



GOD HAS MADE OF ONE BLOOD ALL PEOPLES OF THE EARTH

**BEREA COLLEGE**

*Loyal Jones*  
**APPALACHIAN CENTER**  
*Tradition. Diversity. Change.*

# A special issue for youth



**Bonds**

Winter came with a vengeance to Berea in December, but 2011 dawned with a mid-winter's tease of slightly warmer weather, only to turn cold and snowy. We hope you are warm and well fed wherever you are. The new year also came with the sad news of the death of Julia "Judy" Bonds, an incredibly courageous and feisty West Virginia grandmother who woke up one day and realized she'd had enough of the destruction and pollution of her beloved mountains in Marfork Hollow, where her family had lived for six generations. Her message was consistent: we can't continue to allow those in the coalfields to be sacrificed for our addiction to cheap energy. "If they take away our mountains," I remember her saying once, "who are we?" I read one memorial that likened Judy to some of the most heroic women we've ever witnessed:

Judy Bonds was in the sisterhood, the one that includes Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Alice

Paul, Emma Goldman, Rachel Carson, Kathy Kelly, Medea Benjamin, Mother Jones, Diane Wilson, Molly Ivins, Fannie Lou Hamer, Cindy Sheehan, Rachel Corrie, Jennifer Harbury, Cynthia McKinney, Ann Wright, and many, many more—women who refuse to be intimidated by power and humiliation, women who refuse to endure oppression.

That's big company. And the piece ended with an important point: "My goodness, what a calling to join those ranks! And anyone can do it."

Anyone *can* do it. That's really the point of this issue of the *Newsletter*. Judy Bonds loved getting in front of young people and reminding them that they are the leaders we've all been waiting for. We've gathered a collection of essays mostly from young people writing to what we hope will be other young people. But older types can benefit from reading these words, too. Oh—and then there's the

inspiring piece from the "grandmother" of Appalachian Studies, Dr. Helen M. Lewis, whose commencement address at Berea is reprinted here in slightly abridged form.

For generations, young people from Appalachia have been pulled away from the mountains for college, for work, for opportunity. All too often, they've been pushed. It really is time for mountain youth to have viable futures that enrich their lives as well as those of others inside the region. This is our attempt to contribute ideas and inspiration to that quest.

One of the last public rallies Judy attended in Rock Creek, W.Va., in late September left us with these words: "I consider it an honor to have known and worked with each of you. You are the Chosen Ones. We are waiting on you to change the world."

And so it goes. ✕

—Chad Berry, Director





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Berea College and the Appalachian Center are committed to the betterment of the peoples of Appalachia. The unique views and perspectives of individual authors in this Newsletter, however, do not necessarily represent the views and policies of Berea College.



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# Today's youth, tomorrow's leaders



## THE VIEW FROM HERE

**Ethan  
Hamblin**

Appalachians are skilled artisans, storytellers, farmers, industrialists, miners, and homemakers woven into a single family related by blood and kinship. As a member of this fantastic family, I continue to ask myself where my area is headed in the future. What opportunities will be available for me and mine? Who will guide my people into the future, and what must be done to make Appalachians strong and successful? Only the youth of today can lead us into the future. I hope to dedicate my life to a stronger Appalachia, and I hope that the other young adults of my homeland will join hands with me and work for our future.

Before moving forward, one must look to Appalachia's past to find what inspired our ancestors to work so hard and survive. I believe it is the same ideals that will encourage and motivate us to work for the betterment of our communities and our region. Perhaps Appalachians' most important values are family and a sense of home. The focus on tradition and heritage preservation is essential as well as an active and unending pride for what belongs to us, who we are, our achievements, and our dedicated work ethic. These values course through Appalachian blood. I was once told that being an Appalachian is a state of mind. This is true. Because of this, the youth of our mountains must prepare for and spearhead action plans, community involvement, and developmental projects that will brighten Appalachia's economic and structural future.

How can we, tomorrow's leaders, blend our inherited values with those of the progressing world? We must think outside the box and attempt new ideas. Next, youth must embrace the fundamental Appalachian belief in hard work and put our gifts and talents to use. As leaders, we must learn to utilize outside resources and build community partnerships with those outside Appalachia. These joint efforts will only enhance our own community's works. Finally and most importantly, young people must show great pride for all of our people, for our land, for our culture, for our future. These steps will build young leaders who will carry the Appalachian region into the future. The leaders we create today will spawn active grassroots efforts and inspire community citizens to become active and work for a better region. The change that comes does not mean altering the fundamental beliefs Appalachians cling to; change will only strengthen those values. I believe the youth are our last chance. So let's get to it, young adults: Appalachia is counting on you! Preserve our past, better the present, and progress into the future. ❖

*Ethan Hamblin is a first-year Bonner Scholar at Berea College. He was raised on Gays Creek in rural Perry County, Ky.*



# Putting kids—and their teeth—first

**Editor's Note:** *The Berea College Appalachian Fund (BCAF) has supported Kids First since before it was a nonprofit and provided technical assistance as it applied for 501(c)3 status.*

**by Jessica Cooper**  
*Special to the LJAC Newsletter*

Access to dental care, something every child should have the freedom to receive, is not always available to children in the hills of Central Appalachia. Many of these children are not getting the basic care they need to stay healthy and happy. I am dumbfounded when I learn of dentists going to other countries to serve children who are neglected in their oral health when so many children in the state of Kentucky are in constant pain from toothaches and decay. Kentucky is one of

the leading states in the nation for toothlessness and poor dental health. Statistics show one out of ten residents in Central Appalachia are completely without teeth and children as young as two already having as many as twelve cavities. The problem lies in the lack of education on oral health and too few dentists practicing in rural areas of Kentucky. This is how and why Dr. Edwin Smith, from Barbourville, created Kids First Dental Services, and how I gained the chance to make a difference in children's lives.

I am a dentist with Kids First Dental Services ([kidsfirstdental.org](http://kidsfirstdental.org)), a mobile unit that travels to schools performing preventive treatment and educating children on good oral health habits. I am a 2009 graduate from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry.

After my first year out of school and practicing in an office, I discovered that my heart and passion is with caring for children. I was quickly shocked by the urgency for dental care so many children needed. I began to discover that I was providing my services to the one group in the nation that needed me the most.

A typical workday with Kids First Dental can produce an ebb and flow of emotions, laughing one minute with a second grader, getting sarcasm from a sixth grader, almost having to dodge vomit from a third grader, high-fiving a fourth grader, and getting your heart broken by a neglected first grader. Imagine a six-year-old boy walking into the dental trailer, already going through most of his school day, to find infection running rampant throughout his mouth from tooth decay? I know he is in pain. He tells me he is in pain. Sadly, I see this scenario on a regular basis in so many different schools, and whether it's simply from neglect or ignorance, Kids First Dental team makes sure he gets the attention and care needed.

All in all, I suspect I gain more from working with all these children than they do from me. I do get to spend much of my day in laughter from the most hilarious things children can say, or create, in their still-maturing minds. Children are the most innocent, pure, priceless gifts that any of us can receive. We should cherish them, love them, protect them, and guide them through this crazy world to reach their highest potential. I am so very blessed and grateful to acquire a skill that can help children, make a difference in their lives, and work with them every day. ✕

*Jessica Cooper, DMD, was born in Louisville, raised in Lexington, and educated at Western Kentucky University and the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry.*



Cooper, pictured with her daughter.





THE VIEW  
FROM HERE

Lauren  
Garretson

# Why are we still seen as 'barefoot hillbillies'?

So I was in Virginia the other day visiting colleges, and I had an *interesting* conversation with this guy. Things were going pretty smoothly. Eventually, however, he asked me where I was from, and when I replied "West Virginia," he began to stare at my feet. He stared as if I had some *unusual* vegetation growing on my foot. Now, I can admit that my feet aren't the most beautiful thing you would ever see, but I can also assure you that I would know if Sasquatch lived on my toe. Anyway, he stared for a good minute and I began to get nervous. *What* was he looking at? Think of *all* the dramatic, terrible things that a teenager could come up with in her mind. Have you thought about it? It's actually quite scary. So I shifted from side to side, breaking his concentration on...whatever it was. And *that* was when he said it:

"So, like, you're from West Virginia?"

"Uhm, I recall just saying that, dude."

"So, like, you guys wear shoes...?"

Why *wouldn't* we wear shoes? I mean, *really*? Now it was *my* turn to stare at *him* with the weird facial expression. But this time, instead of a Sasquatchean growth kind of look, it was more like little missiles shooting from my eyes into his forehead. Now, I could have gotten up on my *righteous* Appalachian soap box and given this idiot a piece of my mind. I could have *preached to the choir!* *Glory Hallelujah!* But instead, I walked away and fumed elsewhere.

I wonder when it became that Appalachians were "backwoods, ignorant, incestuous,

prejudiced, barefoot 'n' pregnant hillbillies?" Why is this how people think of us? And, more importantly, who decided this was how we were? It sure wasn't us.

Now, I admit that I'm a little more eccentric than your average person, Appalachian or not. My hobbies include prank phone calls to Walmart, practicing British profanity, and reading. Yes! It is amazing, I know, but we do actually read here. I listen to techno, I watch the news. I know what's going on in the world out there. I do community service. Flat-foot sounds more like a medical condition to me than a dance, I *don't* have a moonshine still in my backyard, I don't hold prejudice. Oh, and another thing: I *don't* play the banjo!

Look: all I'm saying is that, yes, we have a rich heritage here. No, it does not include things like keeping it in the family or kidnapping Californian tourists and sodomizing them. My roots do help define me, yes. The stereotypes about that heritage don't. I'll always have a deep appreciation for the mountains. Crawdads and those smelly onions we call ramps will always taste of home to me. The point is: I'm not going to conform to stereotypes. I'm going to go to college. I'm going to make something of myself; and when I do, I will still be proud to be an Appalachian with lots and lots of shoes. ☞

*Lauren Garretson is a junior at Pocahontas County High School in West Virginia. She has been an active leader in High Rocks for Girls, an award-winning leadership program for young women ages 13-25 (highrocks.org).*



# Leadership at the local level is vital



THE VIEW  
FROM HERE

Michael  
Cox

I did not have a clue what to do for my first summer at Berea College. The prospect of returning home to work a minimum-wage job was anything but appealing, and the possibility of interning somewhere had not even crossed my freshman mind.

I was sitting in my American Government class when a classmate stood up and introduced the Entrepreneurship for the Public Good (EPG) program. The proposal was intriguing: for an eight-week class, I could earn far more than I would were I to work the entire summer back home. Plus, a paid internship would take care of my sophomore summer as well. I signed up.

My first summer was an exposure to an Appalachia I, as a Central Kentucky native, had not yet seen. I learned of mountaintop removal, stream and river pollution, and mineral rights. I toured Eastern Kentucky, explored a coal mine, and saw a one-room schoolhouse. I learned to spell the word *Entrepreneurship* and was given a glimpse into the experiences of many “self-made” business owners. I began to realize the importance of local businesses in rural Appalachian communities.

I saw firsthand just how far ahead of the curve many Appalachians are despite the area’s poverty. I began a project with four classmates to explore the possibility of providing free, wireless Internet to the residents of the small city of Irvine, Ky.—a town that did not yet have cellular phone towers.

My second summer saw my first and most memorable internship. I worked for 10 weeks at MACED, a local Berea not-for-profit. My project was to obtain a local consensus surrounding the issue of government incentives given to large businesses in Appalachia. My goal was to determine how informed Appalachian communities were about the often massive incentives and tax breaks and other benefits that corporations typically receive for setting up in a poor area. Often such policies do not end up benefiting Appalachian communities. Large companies have a history of pulling out, often before the promised jobs have even been created.

I created surveys, conducted focus groups, compiled the resulting data, and converted it into a presentation at the end of the summer. The focus groups were the most memorable. I remember being consistently impressed with the ability of the participants to express what they believed their own Appalachian communities needed.

Looking back at those two intensely memorable summers, I can see the impact they had on the rest of my college development. I’m glad to have had the opportunity to have the experiences within Appalachia as early as I did. I believe the importance of local leadership in Appalachia is one of the most important things a student in Kentucky can learn. ❖

*Michael Cox, a 2009 Berea College alumnus, is a Gift Officer in Berea’s College Relations department.*



# Entering the world

## Make the road by walking, says graduate

**Editor's Note:** *The following essay is an abridged version of the Commencement Address given by the "grandmother" of Appalachian Studies and former director of the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, Dr. Helen M. Lewis. On December 12, 2010, she received an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Berea College.*

**by Helen M. Lewis**

*Special to the LJAC Newsletter*

I have been worried about what to say to graduates today. Should I say we are all spinning around on a fragile planet with numerous environmental disasters and a country in an economic crisis and massive unemployment? Should I apologize for the mess our generation is leaving for you to deal with? You are probably familiar with the Robert Frost poem: "The Road Not Taken." I use his road not taken as the way you can change the world. And I add the line from the Spanish poet Antonio Machado: You make the road by walking.

You are now  
graduating from an  
outstanding  
liberal arts  
college.





# Unpredictable

## Grandmother of Appalachian Studies

As you begin hunting for a job you may wonder how your liberal education will help. For the past few years you have been in a safe, predictable environment in which you have learned *how to learn*. This is probably your most important gift. Now you must learn new ways to navigate in the unpredictable. Your knowledge from many subjects and your work experiences give you the ability to be creative, the ability to see things whole, to connect the dots, and not get stuck on the wrong path. Your education gives you the ability to navigate the road not taken.

We, the older generation, tell you that we are leaving you with many problems. But we hope that you have the energy and courage to deal with these problems that we have caused because of the road we have been walking. We urge you to find a new road to deal with these problems.

You are in a very different world than the one I entered when I graduated from college. It was in 1946, over sixty years ago, at Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville. It was an

optimistic time. We had just ended World War II, and we believed it was the war to end all wars. I gave talks at Kiwanis clubs about hopes for global peace. But since then there has been the Korean, Vietnam, and Middle East wars, and now we are involved in two wars and

numerous tribal or civil wars or terrorist activities and various skirmishes all over the world. We have become a military empire with 700 military bases in 130 countries. How can we change our road? What GPS can we use to lead us to global peace?

We also had great trust in our industrial power.

We believed in progress, economic growth, and our ability to control the environment. We ignored the ecological damage of economic growth. We did not understand the interconnection and interdependence between humans and habitat and became willing exploiters

of the world's resources for progress. Today we realize that the industrial, economic-growth economy based on fossil fuel energy was destructive; that road we have been travelling is now a road to nowhere.

Incredible problems resulted from the road we took, the policies, the choices we made. Can you use your education, your skills, to change our course? We must now make changes or find another place to live.

We did not envision the communication system that would make possible the global economy and the international control by corporations that would outsource our production and turn us into a consumer society. We trusted the global, free-trade, market economy to regulate itself. It will take courage and creativity to make the changes in the economic system, our life style, and consumption patterns. We have become avid and willing consumers standing in line at Walmart looking for big deals.

Even though we are leaving you with incredible problems, we also leave you with some examples to study and follow. Past generations did make some

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**"We, the older generation, ...are leaving you with many problems....We urge you to find a new road to deal with these problems."**

Helen M. Lewis, addressing December 2010 Berea graduates

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# Entering the unpredictable

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important changes: *So change is possible*. And we can point to places where we took the right road. For example, your great, great grandparents' generation abolished slavery, not an easy task. My mother's and grandmothers' generation worked for 90 years for white women's suffrage—the privilege of voting in a democracy. In the 1930s, Frances Perkins and progressive New Dealers developed the Social Security System, which closed down the poor farms and allowed your grandparents to retire with security and dignity. They also began unemployment insurance. In my generation, we finally allowed African Americans to vote, and we also ended public segregation. A large group of students from Berea were part of that struggle in the Civil Rights marches in Mississippi.

When I graduated from college, the big problem I wanted to change in the South was segregation. It was illegal and dangerous for blacks and whites to meet, sit, eat, go to school together, drink at the same fountain, use the same bathroom. Oppression of blacks

was structured into the economic system, and lynching and chain gangs were controls to keep the system going. So while I was a student I began to break the law by going to interracial meetings and got arrested in 1948 at an interracial YWCA meeting in Atlanta. I was part of a student movement that was the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement, which made great changes. We discovered that we couldn't change the world alone, but things were changed, not by us as individuals but by many people working together and in many different places, keeping their "eyes on the prize" and doing what they could where they were. This

requires building and working in community.

The thing you will miss when you leave Berea is the community you have been part of: your work team, your dormitory or

Ecovillage neighbors. You have been in safe place with friends and colleagues working together. I think there is a new social movement of students and young people questioning the status quo and asking for a new social order, wanting to do something to improve life for all. So instead of seeking the individualistic, professional, isolated success model, you can seek and build community, join people working for social change.

Now, for your last assignment before leaving: Stop and make a road map. Your destination is the kind of world you want to live in. If you keep your eyes on the destination, you can make the road by walking. So don't be afraid to take risks. Be flexible, adaptive, and innovative. Keep your eyes on the prize—the world you want to live in. In the unpredictable world you are entering, you sometimes need to go where the wind blows. Dealing with the unexpected requires risk taking, making choices.

When I graduated I planned to be a journalist and run a weekly newspaper, go into politics, and get rid of segregationist politicians in the South. But I ended up in graduate school, married to a fellow student who planned to teach, and we ended up in southwest Virginia in the middle of the coalfields in 1955 teaching at a small college where the big urgent problems were unemployed coal miners, strip mining destroying communities, black lung disease, and no severance tax on coal. So these were the issues I began to study and work on with my students and their families. We met great resistance from the coal industry, which did not want changes, so I was forced out of my job. But I found other places that would let me do the things for which others would fire me. I began to work with communities starting health clinics in West Virginia, developing community education and development programs to rebuild communities when mines closed and industries left. So changing paths or detouring around can place you in a better

**"Never has a generation had the opportunity to make such really important changes as you have. You can transform the world."**

Helen M. Lewis, addressing December 2010 Berea graduates



ation to work for the changes you hope  
Find places to work with others who share your hopes for a better world and don't be afraid of being fired; accept a few failures and detours along the way.

Never has a generation had the opportunity to make such really important changes as you have. You can transform the world. You can actually save the planet. Meanwhile down to earth—you have to survive. You may find you need to create your own job. Why not create one that deals with one of the crucial and urgent problems that you could work on?

There is an issue that I am passionate about and would choose for you to work on. That is protecting and restoring water resources.

Water is the most essential and important resource providing life and survival on the planet earth. Based on a suggestion from George Brosi, the editor of *Appalachian Heritage*: To promise every child a clean glass of water. Doing this would involve organizing people by watersheds. Wherever you settle you can find a group or a community working on a river or watershed clean-up and conservation. This work could expand to clean up and restore all streams in the watershed. It would include improving water and sewage systems; changing some agricultural practices; and stopping polluting industries, destructive mining and timbering, damaging transportation, and tourist development projects, all practices that are destroying the water sources. You can use cultural and educational skills to organize around the watershed's history and use. Write a poem, sing a song about the river, do oral histories up and down the rivers and streams. These stories tell us who lived there, what happened on that watershed, and what must be done to restore it. You will need strategies and legal and political action to stop the pollution sources, such as mountaintop removal, chemical factories, and coal-fired electricity plants. You could teach children and people in the community to trace and monitor their source of water. Some of this

work may be volunteer, some may develop into a paying job, some may be a vacation excursion, but it's work that becomes part of turning the world around one watershed at a time.

As you do this you will find you have to change the economic system from an exploitive one to a moral economy.

This would require changing structures—not patching up or bailing out—to protect the present system. You would need to seek a new way, an alternative to the market economy. How about this as a project as you leap into this unpredictable world? You know how to learn, so develop a study group, start a conversation, continue to study, learn, question, stand, speak, and act. When you start questioning the economic system you will meet considerable resistance from what President Dwight D. Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex, and you will need some new strategies utilizing some detours or travelling back roads.

Wendell Berry gives us some advice in his poem "Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front":

As soon as the generals and the politicians can predict the motions of your mind, lose it. Leave it as a sign to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go.

Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction. Practice resurrection.

You can't be working for social change or saving the planet all the time. Sometimes you need to rest, to take a vacation to escape, to get lost. In her book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes that choosing to get lost can be a positive move and can be a preparation for situations beyond your control when you have really lost your way. You learn and develop

**"This would require changing structures—not patching up or bailing out—to protect the present system."**



Helen M. Lewis, on going from an exploitive economy to a moral one.

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# Do you have the strength to stay in Appalachia?



## THE VIEW FROM HERE

Ada Smith

Most young people do not have the luxury yet of choosing certain jobs, building a network of friends who hold mutual aspirations and a desire to share perspectives, or seizing opportunities while remaining a part of a community that has fallen victim to cycles of poverty. However, during our late teens and early 20s, we do begin to carve out a place for our future, a potential family, and our personal well-being. As we look for the professional skills that will help make this a reality, we're faced with the fact that we have to leave our communities to do so.

Appalachia often fails to offer young people the training and resources we need to improve our own lives and communities. Yet the decision to leave is a big one. My peers grew up and for the most part stayed in Letcher County, Ky. Some spent small amounts of time in nearby cities such as Richmond, Berea, Lexington, Louisville, or Johnson City but came back every weekend feeling homesick and lost outside of the eastern Kentucky coalfields. Many are faced with stereotypes and shortsighted understandings of our region's problems that do

not represent the diversity of people and experiences we encountered growing up.

Personally, the quest for education has always been a central issue for me. After high school, I decided to seek a unique liberal arts college experience. I did leave Kentucky to attend Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., hundreds of miles away from home. After graduating I have returned to Whitesburg but am now faced with finding employment and in doing so, the possibility of leaving again for graduate school.

Appalachia has a hold on us. We have a culture, sense of community, and closeness to our families that is often rare in modern America. Though young people often yearn for city life and new experiences, young Appalachians also find peace and strength from our land and people.

In order to gain professional skills that allow for systematic change, though, most must venture up North or out West. Many of our brightest, most supported young Appalachians leave and fail to return. Those who understand our region's struggles the best, those who have experienced how much we have failed to support new hopes and visions in Appalachia, are sucked into a world far outside the mountains.

The message that Appalachia has failed to communicate is that our region is actively looking for skilled, young professionals. That returning means opportunity. That coming home opens up a world of new ideas, new plans, and experimentation. Appalachia is ripe for innovative solutions to address its many issues. The more emerging leaders from the region that find the strength and encouragement to come home will ultimately lead more young people to build a future that includes staying and investing ourselves in the mountains. ✕

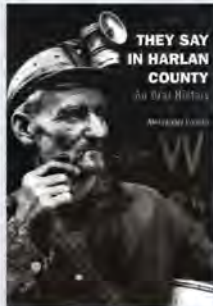
*Ada Smith is 23 years old and hails from Whitesburg, Ky. She is currently working for the Appalachian Media Institute and the STAY Project.*



## BOOK REVIEW

"I shall miss you so much when I'm dead," wrote Harold Pinter—among the most influential of modern British playwrights and winner of the Pulitzer Prize—to his wife, Lady Antonia Fraser. I became a fan of Pinter's around the time I first met *They Say in Harlan County* author, Italian Alessandro Portelli, almost 25 years ago. I sent him to the home of my parents, in Lynch, Ky., shortly after we met in 1986, his "Love Story" with Harlan County already twenty years strong. If Harlan—both the mythical and the real place—were ever to die, it will miss so much the people whom Professor Portelli gives voice to, so creatively, persuasively, believably and accurately in this master work of oral history.

Portelli presents the people of Harlan much like Pinter did in his dramas. He begins by painting them on a deeply etched historical canvas in colorful detail. He allows the strong people of Harlan to speak—in their own words—about how they were pitted in strong conflict against themselves and in struggle against powerful economic and social forces. *They Say In Harlan County* humanizes both the barons, the profiteers and their minions, and the multihued and varied-voiced local characters (including my father, brother, and grandmother—who, like most of Portelli's informants, come off as composites of their families and friends). Through them, Portelli lowers high mountain walls and forces the far away centers of mainstream culture, commerce, and the dominant political principalities to listen to what one can only hear when you live close to the land, the mountains, in Central Appalachian coal camps.



I have never read an oral history that is so creative stylistically. Portelli "directs" his subjects with pauses and unexpected, jazz-like, improvisation. He mixes his interjections of archival works, primary sources, and his own observations and commentaries with his interviewees' remarks and clarifications—*always* in their own words— capturing them in the moment, in dialect, so to speak; such as how he was referred to as an "Eye-talian feller!" That rhythm carries throughout the book on complex issues such as race relations, class, labor conflict and resistance, social and technological change, and environmental degradation in a way that is, well, simply brilliant.

I shall miss Harlan County so much when I'm dead, mainly because the salt of the earth people whose life stories my Professor Portelli captured so well are the ones who gave me life and a reason to live and fight for— through scholarship and service. Harlan, for me, is the place where my personal and professional lives continue to intersect. If the saying "*if you love what you do, it is not work*" is accurate, then I have never worked. I have only had fun, never bored. Reading and relating to those Portelli puts on the pages of *They Say In Harlan County* was both entertaining, most enlightening, affirming, and exceedingly instructive.

They say Harlan County is still challenged; but one thing is for sure, it will *never* die, now that Portelli—exactly a century after the first coal was taken out of the county— channels the voices of those who never give up, who always stand up for themselves, and do what they say.

"Thank ye, 'Sandro, buddy, you done right by us!"  
they're surely saying in Harlan County! —Bill Turner

## Entering the unpredictable

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certain skills: how to manage panic, marshal resources, explore what new situations have to offer, discovering new things, people, and ways to live.

Now while you are in transition to a job or a new location, it is a good time to be lost. Take time to rethink who you are and what your relationship is to family, the earth, and other living creatures. Get reacquainted with your grandparents, talk to the elders in your community, work on your genealogy, and find out how your people survived hard times. Learn from them how you may live. Take time to read a book just for fun. Learn something new like how to play the banjo and plant a garden.

Gardening is a good way to escape and cooperate with nature to survive. Last summer was very hot, but instead of worrying about global warming, I was delighted with the best crop of okra I have ever grown. And lots of tomatoes. My niece and I canned 300 jars of tomatoes at the community cannery. This is a wonderful place to get lost and get the advice and help of all the elders who will share their canning skills and advice on how to survive.

I always look forward to being snowed in at least once each winter. It is great when the electricity goes off and the house heaves a sigh and you experience a silence you seldom find in our noisy world. You can sometimes experience such quiet with a walk in the woods, away from traffic sounds

and airplanes. Sit under a tree, listen to the insects, the wind in the leaves, and become part of the natural world, recognize your place not as the exploiter, not as one with dominion over the earth but as neighbor, a fellow participant in the world. Your education is not over; keep learning from your experiences. Keep your hopes for a better world as your goal but take time to celebrate the beauty that surrounds you, enjoy life, friendships, family, be regenerated so you can do good wherever you are.

So as you pack up to leave, to commence your journey, to make the road by walking, be sure to take your hopes and your road map for a better world with you. So congratulations and start walking on the road not taken. ☞

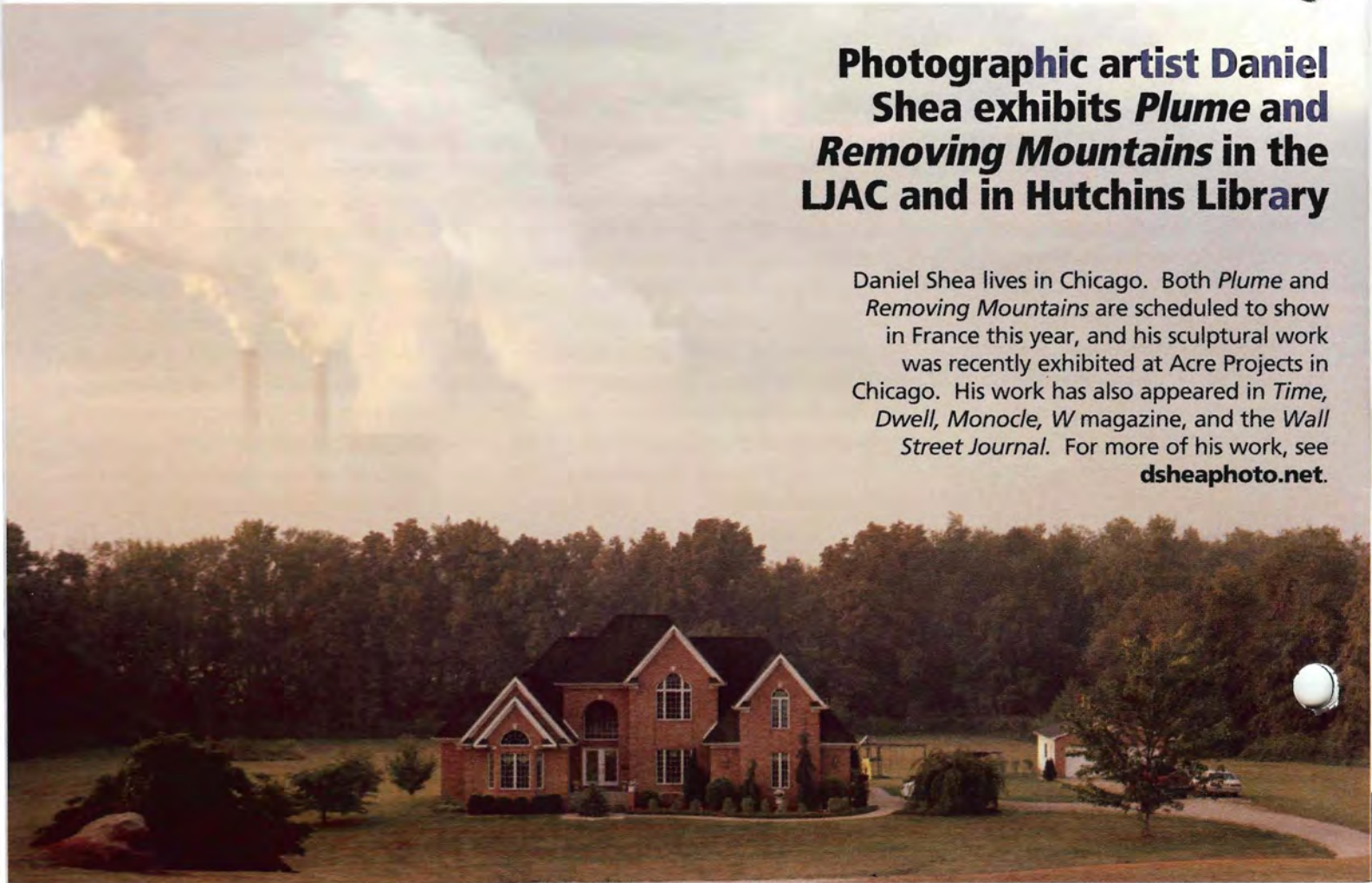




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## Photographic artist Daniel Shea exhibits *Plume* and *Removing Mountains* in the LJAC and in Hutchins Library

Daniel Shea lives in Chicago. Both *Plume* and *Removing Mountains* are scheduled to show in France this year, and his sculptural work was recently exhibited at Acre Projects in Chicago. His work has also appeared in *Time*, *Dwell*, *Monocle*, *W* magazine, and the *Wall Street Journal*. For more of his work, see [dsheaphoto.net](http://dsheaphoto.net).