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Appalachian Englishes in the Twenty-First Century
Educational Materials

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Chapter 6

Language, Gender, and Sexuality in Appalachia
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Exercise 1
What does it mean to be Appalachian—or more broadly, Southern or rural? What cultural meanings do we attach to being from Appalachia or sounding Appalachian? In what ways are Southern and queer identities contradictory or alike? In groups, pick one of the following media representations of Appalachia and conduct a media analysis to identify key scenes or dialogue that you think portray a given character as sounding a certain way based on their gender and regional identity. How are Appalachian Englishes gendered in film, literature, and other media forms?
- Graphic novels, such as *Trampoline* (2015), *Warlords of Appalachia* (2017)
- Films, such as *Deliverance* (1972), *Jug Face* (2013)
- Podcasts, such as *The Adventure Zone: Amnesty* (2018–19)
- Video games, such as *Fallout 76* (2018)

Exercise 2
Propose a hypothetical research project seeking to collect linguistic data from queer Appalachians. First, read the Linguistic Society of America's Ethics Statement, which was revised in 2019. Then, individually or in groups, consider the following questions:
- How would you aim to recruit potential research subjects from such a vulnerable population? What might be the pros and cons of each approach? How can you ensure that any potential risks to their safety might be addressed?

- In what ways can you assure that surveys, interviews, and correspondence are gender- and region-affirming specifically for queer folk in the South? You might reference Queer Appalachia's [About](#) page which outlines some of the myriad identities of the region.
- Some queer folk with gender dysphoria experience extreme [dysphoria](#) when hearing [their own voice](#). How would you think through a researcher's obligation to "minimize harm" if you were to carry out a study that involved recording queer voices? Going beyond minimizing risk, it is a common practice on the part of linguists to give back to the community under study. In this hypothetical study, how would you practice linguistic gratuity in ways that affirm your research subjects' gender identities?
- What research guidelines and practices concerning LGBTQ+ people in Appalachia-based organizations, or organizations in the South at large, can you find online? Do any of these give insight into ethical considerations that would be important to bear in mind as you plan out this hypothetical research project?

Exercise 3

Consider the linguistic landscape of Appalachia or Appalachia's place in the broader American soundscape. Do a search, either online or around your location, for any [songs](#), [books](#) of [poetry](#), [zines](#), [digital archives](#), billboards, monuments, or other cultural artifacts of or about Appalachia. Collect these images and texts, then compose your collection either on paper (e.g., in a journal) or online (in a blog or on social media). Reflect on the following:
- What do the artifacts you've collected tell us about the way that gender is part of the linguistic landscape of Appalachia (or in whatever region you may be located)?
- What culturally salient Appalachian personalities or cultural representations of Appalachians did you or your family/friend group attend to when you were growing up? In what ways were those personalities or representations gendered?
- In what ways do you think the linguistic landscape(s) of Appalachia might change in the future?