

Savannah Paige Murray

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Education

2017-Present

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

-PhD Student in Rhetoric & Writing, Department of English
-Cumulative GPA: 4.0

2015-2017

Appalachian State University

-MA, Appalachian Studies
-Cumulative GPA: 4.0

2011-2015

Wofford College

-BA, History
-BS, Environmental Studies
-Graduated *Cum Laude*, High Honors in History, Phi Beta Kappa

Positions Held

Aug. 2018-Present

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of English, Virginia Tech

-In this role, I completed various service roles for my department including teaching (ENGL 3774: Business Writing, and 1160: Introduction to Shakespeare), as well as grading, course design, and research with faculty.

Aug. 2017-Aug. 2018

Center

Administrative Assistant to the Director of the Writing

-Offering specialized graduate support to Virginia Tech graduate students in the form of one-on-one writing center coaching and specialized presentations and information sessions. Organized and led a professional development session for the Virginia Tech Graduate School entitled, "Developing and Writing the Abstract" on November 7, 2017.

- May 2017-Jan. 2018 **Guest Editor with Joseph Bathanti and Sandra L. Ballard, *Black Mountain College Special Issue, Appalachian Journal***
 -This special issue will reexamine the role of place, particularly the mountain environment surrounding Black Mountain College (BMC) on the experiences of students, artists, and teachers alike and will coincide with an exhibit of BMC art at Appalachian State University's Turchin Center beginning in January 2018. As a guest editor I will be contributing written pieces to this issue as well as providing feedback for authors on articles and essays.
- Dec. 2016-Aug. 2017 **Editor, "King's Mountain National Military Park Ethnographic Overview and Assessment," National Park Service**
 -Editing, collating, and fact-checking the approximately 125-page report focused on examining the ways in which the King's Mountain National Military Park is currently used and making recommendations to the National Park Service about how the park's cultural resources could be enjoyed by a wider, more diverse population.
- Aug. 2016-May 2017 **Assistant Editor, *Appalachian Journal: A Regional Studies Review***
 -Suggesting and organizing edits for authors, organizing book review assignments, completing bibliographic citations and works cited pages for articles, fact-checking articles and book reviews, collating and copy editing pieces for publication, editing page proofs with InDesign software, managing membership database, mailings, and subscriptions
- Aug. 2016-May 2017 **Graduate Student Ambassador, Cratis D. Williams Graduate School, Appalachian State University**
 -Presenting on panel discussions about the Cratis D. Williams Graduate School for admissions events, networking with prospective students at graduate school fairs, leading campus tours and facilitating meetings with faculty for prospective graduate students.
- Jan. - May 2016 **Designer & Typesetter, *Voices from the Headwater: Local Stories CD***
 -Created CD booklet, disc design, and all inside panels using InDesign software. Managed the production of this CD with third-party vendor. This CD serves as a companion to the book *Voices from the Headwaters* and contains 31 tracks of oral histories and music from 24 residents of the headwaters communities along the New River in northwestern North Carolina.
- Aug. 2015- May 2016 **Editorial Assistant, *Appalachian Journal***
 -fact-checking, collating, copy editing, designing layouts and page proofs with InDesign software, writing press releases, and editing images with PhotoShop, managing account deposits, orders, and subscription databases.

- 2015 **Freelance Writer & Manuscript Reviewer, Hub City Press**
-Contributing writer, *Underground Spartanburg Guide*, Fall 2015
-Manuscript Consultant, *Over the Plain Houses* published 2016
- 2014-2015 **Western Regional Archives Intern/Volunteer**
-More than 200 hours as a volunteer assisting with creation of finding aids and document/artifact acquisition
- 2014-2015 **Outreach Education Intern, Goodall Center, Wofford College**
-Planning and hosting educational community events about natural history, local agriculture, and sustainable development
-Developed and hosted the “Appalachian Soul” event on November 16, 2015. This program consisted of speeches by environmental historian Dr. Tim Silver, Professor of Appalachian Music, Phil Jamison, novelist Dot Jackson, and music by the Young Appalachian Musicians of Union, SC.
- 2012-2014 **Biology Laboratory Teaching Assistant, Wofford College**
-Assisting first-year Biology students in safe and effective laboratory procedures, instructing students and editing scientific posters, helping students develop writing skills
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Research Interests

- environmental rhetoric: the built environment, grassroots environmentalism, nature writing, ecocriticism and ecomposition
 - technical communication: construction of dams, infrastructure, hydrology
 - oral history, community narratives and community writing projects
 - digital humanities and multi-modal communication
 - documentary film: history of participatory film and participatory film in the digital age
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Research Projects

“In This Way the Mountain Lives”: An Ecocritical Reading of John Ehle’s Appalachian Fiction

MA thesis, Appalachian State University,
libres.uncg.edu/ir/asu/f/Murray,%20S_2017%20Thesis.pdf

In *Reconnecting with John Muir: Essays in Post-Pastoral Practice* (Univ. of Georgia Press, 2006), Muir scholar Terry Gifford describes the “post-pastoral” as “a cultural practice that seeks to reconnect our species and its home...This is the search for a relationship that

serves both culture and nature” (14). The post-pastoral avoids the idyllic adoration of nature associated with the pastoral tradition in literature and instead encourages works that prompt thoughtful consideration of both the historic interactions of Nature and human nature and how those relationships can endure, with increased sustainability, in the future. In *Reconnecting with John Muir*, Gifford includes an essay examining Charles Frazier’s *Cold Mountain* as an example of the post-pastoral in Appalachian literature. Aside from this account, few scholars have taken up Gifford’s charge of employing the post-pastoral in an attempt to discover if, “as John Muir promised, going to the mountains would not just feel like going home, but actually be going home.” This MA thesis attempts to fill in scholastic gaps about the post-pastoral as well as the seven books of Appalachian fiction by one of the region’s most accomplished, yet most severely understudied writers, John Ehle. Ehle’s depictions of the convergence of Appalachian residents and the surrounding landscape in his seven “Mountain Novels,” not only catalog the natural beauty and inherent complexity of the ecosystem but also pose questions for modern readers about the future of the relationship between people and planet.

The New River Controversy: The Fight to Dam the River and its People

Course Paper, Appalachian History, website: <http://thedamfight.weebly.com/>

In 1966, the Appalachian Power Company released the Blue Ridge Power Project, a plan that included the implementation of two hydroelectric dams on the New River within Grayson County, Virginia. These dams would in total flood 42,000 acres of land and generate electricity for approximately 25-35 years. Of these potentially flooded lands, 8,400 acres of Ashe County, NC were included, 3 percent of the county’s total area that contained some of the area’s most fertile and productive farmlands. This massive project was not without contest, particularly from Ashe County residents who organized an impressive opposition to the project, claiming that since none of the electricity produced by these dams would be locally, local farm owners should not have to sacrifice their own property to supply the needs of another region. This project hopes to illustrate that the efforts of local residents successfully preserve their local landscape; this author contends that the actions of the National Committee for the New River, when examined in the context of the American environmental movement, communicates the power of local communities to align with political allies on both sides of the aisle. By working with local, state, and national officials, local citizens were capable of defeating an industrial Goliath. Their triumph communicates the power of local, grassroots organizations in eliciting positive change both within Appalachia and America.

Black Mountain Assemblage: Writings Inspired by Black Mountain College

Independent study project, Environmental Studies, produced after completing volunteer work at Western Regional Archives, Asheville, N.C.

This portfolio consists of creative writing pieces based on archival and secondary research on the experimental arts school Black Mountain College (BMC). BMC operated in the Black Mountain community in western North Carolina from 1933-1956 and employed some of modern art’s most prominent figures including: Josef and Anni Albers, Merce Cunningham, John Cage, and Buckminster Fuller. This project was completed in January 2015 as an independent study project with Environmental Studies professor, poet, and

novelist, John Lane. This collection consists of five poems, four short stories, and a fictional memoir. Three of these poems were selected for publication in *Black Mountain College Studies'* ninth issue (forthcoming) focused on the work of BMC instructor and poet, Hilda Morley.

A Century Among the Pines: *Pinus strobus* Studies in Western North Carolina

Environmental Studies Department Senior Capstone Project, Wofford College

This research provides an environmental history and scientific analysis of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) studies in western North Carolina from 1891 to the present. The early history of these studies features prominent figures in American conservation such as Frederick Law Olmstead and Gifford Pinchot. German forester Dr. Carl Schenck continued the work of these early conservationists with the first school of forestry in America, known as the Biltmore Forest School, on the property of Gilded-Age tycoon, George Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate. Although the Biltmore Forest School was short-lived, the US Forest Service maintained the group's white pine experimental plots after they were incorporated into America's first publicly owned forest, Pisgah National Forest. The majority of this study tracked the evolution of white pine studies conducted by the Forest Service as they matured beyond timber production to adopt more systems-based analyses. This research has been recently selected for presentation at the 40th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference in Blacksburg, VA, March 2017.

“United We Stand, Divided We May Be Dammed”: Grassroots Environmentalism and the Tennessee Valley Authority in Western North Carolina

Honors Thesis in History, Fall 2014-Spring 2015. In the College Archives Collection at Wofford College's Sandor Tezler Library.

This project investigates the role of the Upper French Broad Defense Association (UFBDA) during the period 1962-1971 in preventing 14 TVA dams from being installed throughout western North Carolina. Research on the UFBDA was initially conducted as part of the History Department Honors Thesis program at Wofford College, a two-semester project not required by the history department for graduation but recommended for students seeking to enroll in graduate school. This work on elderly, seemingly unlikely environmentalists resisting the development plan offered by TVA reflects a nuanced understanding of rural communities and how their core values can be mobilized to promote environmental preservation. A presentation on this research was given at the 39th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, March 2015. This research was published in *The Journal of East Tennessee History*, March 2016.

“Whom Jesus Commands Us Not to Despise”: Cherokee African Slaves and Protestant Missionaries in the American Mountain South

In-Course Honors Project, Wofford College, Fall 2013. In the College Archives Collection at Wofford College's Sandor Tezler Library

This project analyzes the success of both the American Board of Foreign Commission (ABCFM) and Moravian missionaries in their missions within the Cherokee nation in the first half of the 19th century. By using the original documents, records, and

diaries of each mission, the relationship between the missionaries and the African slaves of the Cherokees was explored. This project argues that the Moravians' negative view of the Cherokee slaves as obstinate and lazy negatively impacted their attempts to evangelize, while the ABCFM missionaries were more successful in their missionary efforts with black slaves because they viewed the African slaves of the Cherokees as those "whom Jesus commands us not to despise," as capable beings ready and willing to convert to Christianity.

Publications

"United We Stand, Divided We May Be Dammed": Grassroots Environmentalism and the TVA in Western North Carolina." *The Journal of East Tennessee History*, vol. 87, released March 2016.

"A New King of Stillness': Hilda Morley's Poetry." *Appalachian Journal: Special Black Mountain College Issue*, edited by Sandra L. Ballard, Joseph Bathanti, and Savannah Paige Murray, vol. 44, no. 3-4, January 2018.

"Beyond Martin Dumberman's *Community*—New Directions for Black Mountain College Research." *Appalachian Journal: Special Black Mountain College Issue*, edited by Sandra L. Ballard, Joseph Bathanti, and Savannah Paige Murray, vol. 44, no. 3-4, January 2018.

"Redemption in the Imprisoning Mountains: A Review of Ron Rash's *The Risen*." *North Carolina Literary Review*

"Community Partnership and Community College Collaboration: An Interview with Robert Gipe." Forthcoming book chapter in *Engaging Appalachia: A Guidebook for University-Community Partnerships*, edited by William R. Schumann.

"The Grit of the Land Was in Them': The Post-Pastoral in John Ehle's *The Land Breakers*." Forthcoming book chapter in *Appalachian Ecocriticism*, edited by Laura Wright and Jessica Cory, West Virginia University Press.

Awards and Honors

Anna Todd Wofford Merit Scholarship—Wofford College, 2011-2015: \$28,000 renewed annually

Civic Engagement Seminar Participant—Wofford College, Fall 2014: Third-year students selected by departments for participation in a study of the Spartanburg community and to

complete a community-based project. Selected for the “Best-of” award for the presentation and design of a community kitchen non-profit which would provide lessons in healthy cooking for local residents and include a community garden.

Duke Energy Endowed Scholarship—Environmental Studies Department, Wofford College, 2014-2015: \$1,300.

Helmus Contest 2015—Wofford College, 1st Place in Poetry, “For Max Dehn,” \$150.

Lewis P. Jones Scholarship—History Department, Wofford College, 2013-2015: \$1,000 renewed annually

Phi Beta Kappa—Beta Chapter at Wofford College, Spartanburg, SC. One of 17 students selected for initiation in November 2014. Official induction ceremony, May 7, 2015.

Presidential Seminar Participant—Wofford College, Spring 2015: Selected as the student participant in this seminar by both the History and Environmental Studies departments to participate in weekly discussions of selected political science and critical theory readings as well as current events with Wofford College President, Dr. Nayef Samhat.

The David Duncan Wallace Award—Department of History at Wofford College, awarded May 7, 2015. For over 40 years, the Wofford History Department has honored the memory of “Dunc” Wallace by presenting the David Duncan Wallace Award to the best graduating senior history major. Wallace was a professor of history at Wofford College from 1899 to 1947 and the author of a massive, multi-volume *History of South Carolina*.

The John W. Harrington Award—Department of Environmental Studies at Wofford College, awarded May 7, 2015. Recipients of the John W. Harrington award are recognized by departmental faculty on the basis of academic achievement, character, and intellectual promise. Awarded given in honor of John Harrington, Wofford College professor of geology from 1963 to 1981, whose books *To See A World* and *Dance of the Continents*, sought to teach readers to understand science and scientific evidence.

Invited Lectures & Presentations

13th Annual Conference on Gender, Wofford College, March 31, 2015. Invited by conference director, Dr. Sally Hitchmough, to read original poetry.

38th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN. March 28, 2015. Presented original research paper entitled, “‘United We Stand, Divided We May Be Dammed:’ Grassroots Environmental Activism and the TVA.”

39th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV. March 18, 2015. Along with two other graduate students at

Appalachian State University, I organized and participated in the panel discussion entitled, "Environmental History: Possibilities and New Directions" along with several leaders in the field, including, Kathryn Newfont, David Whisnant, Don Davis, Luke Manget, and Ron Eller.

6th Annual Southern Appalachian Student Conference on Literature, April 9, 2016 at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN. Presented original research paper, "Nature and Human Nature: The Post-Pastoral in John Ehle's Appalachian Fiction"

40th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Presentation of original research paper: "A Century Among the Pines: *Pinus strobus* Studies in Western North Carolina." (March 2017)

"The Heroic, The Comedic, and The Violent in Appalachian Literature"—April 5, 2016 with Dr. Sandra L. Ballard for Introduction to Appalachian Studies, Instructor: Cheryl Laws, Appalachian State University

"United We Stand, Divided We May Be Dammed': Grassroots Environmentalism in Western North Carolina"—March 16, 2016 for Introduction to Sustainable Development, Instructor: Cody Miller, Appalachian State University

"The Heroic, Comedic, and The Violent in Appalachian Literature"— April 27, 2016 for Appalachian Stories, Instructor: Chelsea Ensley, Appalachian State University

41th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Cincinnati, Ohio. Panel presentation member, "Black Mountain College Semester at Appalachian State University." (March 2018)

41th Annual Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Cincinnati, Ohio. Presentation of original research paper, "The Pastoral, Anti-Pastoral, and Post-Pastoral in Appalachian Literature." (March 2018)

2nd Annual International Rhetoric Workshop, Ghent, Belgium. Workshopped original paper, "United We Stand, Divided We May Be Dammed: Grassroots Environmental Rhetoric Along the Upper French Broad." (July 2018)

References

Prof. John Lane
Professor of Environmental Studies
Director, Goodall Environmental Studies Center
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Dr. Mark S. Byrnes
History Department Professor and Chair
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