to concentrate on one type of movie or the other.

Stereotyping in films based on true stories may have a greater impact than those representations in fictional stories as true stories purport to show the truth. When the "truth" they show is skewed toward stereotypes, they may lend more credence to those notions for viewers. Future research toward finding out what judgments viewers from outside West Virginia make about West Virginia from these types of films could examine this relationship. Likewise, research similar to the study in this paper could be conducted on other forms of media representations, i.e., television series, documentaries, National Public Radio shows, etc.

Rhetorical analysis of the way West Virginians are portrayed in the news, especially in how accent is discussed, described, or inserted into a story where the sound of a person's speech is not the subject, could be fruitful. Similar rhetorical research could analyze magazine articles, news articles about accent reduction courses specifically. Naturalistic research could be used to gather information on how individuals within a community discuss such issues as accent reduction training.

The connection between accent and the way a person's communication is perceived is another area with research possibilities. Empirical research along these lines could provide insight into what effects accent may have on communicating efficiently and may point toward what ways an accented communicator can communicate more effectively. This type of research could be conducted in a similar manner to Manusov, Winchatz, and Manning's (1997) study of the nonverbal relationship between stereotype-based expectancies and cross-cultural interactions. They found certain nonverbal behaviors lent themselves to more positive evaluations of participants. This type of

research could bring to light what types of verbal behaviors foster more positive evaluations of accented individuals.

Mulac & Rudd (1977) found that accent did affect judgments made about speakers, including Appalachian-accented speakers. An updated version of this study could be beneficial, especially in designing college speech courses for Appalachian speakers. As accent is such a powerful symbol of personhood, the effects of accent on listeners' perceptions of an accented speaker's ethos get to the heart of the type of impact that speaker's words may have on an audience. To ignore the impact of such a cue in an accented region is neglectful of our duties to our students.

Conclusion

There is undeniably a connection between accent and linguistic discrimination. Support for Lippi-Green's (1997) finding that there is a connection between accent and stereotyping in mass media was found in this study. When the larger share of representations of an accented group are stereotypical, they can lead to real-world negative judgments about real-world speakers with that accent, particularly in instances where the person from outside the group's knowledge of the group is limited to that which comes from mass media.

Lippi-Green (1997) states that she does not seek to say whether it is right or wrong for accented speakers to try to reduce their accent or learn a different accent in order to avoid such negative evaluations. She does strongly and convincingly argue that negative evaluations based on accent are wrong. Her aim was to foster public discussion so that individuals may choose for themselves how they want to approach the world and to enable those who make such negative evaluations to see these interactions in a

different light. Examination and discussion of accent and stereotyping in West Virginia would seem especially prudent, as stereotyping relates to image and image relates to fostering economic development in West Virginia from outside sources.

More importantly, from an educational standpoint, we have a responsibility to prepare students realistically to navigate in a world where communication is more free and fluid than ever. Especially in today's "communication age", rare would be the occasion where a person would not ever have to communicate with others from outside his or her speech community. We expect education to enable students to communicate effectively, but we do not address the most prominent facet of many West Virginians' speech—accent. As accent is symbolic and communicates something in and of itself, continuing to ignore accent in education is neglectful in the least.

Furthermore, not only do outsiders tend to make negative evaluations of Southern Mountain accents, but West Virginians from parts of the state where Southern Mountain accents are not the norm also tend to make negative evaluations about West Virginians with Southern Mountain accents. How can we ever begin to truly fight this type of discrimination from outside sources when we discriminate against each other?

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Appendix A

All Films Considered

No Drums, No Bugles (Ware, 1971) is a biographic film about a West Virginia man (Ashby Gatrell, played by Martin Sheen) who hid in a cave to avoid fighting in the Civil War. The film is set in southern West Virginia, where a native men fought on both sides of the Civil War. Gatrell hid in the cave because he "was reluctant to kill friends and relatives, as he would have had to do no matter which side he joined" (New York Times, Movies http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v_id=35493). It is largely a monologue by Sheen with interaction and updates on the war from occasional passers-by. The film was shot in southern West Virginia.

When the Line Goes Through (Ware, 1973) was also filmed and set in West Virginia. Martin Sheen plays a stranger who changes the lives of two sisters who "lead a simple existence in a quiet West Virginia town" (http://www.ifilm.com/ifilmdetail/2331963).

The Gravy Train (Starrett, 1974) stars Stacy Keach and Frederick Forrest as "a husky but none-too-bright pair of West Virginia brothers" who are "sociopathic protagonists (New York Times, Movies http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v_id=93693). The Dion Brothers, which is the TV title for the same film, embark on a crime caper.

The Right Stuff (Kaufman, 1983) was based on the book of the same name by Tom Wolfe. It focuses on the beginning of the space program in the United States and WV native Chuck Yeager, played by Sam Shepherd, is a prominent character in the movie.

A Killing Affair (Saperstein, 1986) is "[*t*]he story of a widow (in West Virginia) who takes in a drifter who she believes killed her husband. She begins to fall for him but cannot be sure if she should trust him" (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0095445/plotsummary). Peter Weller plays the drifter and Kathy Baker plays the widow.

Chillers (Boyd, 1987) was set and filmed in West Virginia. "This interesting low-budget horror omnibus from West Virginia works like a cut-price variation on Amicus Productions' horror anthologies of the '60s and '70s" (http://www.allmovie.com/cg/avg.dll?p=avg&sql=1:9314) wherein people waiting in a bus station tell each other horror stories, which we see as vignettes.

Matewan (Sayles, 1987) was set and filmed in West Virginia. It is a period film that tells of the struggles to unionize West Virginia's coal mining industry.

Big Business (Abrahams, 1988) is a comedy about two sets of twins getting mixed up in a small hospital in West Virginia. One set of twins belongs "to a poor local family and the other to a rich family just passing through" (IMDB). Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin play both sets of twins. One Midler/Tomlin set runs a company that intends to close a West Virginia factory, while the other Midler/Tomlin set works in the factory. The West Virginia Midler/Tomlin set goes to New York to "save the factory" and meets the New York Midler/Tomlin set.

Patch Adams (Shadyac, 1988) is a comedy based on the life of West Virginia Patch Adams, who is the founder of the Gesundheit Institute where Adams hopes to treat patients with humor. Robin Williams stars as Patch Adams.

Blaze (Shelton, 1989) is based on the book "Blaze Starr: My Life as Told to Huey Perry" and focuses on the relationship between Starr, a burlesque stripper from West Virginia, and Louisiana Governor Earl Long. Lolita Davidovich and Paul Newman star in those roles, respectively (www.imdb.com).

Strangest Dreams: Invasion of the Space Preachers (Boyd, 1990) was set and filmed in West Virginia. This is a strange movie, as the title would imply. According to All Movie Guide, "Aliens disguise themselves as radio evangelists in order to take over the planet. Earth's last hope may be a group of nerds camping in West Virginia" (http://www.allmovie.com/cg/avg.dll?p=avg&sql=1:25297).

Jan-Gel, the Beast from the East (Brooks, 1991) is a homemade horror movie reminiscent of Ed Wood's style. From the Internet Movie Database:

> "Without doubt, the most intriguing caveman epic of our time. Jan-Gel, thawed from his 50,000 year sleep, dedicates his new life in the present day to mutilating anyone he can find as he roams the hills of Maryland and West Virginia. Dresses in a leopard skin, and not much else, he wreaks havoc and still finds the time to fall in love with young Beth Simmons" (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0261756/plotsummary).

Paradise Park (Boyd, 1991) was filmed and set in West Virginia. "As narrated by a youthful observer of the Paradise Trailer Park in West Virginia, this film depicts the earthy existence and dreams of the park's residents" (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0102632/combined).

The Silence of the Lambs (Demme, 1991) is a film that garnered many awards. The film is shot from the perspective of Clarice Starling, a character who is from West Virginia. Starling, played by Jodie Foster, is an FBI trainee who is sent to glean information from an infamous genius serial killer named Hannibal Lecter, played by Anthony Hopkins. Part of the film's setting is in West Virginia as well, when a victim of

another serial killer turns up in Clay County and when Starling flashes back on her childhood in West Virginia.

October Sky (Johnston, 1999) is based on the Homer Hickam, Jr., autobiographical novel "Rocket Boys." The film is set in West Virginia, but wasn't filmed here.

A Beautiful Mind (Howard, 2001) also won many awards. It is a biographical film about mathematician John Nash, who was born and raised in West Virginia. Nash, played by Russell Crowe, suffers from schizophrenia but was able to overcome the effects of his mental illness to win the Nobel Prize for his contributions to the field of economics. Nash is played with an accent and the film is set mainly in Princeton, NJ.

Hannibal (Scott, 2001) is the sequel to The Silence of the Lambs and, again, features WV-born, WV-accented character FBI Agent Clarice Starling, here played by Julianne Moore. This film is not as well-respected as its predecessor, but nonetheless features a WV-accented character prominently.

The Mothman Prophecies (Pellington, 2002) is based on the Mothman sightings in Point Pleasant, WV, in the 1960's and the disastrous crash of the Silver Bridge around the same time; however, it is updated as if the events occur in modern times.

Wrong Turn (Schmidt, 2003) is a gross-em-out, slash-em-up horror movie set in the backwoods of West Virginia. A group of teenagers take a "wrong turn" and end up on a dirt road leading to disaster, with disaster being a family of inbred West Virginia cannibals.

The Fifth String (Phelan, 2004) is a drama featuring music prominently. Dwight Diller plays an Ivy League music professor who was born in West Virginia. From IMDB's website:

> Having fled the mountain hollows and the hillbilly stereotypes that haunted him as a child, Greenfield returns to his birthplace in the Yew Pine Mountains to pay his respects to the man who taught him how to play. To his fellow academics at the University, his hillbilly background has remained a personal secret -- but with the news of his trip revealed in a board meeting -- he must deflect the snickers and the jokes of "heading home to the sticks". But his plan of making a brief appearance at the gravesite is only wishful thinking, and shortly after his brother picks him up from the airport, he realizes that the mountain world he once inhabited moves to a rhythm all its own. The shame he has long held for the mountain culture and the "old-timey music" of his youth will be severely tested. He embarks on a musical odyssey that brings him face to face with a past he has desperately tried to outrun. But as the old-timers used to say, "The things you run from, you're bound to take with you." "The Fifth String" is a celebration of hope, salvation and the ultimate power of the human bond rekindled through music" (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0432285/plotsummary).

Win a Date with Tad Hamilton! (Luketic, 2004) is a romantic comedy. A Fraziers Bottom, WV, girl (who inexplicably works at a Piggly Wiggly--inexplicably because there are no Piggly Wiggly stores in West Virginia) wins a date with a movie star (Tad Hamilton). Filmed partially in West Virginia, this film seems to be connected to West Virginia as an 'ideal small town' image.