

*Appalachian Understories:
Growing Hope & Resilience from Commonwealth to
Global Commons*

Thursday, March 12 — Sunday, March 15, 2020

Lexington, Kentucky

We human Appalachians are fortunate to have the world's richest temperate forests grace our region. Inspiration for the 43rd Annual ASA Conference is rooted in these forests, and particularly in the easy-to-overlook portion of the woods known as "understory." In the forest understory, plant and animal life grows between the earthen ground and the more visible canopy, in both shade and sunlight. Recognizing that forest understories are places of beauty and strength, the 2020 ASA Conference will bring to light the many voices of Appalachia that are often obscured. In the understories, people confront stereotypes, myths, marginalization, and violence and meet them with resilience and hope. In addition to native forests and forest-based human experiences, this gathering will highlight stories of Black Appalachians, women, gender, and sexuality, health and healing, and hope spots. Oral history and film-making, along with literature, music, photography, and other art forms, will be among our featured "understories" exploration methods. We also celebrate Appalshop's 50th anniversary, revisiting the Whitesburg studio's important documentary legacy and learning about the "understories" it continues to produce today. Like the forest that inspires us, and like the 42 previous ASA conferences, this gathering offers growth, beauty, hope, and nourishment.

For the first time ever, the conference will be held on the 30,000-student University of Kentucky campus in Lexington, which has long earned recognition for its leadership in Appalachian Studies. A broad range of UK colleges, centers, departments, and programs engage in research related to the Appalachian region. The ASA 2020 conference is hosted by the UK Appalachian Studies Center, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate Appalachian Research Community, with additional sponsorship from a number of organizations and units within the University, local and regional communities, and the state. Many on-campus units will share their cutting-edge research, as will many of our internationally-recognized humanities, creative arts, social science, science, and medical scholars. Joining these on-campus events are off-campus field trips, events, activities, and performances.

The 2020 Program Committee invites proposals for panels, papers, posters, roundtables, performances, or workshops. Papers and posters should feature original unpublished work in progress. The full call for participation with details for online submission will go out September 3. Scholarships are available.

Deadline for proposals is October 7, 2019. Please come, participate, and celebrate the region.

**Forest Commons | Oral History | Women
Black Appalachians | Gender & Sexuality
Appalshop's 50th Anniversary | Health & Healing**

Kathy Newfont, Conference Chair, Kathryn.newfont@uky.edu
Jennifer Cramer, Program Chair, Jennifer.cramer@uky.edu



The mission of the Appalachian Studies Association is to promote and engage dialogue, research, scholarship, education, creative expression, and action among a diverse and inclusive group of scholars, educators, practitioners, grassroots activists, students, individuals, groups and institutions. Our mission is driven by our commitment to foster quality of life, democratic participation and appreciation of Appalachian experiences regionally, nationally and internationally.

