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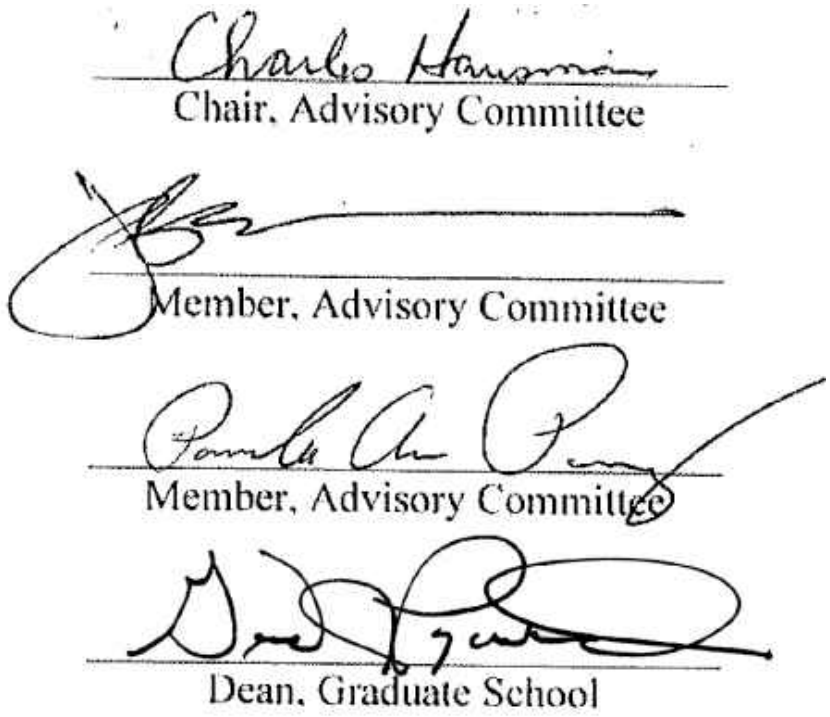
THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE HUMAN-INTEREST STORIES ON RAISING HOPE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA IN KENTUCKY'S PROMISE ZONE COUNTIES

BY

MELISSA L. NEWMAN

DISSERTATION APPROVED:



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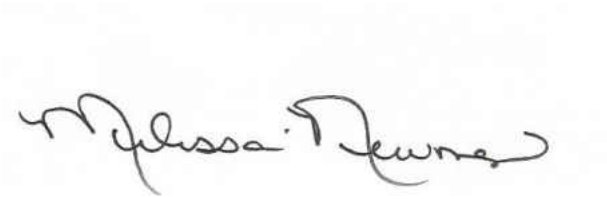

Date: 12/16/2019

THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE HUMAN-INTEREST STORIES ON HOPE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA IN KENTUCKY'S PROMISE ZONE COUNTIES

By

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DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

2019

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Frank, who is always amazingly supportive of my many works in progress and who also shares my love of Kentucky's Appalachia. Together, we both work to make the mountains we call home a better place for future generations. This work is also shaped by our daughters, Brittani and Brooke – the two amazing women in my life who I learn from every day through their strength and determination. I also dedicate this work to my grandchildren, who bring joy and a new perspective to my life and work. It is for them that my husband and I strive to build a legacy they can be proud of as they grow and recognize who we are as a family and how far we've all come together. I am forever indebted to my parents, Everett and Nellie Dozier, who instilled in me the grit I needed to stand up for what I believe and the resolve to change what I see as unfit and unfair.

And finally, I dedicate this work to the people of Kentucky's Appalachia, my people, who have persevered across myriad barriers throughout generations. To us, most of all, I wish an abundance of hope.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Charles Hausman, my committee chair, for his patience and guidance through this research effort. The knowledge he shared during the research process allowed me to stretch my limits and truly empowered me to believe in my own abilities.

For Dr. Pamela Parry, who committed to being an active member of my committee, I have nothing but gratitude. Dr. Parry's practical approach to the research process and the story that data can tell is what makes her an excellent teacher and an even more amazing editor. Dr. Parry is a valuable member of my tribe and a true and loyal friend who I hope to share many years of research ideas.

Dr. Jim Gleason, my first faculty mentor and another member of my dissertation committee, continues to be a constant in my academic career. From my first day on the job teaching, to those first years as a student intern supervisor, Dr. Gleason has helped to shape my ideas about higher education academia.

I must also acknowledge those who shaped my early career as a journalist. For all the publishers, editors and fellow reporters and journalists, who during good times and bad, still managed to tell the story. I am grateful for the insider knowledge of the business that helped me to gain understanding of how news media shapes our world, for better or for worse.

ABSTRACT

During the past decade, social media has gained dominance over traditional media in an agenda-setting role for journalists, often dictating the news of the day (Pfeffer et al., 2014). With data collected from Kentucky's Promise Zone counties and C. R. Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale instrument, this study looks at how the use of social media affects hope, while considering five decades of news media negative stereotypical views of those who live in the mountains of Appalachia (Bowler, 1985). This study examines data from those who live in Kentucky's Promise Zone counties, a 2014 designation by President Barack Obama. Kentucky's PZ counties: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry, and Whitley, in some cases geographically and in others socioeconomically, overlap the Kentucky towns of Inez and Paintsville and neighboring communities of Neon, Happy Hollow, Beauty, and Thornton Gap, initially featured in mainstream media reporting from Appalachia when America's War on Poverty was declared in 1964. News media has continued to report at these locations during War on Poverty milestone years or when poverty becomes part of a political agenda, most often during discussions and debates of entitlement reform (Berke, 1992). This study is also informed by a 2017 report from the United Nations (Alston, 2017) that supports the notion that news media continue to perpetuate negative stereotypes among the poorest and most economically disadvantaged populations within Appalachia. This study also touches on economic research, which has recently emerged, suggesting a correlation between higher hope and the economic success of a region (Wuepper & Lybbert, 2017).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Face of Poverty

More than 50 years ago, a young senator from Massachusetts named John F. Kennedy set out on the campaign trail in a bid for the United States Presidency. During several stops in West Virginia, Kennedy was deeply moved by the poverty he saw (Appalachia Then and Now, 2015). During the first televised presidential debate in 1960, Kennedy displayed a sack of cornmeal and spoke into the camera, "This is what people are living on" (Franklin, 1981, page 8). Once elected, President Kennedy's first executive order started a pilot supplemental food program and on May 28, 1961 he sent his Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Lothrop Freeman, to Welch, West Virginia, to deliver the nation's first food stamps, totaling $95, to Alderson Muncy, an unemployed coal miner with 13 children (Franklin, 1981).

As early as one year prior to this first dispersal of food stamps, a unique convening of governors from the Appalachian states, notably called the Conference of Appalachian Governors, was already beginning to explore the development of a regional approach that would address the needs of the more than 15 million people living in poverty within their collective states of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. The governors took Kennedy's interest in relieving poverty as an invitation to forge ahead with a plan and present their case to the newly elected President. In 1963, President Kennedy formed a federal-state commission called the President's Appalachian Regional Commission or PARC. Each governor from every state, designated as part of the Appalachian Region, put forth an appointee to act as a

state representative within the PARC body. The first order of business for the freshly appointed representatives was to prepare a comprehensive action program for the economic development of the Appalachian Region to explore solutions to poverty, culminating with a comprehensive report aimed at revealing economic barriers for the people of Appalachia while seeking solutions for financial stabilization. The PARC body's findings were simply titled, *A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission 1964.* The report, released in April 1964, came months after the assassination of President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, and was therefore officially delivered to President Lyndon B. Johnson. It called for a Federal appropriation of $218 million for fiscal year 1965, beginning July 1 (Pomfret, 1964).

This appropriation would be in addition to the President's billion-dollar program to attack poverty throughout the nation. The report was signed by the governors of West Virginia, Maryland, Alabama, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia, all states except for Ohio, which made up the PARC at that time. Originally, Ohio had "balked at participating in a joint effort with the other states" but was added in time for President Johnson's Congressional request for aid in Appalachia (Morris, 1964, page 1).

Only three months prior to the report's release, President Johnson, during his State of the Union address, on Jan. 8, 1964, made a declaration to continue the late President John F. Kennedy's legacy. The major initiatives were aimed at ending poverty in Appalachia: The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, The Food Stamp Act of 1964, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and the Social Security Act of 1965.

> "This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America … Our aim is not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it. No single piece of legislation, however, is going to suffice" President Lyndon Johnson (Fuller, 2014, para. 3).

The PARC report called Appalachia "a region apart," both geographically and statistically (see Figure 1.1). The report cited low income, high unemployment, lack of urbanization, deficits in education, deficits in living standard, and a changing citizenry, as culprits in what the report referred to as "The Legacy of Neglect" (A Report By the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, 1964).

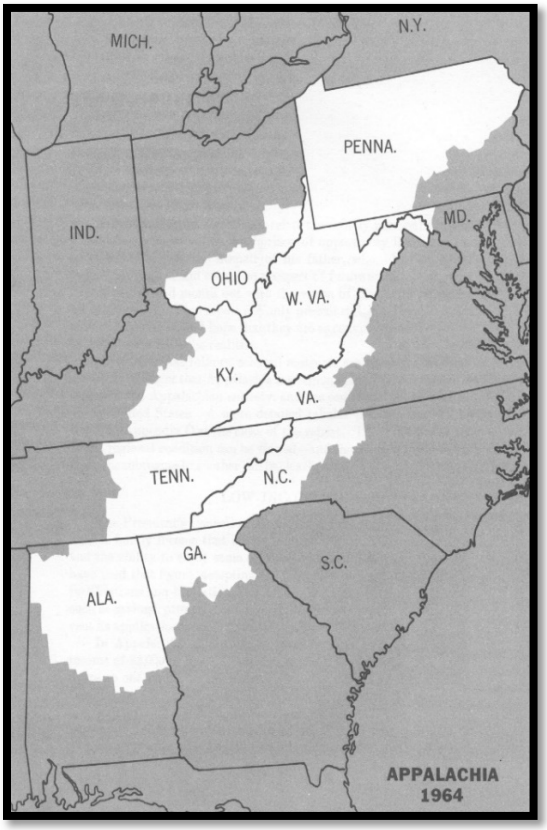

Figure 1.1 Appalachia in 1964
The Appalachian Region as defined by President's Appalachian Regional Commission in 1963 (A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, 1964).

It would be less than a month after the PARC report was released, that the Appalachian Region was made famous by a 1964 *Life* magazine photo spread called "The Valley of Poverty" (Dominis, 1964) that focused on one small Appalachian Kentucky town, visiting with only two families. With that *Life* printing, in January 1964, the Appalachian stereotypical narrative, that was born a few years earlier, began to get some nourishment. The 12-page feature was mostly the compilation of large, stirring photographs with captioned

descriptions like “sad faced and prematurely aged” and “ragged urchins” (see Figure 1.2). The word shack was used five times throughout the 12-page spread. One set of photos depicted little girls holding an unclothed baby doll with both child and doll dirty-faced (see Figure 1.3). This same doll showed up in other photos as if passed around like a photo prop. Another photo showed a father and his young son digging coal from railroad tracks to heat the family home. Another was a vivid image of a child-aged mother singing while she swayed in a rocking chair holding her sick child.

Figure 1.2 Appalachia’s “Ragged Urchins” The commonest sights around Appalachia are aging men and ragged urchins …, (Dominis, 1964). Photo by John Dominis ©Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

With this *Life* printing, along with the birth of the highly politicized War on Poverty, a media darling was created for news organizations as well as politicians. Dozens of journalists and photographers came to Appalachia seeking national recognition like those at *Life*. Would-be elected officials favoring a platform of ending poverty in one of the wealthiest countries in the world were now using Appalachia as a political launching pad. During, and since the official declaration of the War on Poverty and the release of the 1964 PARC report, news media across the country collectively printed hundreds of grim black-and-white photos of barefoot children with dirty faces

back dropped with wooden shacks. While the photos told most of the story, the captions and short narrative, which served as an introduction, helped to set the tone for *Life* photographer John Dominis' (deceased, Dec. 30, 2013) black-and-white shots.

> "In a lonely valley in eastern Kentucky, in the heart of the mountainous region called Appalachia, live an impoverished people whose plight has long been ignored by affluent America. Their homes are shacks without plumbing or sanitation. Their landscape is a man-made desolation of corrugated hills and hollows laced with polluted streams. The people, themselves — often disease-ridden and unschooled — are without jobs and even without hope. Government relief and handouts of surplus food have sustained them on a bare subsistence level for so many years that idleness and relief are now their accepted way of life" (Dominis, 1964, page 55).

This is what the world now knew of Appalachia and her people and would set off decades of stereotypical ideology still prevalent today.

Life's "Valley of Poverty" spread was not untrue. The people in the photos from Inez, Kentucky did exist and their living conditions were depicted accurately. Statistical evidence also existed as proof that compared to the rest of the United States' population; Appalachia was worse off educationally and economically. The income gap captured in 1960 as reported by the U.S. Bureau of the Census was demonstrated in several subcategories throughout

Figure 1.3 In Grandma's Shack
"Nadine McFall, 1, happily reaches over to pat the stomach of a huge doll – its wardrobe long since lost and never replaced – as she squats on a crowded couch in her great grandmother's shack near Neon" (Dominis, 1964). ©Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images
©Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

the PARC report and made stark comparisons. In all categories, median family income in Appalachia showed lower dollar amounts than in the rest of the United States (see Figure 1.4), (A Report by the President' Appalachian Regional Commission, 1964).

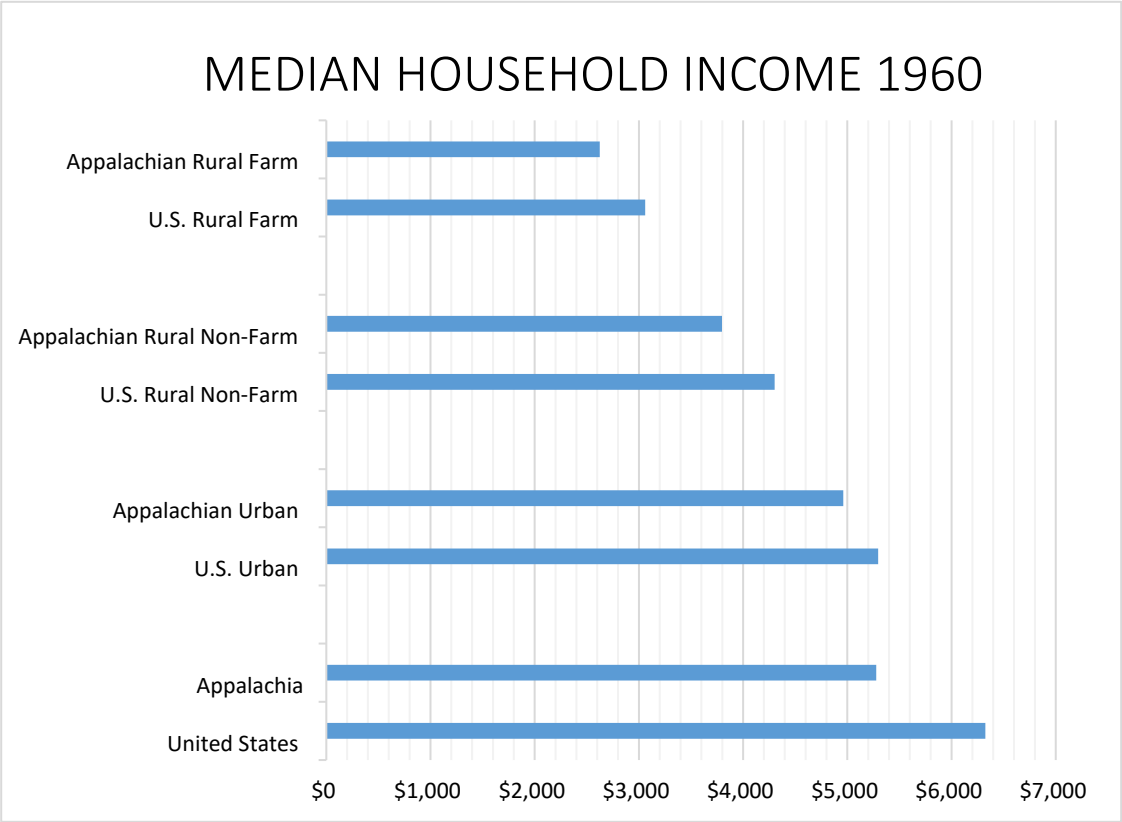

Figure 1.4 Median Household Income in 1960
Statistics Provided by A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, 1964.

Poverty was real in Appalachia and *Life* had uncovered that truth for the world to see, but there was another truth that went unreported. For example, during this same period, the Inez High School gymnasium was standing room only on basketball nights as fans were excited to watch teams that had a history of winning.

The Inez Indians made it all the way to the state championship more than eight times and took home the championship trophy at least twice (see Figure 1.5). Paintsville

High School earned two state titles of its own. The Inez team had a history of its players earning spots on the Kentucky All Stars Team that would compete against the Indiana All Stars Team. They had earned the title of "Iron Men of Inez" (Vanhoose, 2012).

Figure 1.5 The "Iron Men of Inez"
The "Iron Men of Inez" and what will be forever known as The "Muncie Miracle" (see Figure 1.6) were high school teams from similar small towns 250 miles apart. The Inez team had a history of its players earning spots on the Kentucky All Stars Team that would compete against the Indiana All Stars Team (Anspaugh, 1986).

Approximately 250 miles away in Muncie, Indiana, during the same year, the Milan High School Indians were celebrating their own high school basketball team that had just won the Indiana High School Boys Basketball Tournament championship in 1954 (see Figure 1.6). With an enrollment of only 161, Milan was the smallest school ever to win a single-class state basketball title in Indiana, beating the team from the much larger Muncie Central High School in a classic competition known as The Milan Miracle (Higgins, 2004). The Milan team and Muncie, Indiana were the inspiration for the 1986 film *Hoosiers* (Anspaugh, 1986).

There was a more middle-class truth that somehow went unnoticed by reporters and politicians alike, one where families were eating dinner every night, children were going to school each morning, and a community was celebrating the creation of its second annual Apple Festival, still part of the rich community culture more than 50 years later.

Figure 1.6 The "Muncie Miracle"
The "Muncie Miracle" team became the inspiration for the 1986 film Hoosiers, (Higgins, 2004).

Three months after "The Valley of Poverty" photo spread was published, President Johnson visited Inez in Martin County and Paintsville in adjacent Johnson County, Kentucky. The *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Kentucky) reported that 3,000 people turned out to greet him. A photograph of high school-aged teenagers holding books while other community members awaited the President's arrival was published with the story on April 24, 1964. In the background of this photo, published only in the

state of Kentucky, there are three smaller children holding a sign that says, “Johnson County Welcomes Pres. Johnson.” Others are holding signs, “Welcome L.B.J,” “Help Coal,” and “Coal is our Bread and Butter” (see Figure 1.7).

What was not depicted in this photograph are shacks, dirty-faced children, or “urchins,” as the children were referred to in “The Valley of Poverty” photo spread. In addition, there were no scantily clad or naked, dirty baby dolls. Another photo taken by *Courier-Journal* photographer, Bill Strode (1964) shows a helicopter carrying the President out to land in a field while some from Inez and Paintsville anxiously wait to meet the leader of the free world. No shacks or broken-down trucks were visible in the photo, only a commercial passenger bus that may have carried the community members to greet their President (See Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.7 Painstville, Ky. Greets the President
Photo by Bill Strode, *The Courier-Journal*, April 24, 1964.
©The Courier Journal

A half a day by air travel from Inez, Kentucky, London, England was bidding a temporary farewell to their “mop top” heartthrobs, The Beatles. John, Paul, Ringo, and George were about to set off on tour to Paris and then to the United States. Separated by nearly 4,000 miles but only 29 pages in the Jan. 31, 1964 issue of *Life*, the story of Kentucky’s Appalachia called “The Valley of Poverty” and the tale of “Here Come

Those Beatles" shared the 90-page periodical, along with Robert F. Kennedy's mission to Asia, and astronaut John Glenn announcing his "launch" into politics.

Figure 1.8 President Lyndon B. Johnson Visits Kentucky
President Lyndon Johnson lands in Inez, Kentucky, as part of a campaign stop and his War on Poverty. April 25, 1964. Photo by Bill Strode. ©The Courier Journal

The pictures within the pages of *Life's* 1964 issue, for both articles from "The Valley of Poverty" and "Here Come Those Beatles," are presented vastly different with regard to content intent. Those depicted within the (Louisville, Kentucky) *Courier Journal's* photo of the crowd greeting President Lyndon B. Johnson in downtown Prestonsburg, Kentucky (see Figure 1.9) could easily have been interchangeable with those depicted in any of the photos from the article on the Beatles' upcoming tours (see Figure 1.10).

Figure 1.9 President Lyndon B. Johnson Greets the Public in Prestonsburg, Kentucky
President Lyndon Johnson greeting an excited public in downtown Prestonsburg, Kentucky on April 25, 1964. Photo by Bill Strode. ©The Courier Journal

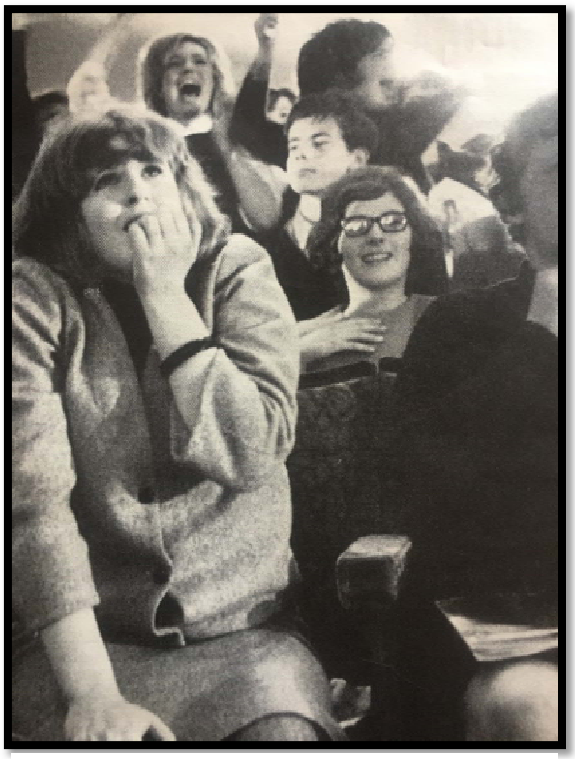

Figure 1.10

The Beatles are coming to America
This photograph (left) was published on page 29 of the *Life* magazine photo and story spread called "Here Come Those Beatles." The girls photographed were from England. Many photos like this one were published in the same issue to show Americans what they could expect when the band would arrive in the United States for its first tour. This was the same issue of Life magazine that featured the "Valley of Poverty" in the January 1964 issue. Photo by Terrance Spencer ©Life

The News Media and How Americans Viewed the World

Life circulated 4 million copies a week, and was read by 13.5 million people, which was at that time 10 percent of the U.S. population. Before television became commonplace in every American home, *Life's* photographs were how Americans viewed the world (Levinson & Fletcher, 1986).

Life photographers were considered much more important than the reporters, their photos so impactful that the magazine's photos of the Vietnam Conflict (War) is credited for turning the American public against the war (Deacon, 2011). The January 1964 *Life* photos, no less impactful, have lived on in infamy, etched in the consciousness of what the rest of the country would believe about the people of the Appalachian Mountains.

During the *Life* reign of popularity, in what is referred to as its golden age – from 1936 to 1972, enjoyed media market domination. The magazine featured some of the most notable writers, illustrators, and photographers from the 20th Century, including Norman Rockwell and the iconic Alfred Eisenstaedt who shot the cover photograph for its Aug. 14, 1945 issue featuring the famed and commonly referenced photo *Nurse in a Sailor's Arms* as Victory Over Japan Day in New York City was happening in the background of the kissing couple. The publication also captured aerial photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs and photos of Hitler's bunker just after his suicide. *Life* photographers also took the nation into the compound that housed children of German officers, which had been bred to create an Aryan race. Readers were also taken on a tour of Mussolini's love nest. *Life* covered the Nuremberg tribunals and the trial of Norwegian Nazi collaborator Vidkun Quisling. The magazine profiled

President Harry S. Truman and even took the nation on his family vacation, following him through photos. Photographers reported on Sir Winston Churchill and General Douglas MacArthur so often and so thoroughly that the pieces were referred to as memoirs. *Life* had set the precedence for news coverage both during and after WWII. No contemporary magazine could reimagine its success and none has since come close to its influence. *Life* was the lens through which Americans saw the world (Wainwright, 1986).

Throughout the 20th Century, these photographs were the main tool that news editors used to communicate the news. The role of the photographers became more important than the journalists who were writing about events. While photographs began to take a larger percentage of the news page, the printed story became secondary. In other words, the picture, became the story – the main representation of the event or happening, and *Life* photographers were the team to beat, at least in the United States. The magazine's solid reputation for reporting, with accuracy, the life and times of the United States, had catapulted it into the spotlight as the main and most trusted news source. When *Life's* photos were shown to the world, other publications wanted to follow suit – or at the very least, they were inspired and influenced by *Life*, where the photographers played a critical role in attracting new readers and often acted as free agents (Gervais & Morel, 2015).

When President Johnson made promises to Appalachia during his State of the Union address to Congress on Jan. 8, 1964, and made public the official declaration of the nation's War on Poverty, he said he would "bring rural America into the mainstream of American prosperity" (Wicker, 1964, page 12). With this declaration, the President

also brought this small area of Appalachia into the mainstream of American media with national attention like the area had never seen before. Because of *Life's* immense circulation, readership, and influence, other magazine and newspaper editors began instructing journalists and photographers to report on Appalachia.

The *New York Times* reported less than a week later after the State of the Union address that LBJ's plan would include road construction to bring industry and tourism to a region representing the nation's "worst pocket of poverty" with a "swath of deprivation containing some rural slums as despairing as anything one might encounter in Europe" (Bigart, 1964, page 91).

Facts, Truth, and Accuracy in Reporting

Armed with scant more than a recent book written by a small-town Kentucky lawyer, Harry Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, reporters set out to find poverty. Journalists viewed Caudill's book or at least they had heard that his words were an accurate historical reference on which to base their findings in Appalachia. Caudill's book was published in 1963 by Boston's Little Brown & Company, at that time one of the major publishing companies in the United States. Caudill's book used terms like "squalor," "ignorance," and "ill health." Caudill's generalizations painted a picture that all people from Appalachia were living in substandard conditions. His frame of reference was problematic because it only viewed Appalachia from his experience with east Kentucky coal camps.

Nation magazine invited Caudill to basically summarize his book in one of their 1964 issues. In this installment, Caudill drew from a section of his book about the

Cumberland Plateau and that became the ideological theme for the article, using phrases like “drab little towns,” dilapidated shacks,” and “huddled ugliness and want.”

It is not unusual for journalists and photographers to seek a foundation, much like Caudill’s summation of Appalachia, in which to base the reporting that comes after. In many instances journalists seek to reference truth on a compilation of foundational findings that demonstrate an accurate representation of the facts at any given time. The geographical impossibility of journalists and photographers having personal knowledge about every community where news coverage is taking place, is one reason journalists rely on other narratives whose authors have a more intimate view of the coverage area and people (Forde, 2012). In other words, journalists lack the capacity to gather all information and inform the public on every single world event. The professional norms on which they depend to begin building a set of facts gives them an extremely limited view from what some would consider a very small window.

Facts are by definition true, and when journalists seek the truth they often find that the truth (facts) change as time passes, which makes finding the truth and reporting it accurately more challenging than expected. Many times this truth encompasses the perspective of both the journalist and those who provide the foundational knowledge about the story or stories that will be disseminated. Facts can be living and breathing concepts and as humans learn more about the world and circumstances, old facts are replaced by new facts, therefore changing the truth as we know it at any given moment in time. There is also the instance when some facts are hidden and not surfaced until a later time. This makes the journalist’s job of getting at the truth even more difficult

because they do not have all the knowledge they need in order to be as accurate as possible (BBC Academy: Truth and Accuracy, 2017).

Then, there is the journalist's interpretation of the facts. If a journalist only has access to most facts about an incident or condition and some are hidden from them then the interpretation is not likely to be fully accurate and therefore seem untruthful, especially if those hidden facts become visible at a later time. As much as reporters strive to compartmentalize their own values and beliefs when attempting to interpret the facts as they have learned them, it is nearly impossible to completely and wholly set aside personal perspectives and it is unreasonable to think any journalist could escape them completely (Forde, 2012).

The 1961 Freedom Riders is just one historical example of journalist perspective combined with practicing accuracy in reporting that clearly that demonstrates the difficulty in the task of getting at the truth when co-mingled with personal perspective. The Freedom Riders were part of a movement called the Congress of Racial Equality, better known at the time by its acronym CORE, led by director James Farmer. At the base of the Freedom Riders event in May of that year, was a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court stating that segregation on interstate conveyances violated the Interstate Commerce Act. Even so, states in the south were "clinging to Jim Crow laws and ignoring the high court's ruling" (Roberts & Klibanoff, 2006, page 2).

The Freedom Riders traveled on Greyhound and Trailways buses from the upper through the lower South, aiming a visual message at those who were culturally tied to the old segregationist laws of the South. The passengers mingled throughout designated areas segregated by race at each stop, visiting public restrooms, restaurants, and bus

terminals, along the way. As they traveled deeper into the "Jim Crow abiding south," they were determined to keep their commitment to peaceful, non-violent actions, with an aim at simply exercising the civil right that had been passed to them by the high court in 1946 (Roberts & Klibanoff, 2006, page 242-43.)

Although almost half of the Freedom Riders, who made the trek from Washington D.C. to a pre-planned final destination in New Orleans, Louisiana, were born and bred southerners, southern newspapers that had been reporting on northern interference in the affairs of southern governance – in many instances referring to them as outside agitators – reported this trope again and did not question the identities of the passengers. Even when the Freedom Riders were attacked in Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama, a front-page editorial published May 22, 1961, the *Birmingham News* asked then Attorney General Robert Kennedy to take action to "stop those who provoke violence," referring not to those who were involved in the attack, but instead to those who were riding the busses. Many in the national press suggested the Riders, themselves, were responsible for the violence they endured (New York Times, 1961).

Those newspapers making decisions as press editorial boards and individual journalists making the claim that, in essence, it was the northern agitators who were causing public discourse were in all likelihood subscribing to a "sphere of consensus," a metaphysical arena in public life where everyone is understood to agree. In this sphere, "the journalist's role is to serve as an advocate or celebrant of consensus values" (Hallin, 1986, page 115).

A consensus in the south, at the time of the Freedom Riders trek, was that those who pushed the traditional rules of Jim Crow laws into recognizing civil rights, were

bringing undue controversy to an otherwise peaceful existence. Within this perspective, the reporting of the social norm narrative of the time would have been correct, except for the egregious error in misidentifying the Riders as northern agitators. This fact alone, however, could have changed the trajectory of reporting that came after. The ever-present notion of journalists disciplining themselves to the degree that questioning a socially acceptable norm is commonplace is a timeless one, but one that demands daily attention. And, would any reporting ever be finalized and publishable if journalists were constantly questioning the basis or the beginnings of facts that have been already been publicly accepted? From this historical record of The Freedom Riders, comes one of the more memorable historical moments where recounting of facts used to form a basis for a story was inaccurate and some would say untruthful. A photo of then believed to be James Peck, a white Rider who was said to have endured the severity of the beatings that took place at the Birmingham bus terminal, was misidentified. The photo of this beating was circulated in newspapers across the country. The story, of how Peck was beaten and how his head was "split down to the skull," undoubtedly shocked readers and audiences. However, the man in the photo was George Webb, a bystander, a black man whose finance was riding on that bus. She was a regular passenger and as he was waiting for her to exit, he was attacked. Neither Webb nor his fiancé were a part of CORE or the Freedom Riders. Without questioning the story, which was the basis for available information, highly respected journalists wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning book chronicling the attacks. This error was reproduced in the first edition, hardcover book, "The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation."

The book made journalists, turned authors, Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, Pulitzer Prize winners in 2000 (Roberts & Klibanoff, 2006, page 247-49).

Even though the mistake was probably an honest one at the first reporting and then repeated later on, it did make a better story that a white Freedom Rider had been brutally beaten for his role in pushing southern norms in favor of civil rights enforcements for the black community (Forde, 2012).

Harry Caudill's "Night Comes to the Cumberlands," much like many of the acceptable norms of the journalists covering the 1961 Freedom Riders' trek, depicted his view through a small window of what Appalachia seemed to look like. Bringing attention again to that "sphere of consensus, where everyone is understood to agree" (Hallin, 1986, page 115), it is Caudill's book that became much of the foundation for the journalists who would continue with that same Appalachian story, without much question as to what facts were hidden from view.

To be as fair as possible to the Fourth Estate – our watch-dogs, those who work the thankless job of being the public's eyes and ears – it is important to note that while facts do change over time and the truth is mostly obscured by layers of political agendas, activism and limited to what we know, see, and hear at any given time, accuracy is often the journalists' only reasonable goal. Since truth and facts are not stationary, they are living and breathing, changing as knowledge grows, accuracy is the concept on which journalists rely. Striving to be as accurate as possible also comes with its own set of problems linking back to facts and truth. It is feasible that one could give an entirely accurate account of something that is not true, (BBC Academy, 2017).

The Appalachian Narrative Evolves

Newsweek published a feature in one of its March issues in 1964, printing in bold headlines the bleakness of Appalachia and calling it "American's largest and most stubborn rural slum …" (Bowler, 1985, page 240).

Eight months after the official declaration of the War on Poverty, the *Monthly Labor Review's* August edition, printed an article claiming, "the name of the region has become almost synonymous with poverty in America" (Miller, 1964, page 887). By this time, the statement had become truth as the entire nation had been exposed to dozens of images of Appalachia's most depressed people. By December, nearing the end of the first year of Johnson's War on Poverty, the *Congressional Digest* used an entire issue to display the "Appalachian Situation." This periodical reported that the region's basest needs were not met, "food, clothing, medical care, housing, basic education, skills, jobs, hope, dignity …" (Bowler, 1985, page 240).

After LBJ's visit to Kentucky in April 1964, the *New York Times* sent reporter Marjorie Hunter and an accompanying photographer to explore the same areas near where the president had visited. In one of the first articles, the headline set the tone for what would come after: "The Largest Economic Slum Problem" (Hunter, 1964, page 18). Marjorie Hunter (deceased April 11, 2011) and her photographer's mission was to find examples of poverty. Mimicking the *Life* feature "The Valley of Poverty" from early in that year; the *New York Times* piece was called "The Mountains of Poverty." Like the *Life* spread, the photos were large, stirring, and dramatic.

Hunter and her photographer, who unlike *Life* photographers did not get credit for the work, visited places like Happy Hollow, Kentucky, and Beauty, Kentucky. It

was no accident that the names provided a bit of irony for the reporting. Following the Happy Hollow visit, Hunter reported, "… if anyone is happy in Happy Hollow, Kentucky, it doesn't show in the tired, drawn faces that bear the mark of poverty" (Bowler, 1985, page 240). Her reporting also indicated that Happy's residents "sit in front of their shacks in the day … sleep on lumpy beds … and … get up the next day for the same listless existence" (Hunter, May 4, 1964, page 19). Hunter reported that there were nine families in Happy Hollow and not one of the family members had a job. While visiting Beauty, Kentucky, another convenient name to demonstrate irony, she reported that there were 207 homes and only 10 percent of those could be considered acceptable housing for civilized society. The other 90 percent, Hunter wrote, were "blackened with age and neglect, sag badly" (Hunter, 1964, May 17, Sec. VI, page 13) and a stark contrast to anything that might be described as beauty in Beauty, Kentucky. Hunter also wrote that 307 men were unemployed in Beauty and Happy Hollow (Bowler, 1985).

The photos' captions read like final summations of the people they depicted. One photograph called "Woman of Appalachia," featured Ms. Pernie Mathis who was 58 at the time. "Nobody knows me anymore. I'm dried up," she said. The caption concluded with an explanation about Mathis and her situation as a widow of a wounded veteran who received $60 in a monthly pension. Not to be outdone by *Life's* close to half dozen mentions of shacks in their 12-page spread, the *New York Times* captioned another photo called "The Old," showing Mrs. Lee Nelson standing in the doorway of her "shack." The caption goes on to report that Mrs. Nelson's husband was too feeble to come to the door and that they had no Social Security benefits. The couple was

reportedly getting by on welfare payments. Their four sons, "like many men who grow up in Appalachia," had all left home and sent nothing back to their parents. "When you're old and no good nobody wants you," Mrs. Nelson's caption read (Hunter, 1964, May 17, Sec. VI, page 1).

In another article in the *New York Times* report headlined: "Talk Passes Time for the Deprived*,"* printed May 3, 1964, the reporter, Hunter, takes liberties with assigning her own labels to the people of Appalachia. The poor don't like to talk to strangers, Hunter wrote. Hunter names people, first and last names, in hear-say conversations with unsubstantiated information, something that by any journalistic standard, even in 1964, was considered unethical, (SPJ Code of Ethics, 1923-2018). The starkest example is a conversation with an unnamed interviewee where no attribution is offered. This person allegedly says about someone who also lives in the community, "Samantha Smothers is kinda jokefied and acts peculiar 'cause she's over 40 years old and hain't never been married yet" (Hunter, May 8, 1964, Sec. I, page 59).

In a mere six months from the beginning of LBJ's declaration of the War on Poverty for Appalachia, the *Times'* reporting style from Appalachia had gone from informational and statistical to sensationalizing and stereotyping (for example, Morris, 1964; Hunter, May 3, May 8, May 17, 1964; Bigart, 1964; Wicker, 1964, Pomfret, 1964; Semple, 1964).

In one of Hunter's *New York Times* articles, it is noted by an interviewee that the people of Martin County who were being interviewed by national media outlets, "didn't go into town much" for fear of people making fun of their clothes and their accents.

Hunter admits in a sentence that these people are "not easy to find, living on the outskirts of town" (Hunter, May 8, 1964, Sec. I, page 59).

In fact, from January to December 1964, there were four Kentucky counties in which the media seemed to focus much time and effort: Martin, Johnson, Letcher, and Floyd counties. Of the 360 counties in Appalachia that were designated by the original PARC, these four had become not only the face of Appalachia, but also the face of poverty, bringing awkward attention to the small communities as well as augmenting and reinforcing a negative stereotype of what it looked like to be poor in the mountains, (See Figure 1.11.)

Letcher County's Neon and Thornton Gap were featured in *Life's* "The Valley of Poverty" in January 1964 as was Martin County's Inez and Johnson County's Paintsville. Letcher, Johnson, Floyd, and Martin counties were all featured in the *New York Times'* piece called "The Mountains of Poverty" in May 1964.

The War on Poverty 50 Years Later

The 50th anniversary of the United States' official War on Poverty was commemorated in 2014 with a *New York Times* headline calling it a "mixed bag." The *Times'* story asserted that the poverty rate had fallen to only 15 percent from 19 percent during the five-decade long effort (Lowery, 2014, Jan. 4). *USA Today* claimed there was no victory in war on poverty, focusing specifically on one of the 1964 originally featured eastern Kentucky towns, Inez (see Figure 1.11) (Bello, 2014). After all, it was Inez, Kentucky, that offered the public a first view of Appalachian poverty. The news media's role in both agenda setting and going a step further into second-level agenda

setting was demonstrated through both the photos and stories that were chosen during the many reports on the nation's War on Poverty, both in 1964 and in 2014.

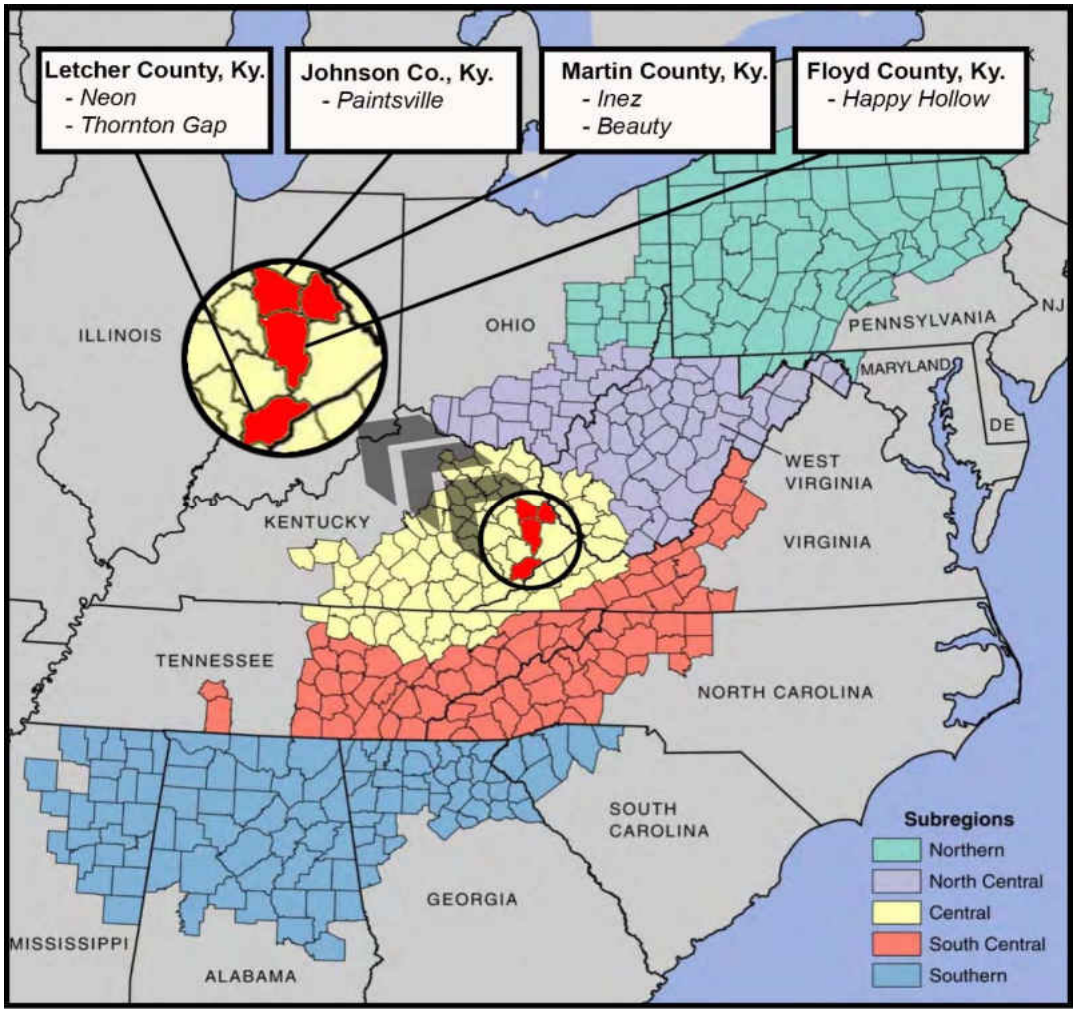

Figure 1.11 Counties Featured in *Life's* "Valley of Poverty"
Map of Appalachia broken into sub-regions created for the Appalachian Regional Commission. An overlay of 1964 Kentucky media focus counties (pullout circles) was added. Map shows ARC geographical area as of 2012. In 1964 when the PARC was first formed, Mississippi was not included; a few other states' counties were added later.

Agenda setting and framing effects, though related, are different in more than subtle ways. Agenda setting asserts that through accessibility or the reporting of an issue, informational media is powerful enough to lead the public in not what to think but what is worth thinking about. Second level agenda setting, or framing effects, suggests

that the delivery of information can offer audiences a way to think about a topic, or rather how to think. Research asserts that at its most powerful levels, even the use of one word over another can affect how audiences think about an issue. Information effects cause people to acquire beliefs about an issue and its context. Framing effect happens when a phrase, image or statement is suggestive toward an interpretation (Simon & Jerit, 2007).

While exploring the news media's role in influencing how the rest of the world would think about Appalachian poverty, the political influence that was set into motion as the War on Poverty ensued cannot be dismissed. Prior to LBJ's proclamation in January 1964 and his visit to Appalachia later that spring, most American's believed that the New Deal and World War II had ended the problem of poverty as a major national problem. It was a year free of economic depression and mass unemployment. Because the poor people of Appalachia were neither organized nor politically connected to bring the issue of their own poverty to the attention of lawmakers, this made the political move to address poverty an executive legislative action rather than a legislative initiative (Rector & Sheffield, 2014, Sept. 15). In other words, the political powers of the time were, much like the media, telling the American people that they should be concerned with Appalachian poverty, even if they hadn't been in the past. The assertion that political interest groups were at the heart of the nation's War on Poverty, reveal that President Kennedy's victory in the West Virginia primary gave him a stronghold going forward to the presidential election. After a visit to West Virginia, Kennedy campaigned partly with the phrase, seventeen million Americans go to bed hungry every night. Conversely, while campaigning, sitting Vice President and presidential hopeful Richard

M. Nixon disputed the accuracy of Kennedy's statement, saying that poverty was insular and that while some lacked the prosperity others enjoyed, to say that one-tenth are on the brink of starvation was communist propaganda. According to Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr., Kennedy's brother-in-law, who worked on the 1960s political campaign, the president became interested in poverty through books he read: "The Other America, Poverty in the United States" by Michael Harrington and "The Affluent Society" by John Galbraith. Before Kennedy's assassination, in November 1963, the president was planning a larger assault on poverty that would spread throughout the nation and not just in Appalachia, to include the elderly, youth, and people of color. As the Civil Rights struggle was underway, President Kennedy had come under harsh criticism from his constituents within the movement who were concerned that the he had not included the black population in poverty legislation. The voting power of blacks was increasing and, in fact, had been an important factor in Kennedy's narrow victory in 1960. Both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson saw the seriousness of socio-economic issues of the entire nation (Lander, 1971). Programmatic plans were underway to address all poverty, not just Appalachian poverty, but the face of poverty had already been clearly defined.

In 1964, the nation's War on Poverty had, through both media and political information dissemination, succeeded in framing the public's perception of poverty in Appalachia as something that had happened to the people in the mountains – they were poor because there was no opportunity, they were uneducated because their schools were scarce and substandard, and they needed the government's help because they could not help themselves.

The War on Welfare

By the late 1960s, the national conversation was shifting. Yes, the poor were still poor, but poverty was no longer viewed as something that, through no fault of their own, happened to them. The poor were now seen as being directly responsible for their own circumstances. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, also commonly known as welfare, was established to provide sub-minimal cash for poor children and their mothers. The AFDC program was enacted in 1935 as part of the Social Security Act, which rose out of the Great Depression. The idea was that widows and orphans were the responsibility of the greater public and the entire country. Although the program began in 1935, it is mainly associated with President Johnson's War on Poverty, due to the 1960s seeing a decade of increase in AFDC caseloads and a number of new federal anti-poverty programs. Putting a stop to the AFDC program was a way for newly formed Republican political think tanks to get support for a more fiscally conservative agenda. Much of the anti-welfare discussions were associated with the John Birch Society, headed by Barry Goldwater, a politician, businessman, and author who was a five-term Senator from Arizona (1953–1965, 1969–1987) and the Republican Party nominee for President of the United States in 1964. Goldwater ran an unsuccessful campaign, mainly on the attack of what he considered the Johnson administration's liberal policies and his Great Society programs (Chapelle, 2010). In 1959, in the John Birch Society's founding documents and then repeated later in the official bulletins, it was stated that governmental welfare programs were subsidizing laziness, illegitimate children, and political corruption. The John Birch Society, founded in 1958, supported limited government and was associated with the far right. Moving

into the 1960s as African Americans became eligible to receive AFDC, the more conservative Republican political candidates for state and local offices began carrying the Goldwater message and exploiting racial tensions for political gain, painting the welfare state as responsible for street crime, deteriorating neighborhoods, and declining property values (Bentele & Nicoli, 2012).

By 1976, the *New York Times* was reporting on a different kind of poverty and presidential candidate Ronald Reagan was running on a platform of welfare reform. Reagan painted a different collective picture of the poor as being undeserving of the government's generosity.

The would-be President Reagan spoke at every stop about Linda Harris, a 47-year-old Chicago woman, who he said had "80 names, 30 addresses, 12 social security cards and (was) collecting veterans' benefits on four nonexistent, deceased husbands" (New York Times, 1976, Feb. 15, page 31). Reagan, along with many conservative media outlets, was framing the poor as not deserving, and called Presidents Kennedy and Johnson's programs for poverty dysfunctional, blaming them for encouraging pessimism, causing laziness and generational government dependency as well as breaking down the traditional American family structure (Berke, 1992). As early as 1970, the public discussion of the poor focused on how they were cheaters and unwilling to work. The cheater frame has grown steadily since 1970, and much like in 1964 when Appalachia and the word poverty became almost synonymous, now government assistance and cheater are viewed as a constant correlation and represented a common way of talking about the poor. The people of Appalachia, who had already been framed as ignorant, uneducated, lazy, and living in shacks, were given another

layer of stereotype. Now, the rest of the country viewed the poor as cheaters and undeserving of help (Rose & Baumgartner, 2013).

In anticipation of the 50th anniversary date of LBJ's official War on Poverty in January 2014, as expected American media placed a new focus on Appalachian poverty but there was also interest from around the world. A United Nations special reporter on extreme poverty and human rights was granted permission by President Barack Obama's administration to engage in a poverty fact-finding mission within the United States. Preliminary findings were released December 2017, and the U.N. reporter, Philip Alston, said during an interview with NPR "The American Dream has become an American Illusion" (Alston, 2017, Sec. 3, number 10, para. 1).

Alston, an Australian law professor, traveled to Washington, D.C, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Alabama, Puerto Rico, and a piece of the United States' Appalachian Region of West Virginia. Alston spoke with poverty experts, civil society organizations, government officials and those who either were born into poverty or because of external unforeseeable forces became impoverished.

The final statement findings revealed negative stereotypes as one factor in what is keeping America's poor submerged in poverty. Furthermore, the statement asserts that the media has been allowed to frame a collective public picture of what being poor in America looks like, giving definition to the ongoing welfare versus work public debate.

> "Caricatured narratives about the purported innate differences between rich and poor have been sold to the electorate by some politicians and media and have been allowed to define the debate. The rich are industrious, entrepreneurial, patriotic, and the drivers of economic success. The poor are wasters, losers, and scammers. As a result, money spent on welfare is money down the drain. To complete the picture, we are also told that they really can achieve the American

> dream if only they work hard enough" (Alston, 2017, Sec. 3, number 10, para. 1).

News media coverage and politically focused messaging, which was at first purposed with shining a light into the Appalachian Mountains so poverty could be addressed, had become the same messaging that created the long-lived negative stereotypes which have now been identified as part of the problem. Once poor, families begin to see the effects of poverty flowing generationally (Ingber, 2017).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Basis for Study

Hope levels are measured through a dispositional self-report scale, more specifically called Future Scale, in which a sense of success can be measured through (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals), (Snyder et al., 1995). This hope theory's frame arises out of two other conceptualizations of hope:

1) Stotland's assertion that hope can be measure as an expectation greater than zero of achieving a goal, (Snyder, Irving & Anderson, 1991) and (Stotland, 1969); and

2) Averill (1990) and contributing researchers' more complex reasoning includes a social constructionist foundation and asserts that within the conceptualization of hope the element of emotion can contribute to whether or not someone deems a goal important enough to hope.

This conceptualization also suggests that the goal needs to be appropriate and socially acceptable to assign the honor of hope (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990). Snyder's Hope Scale, (1991) also has underpinnings which include Theories of Optimism, that when applied, create outcome expectancies (Scheier & Carver, 1985 & 1987); and Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, (1977, 1982, 1986, 1989, & 1997). Levels of hope, using the Hope Scale, have been measured in education, healthcare, sociology and psychology.

Hope Theory and Hope Scale

While the Appalachian Regional Commission has approached Appalachia's many burdens as economic, it is worth studying the relatively new idea of how Perceived Self Efficacy (PSE) and by extension, hope, affects economic outcomes. Economists at one time were focused on external constraints with regard to economic success or failure. However, there is growing evidence in the fields of psychology and economics that asserts relevance in how people feel about themselves and their communities in correlation to poverty and economic development. Wuepper and Lybbert's (2017) *Perceived Self Efficacy, Poverty and Economic Development,* states that economists are now starting to look at low perceived self-efficacy (and hope, by extension) as a factor in moving out of poverty, and there is a growing interest among economists to consider concepts from psychology, sociology, and anthropology, as exemplified by economic models on identity, confidence, and self-motivation. PSE affects the aspirations of people and how persistent they try (Bandura 1977, 1982, 1986, 1989 & 1997). PSE can be of high relevance to economics, and especially development economics, as argued by Alkire (2005), and more recently Carter (2015), and Lybbert and Wydick (2017). PSE theory was first developed in 1977 by psychologist Albert Bandura (1977) and influenced Snyder's (1991) work on hope and the development of Hope Theory and the Hope Scale, (Snyder et al., 1991). Snyder's (1991 & 1995) theory, which looks at agencies and pathways as a way of measuring hope, suggests that phycologists use the information gained from administering the Hope Scale to discover reasons for lower or higher hope, both of which are embedded in the agencies and pathways subscales. These subscales can reveal if individuals actually have hope but

cannot see a pathway to make that hope into a reality. Snyder's belief was that even people with lower levels of hope may have "pockets of hope onto which to build" (Snyder, 1995, page 358).

A Conceptualization and Measurement of Hope

Throughout history, theorists, and famous thinkers, have been skeptical that hope could be measured due its vagueness and the outcomes useless even if this elusive emotion-riddled concept could be measured. Sophocles believed that hope could do more harm than good for humans and a flaw in thinking that contributed to the prolonging of human suffering (Snyder, 1995). Although most philosophers were in agreement that hope existed as a human attribute to make pain and suffering more bearable, in some cases many were divided on hope being good or bad as foolish or genuine. For example, it might be considered foolish to hope that an impending bankruptcy might have been thwarted by winning the $700 million Powerball jackpot in the summer of 2017, where the chance of success landed at 1 in 175 million (McCarthy, K., 2017). Conversely, it could be considered genuine hope to believe in the avoidance of that same impending bankruptcy due to a job interview that went well and promised a six-figure salary. The example of lottery winning would support Sophocles' assertion as this hope-inspired action would most likely prolong pain and discomfort by losing both the chance at having millions of dollars and then losing again when the bankruptcy filing had to, in fact, proceed. What is considered foolish hope has also been argued as both good and bad throughout history. For example, having hope that a religious healer could cure a family member's doctor diagnosed terminal illness, might be considered false or foolish hope. However, when all other types of hope have been exhausted, like

surgeries, treatments, and medically-trialed medicines, false or foolish hope, is still thought to provide a benefit to families and even those with illnesses. Some researchers assert that modern medicine ignores its own placebo effect, or what some refer to as dummy intervention. Can the act of going to the doctor, prescribing to the notion of genuine hope that a physician can help, then receiving attention to illnesses and engaging in a discussion of options for treatment have its own type of healing power? In more recent years, as medical professionals and the medical community at large are seeing alternative medicine as more of an integral part of the medical practice of healing, the placebo effect has become part of patient treatment and is often thought of as a compassionate treatment that sometimes alleviates anxiety about one's illness and can even make a patient's symptoms more bearable as they think of themselves as having some control over their own outcome (Kaptchuk, 2002).

Again, while Sophocles believed hope to be harmful and even went so far as to proclaim its evil, others like Martin Luther and Saint Paul believed that hope, positioned alongside love, is a true representation of what makes life good (Tillich, 1965). The ultimate story of hope and its usefulness, whether it be good or evil, comes from Greek Mythology in the story of Pandora's Box, which was actually a jar. In modern times the use of the term Pandora's Box means someone is about to unleash something bad or something they aren't quite ready to handle, or more simply put – curiosity killed the cat (Groopman, 2004). The original story from the Greek Myths begins with Pandora as the first woman on Earth, created by the gods. Each god gave her a gift, hence her name's meaning the one who bears all gifts. She was created by the gods as a punishment to man for stealing fire from them. Pandora was deceitful, stubborn, and

curious. The gifts given to her by the gods were closed inside the jar and contained secret ills and tribulations that were harmful to humans. Pandora opened the box, although she was instructed otherwise, and became frightened when she saw all the evil escaping. She quickly closed the jar, leaving only hope inside, knowing that without hope mankind could not endure (Fehl, 1957; Zarecki, 2007).

C.R. Snyder and his colleagues conceptualized hope as a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals) (Snyder, 1995). Snyder's team also conceptualized a second definition of hope described as "a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally-derived sense of successful agency (goal-directed determination) and pathways (planning to meet goals)," (Snyder, Harris, et al., 1991 p. 571). To simplify, Snyder's team conceptualized hope as goals, pathways, and agency. To further clarify this research team's conceptualization of hope (Snyder, 1989, Snyder et al., 1991, Snyder, 1995, Snyder et al., 1998, Snyder, 2000, Snyder et al., 2002, Snyder, 2002):

1) Goals are at the heart of hope as without something to hope for, there is no reason to hope;

2) Pathways or thoughts are another undergirding of hope as the perception of one's ability to make a way or plan to achieve the goal. In other words, can the mind think of a logical way to get there from here?

3) Agency is the motivational component when working toward hope and the assessment of the person to decide if he or she has the capability to persevere to meet the goal; Snyder and team, (1994a, 1994b) asserts that: Hope = Agency +

Pathways and can be measured via the Hope Scale instrument, (see Appendix A).

Barriers to one's goals cannot be dismissed. How people persevere when faced with barriers along their planned pathway will, of course, determine outcomes. Snyder and colleagues (1994b), through the conceptualization of hope, ascertained that people with hope can usually come up with one route, or pathway, to meet their goals when faced with barriers, and can perceive themselves as someone who can think of multiple alternative routes around the impediment. High hope people can think of multiple alternative routes to meet the goal or a work around (Snyder, 1994a).

Hope theory asserts that if someone is unimpeded while pursuing goals, positive emotions are produced. Conversely, if someone is blocked by barriers when trying to reach goals, emotions are negative. When measured for hope levels, higher hope people are more adaptive to barriers most likely because they can cognitively generate alternative paths when they are blocked, thus facilitating success in pursuit of goals (Snyder, 1994b).

Theories of Optimism and their Relationship to Hope

Edging toward the heels of hope theory but not quite falling into Snyder's (1995) wills and ways necessary for hope, are two theories of optimism. Scheier and Carver (1985, 1987) asserted that optimism is present when there is an expectation of a positive outcome. In other words, optimism is cross-situational and depends on how much the optimistic person believes or conversely doesn't believe or doesn't expect. Unlike hope theory, however, optimism is only good until obstacles and impediments get in the way of a goal. The optimist, met with road blocks may or may not have the

capacity to find a new route or a work around to reach the goal. It is the high hope person who is met with an obstacle and finds other pathways to continue toward achievement (Snyder, 1995).

Another theory of optimism evolved from learned helplessness theory (Maier & Seligman, 1976), and asserts that people who have pessimistic tendencies internalize and generalize about bad events, which have happened to them in the past, which affects present outcomes or keeps them from reaching goals they otherwise would be capable of meeting. Sometimes these internalizations and generalization approaches to problems keep them from even attempting to reach the goal at all, distancing themselves from the negative outcomes all together (Snyder, 1995).

Perceived Self Efficacy and its Relationship to Hope

Similar to Snyder and colleagues' (1994a) thought pathways, Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1982, 1997), states that people will make decisions on whether or not to perform a task, based on their own belief of successfully completing the task. Each day, when people are experiencing difficult situations, they make decisions on what course of action to take based on their perceived capabilities, knowledge, and strength.

Sometimes people misjudge their own capabilities, selling themselves short on what they can accomplish or being overconfident in a situation that they are not prepared to complete. Someone's PSE also determines how much effort is expended and how long someone will continue trying to complete a task or reach a goal. In other words, if people believe they can achieve goals they will try harder (Bandura, 1997). The convergence of hope theory and self-efficacy theory occurs along two assumptions: 1) that the goal that is to be achieved is important enough to the person trying to achieve

it that it holds the tryer's attention; and 2) they both focus on situational specific goals, considered also to parallel outcome expectancy and is similar to hope theory's pathways process (Snyder, 2000).

According to Bandura (1982), while much focus is placed on individual PSE, group dynamics related to this concept cannot be ignored. Collective efficacy occurs because individuals do not live their lives in isolation and thus do not form thought patterns with the absence of outside influence. Often, groups and even entire communities must work toward tasks or goals as a unit, causing perceived collective efficacy. This collective efficacy influences what people do as a group and how much effort they exert toward a goal, and how long the group will work at trying to complete tasks to reach the goal. Bandura (1982) also notes that that PSE and perceived collective efficacy, or PCE, are not necessarily related within the dynamic of a group working toward completing a task or reaching a goal. Many believe that solutions are born out of hopeless situations whether those solutions are functional, social, governmental, or otherwise. To the contrary, evidence disputes this ideology (Gecas, 1989). Through studies of social and political activism, it has been demonstrated that while poor conditions do ignite social action they do not stem from hopelessness but rather from groups who have seen at least some successes prompted by engagement or activism toward an issue (Bandura, 1977). It also must be noted that those who are members of activist groups and tend to publicly demonstrate their views are shown to have more education and have greater self-esteem and self-efficacy, believing that they can make changes happen through forceful group action (Crawford & Naditch, 1970). The

statement below supports the theoretical work for scholars who study PSE and hope and, in essence, makes Gandhi a practitioner or at least a philosopher of hope.

> "Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it," Ghandi (Deats & Jegen 2005, p. 108).

Weupper & Lybert's (2017) report in the Annual Review of Resource Economics, reiterates and expands on Bandura's (1982) self-efficacy theory and supports Gandhi's statement that if PSE can motivate then it can also demotivate and even demoralize (Deats & Jegen, 2005). Studies show that individuals who fail at something in the past are more likely to fail at the same task or goal in the future, even if circumstances change in their favor. Using an example of two rival basketball teams in which one team is enjoying a winning season and the other is grimacing through a losing season, the losing team is likely to continue to lose games to the rival team, even if there is a favorable change in circumstances. This negative cycle of PSE can, over time, begin to carry the same sequences as learned helplessness (Maier & Seligman, 1976), the aforementioned behavioral theory that demonstrates prior learning, even consistent trauma or failure, may cause a person to remain in negative situations even when there are clear actions that can change their circumstances (Maier & Seligman, 2016). The theory of learned helplessness also asserts that learned failure can lead to future negative expectations, an unwillingness to act, low self-esteem, chronic failure, sadness and even physical illnesses. Learned helplessness theory has been applied to clinical depression, aging, domestic violence, poverty, discrimination, parenting, academic achievement, drug abuse, and alcoholism (Wuepper & Lybbert, 2017). In a study about Pervasive Refusal Syndrome, a refusal of children to eat, drink, talk, or care

of themselves (Lask et al., 1991, p. 866), researchers demonstrate a clear connection between learned helplessness and hopelessness (Nunn & Thompson, 1996).

Hope Measured Across the Disciplines

Layered in many concepts and assertions, hope, as it has been defined over the past fifty years through various studies and theories, has exalted itself as necessary for human achievement at all levels (Maier & Sielgman, 1976). This ideology, alone, lends credence to the scholarly work taking place throughout the social sciences and in biological sciences and even other disciplines. Outside of academia and a recent example of how hope has been used in messaging and platform, we need only to point to America's 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, who ran his entire political campaign on the concept of hope. Much of his political campaign materials featured the word "Hope" as a focus (Cornwell, 2012) (see Figure 2.1).

More recently, a group of scientists studied how individuals think about science. Words like curiosity, discovery, optimism were used to describe how individuals felt about scientific discovery. Through digging deeper and listening to people talking about science and how they relate to the discipline, it was revealed that most Americans equate science with hope for discoveries that make the world a better place. Science makes them hopeful as an expectation of what science can do for them (Volpe, 2019).

Figure 2.1 Hope as a Political Campaign
Former President Barack Obama's 2008 political campaign poster designed by Shepard Fairey (Delaney, 2017).

Hope in Psychology

Most of what we know about hope, Hope Theory, and more specifically, the Hope Scale, comes from the discipline of psychology with much of the empirical research, data and scholarly studies, and works credited to a few notable researchers and their teams, beginning with Bandura (1977, 1982, 1986, 1989 & 1997) and self-efficacy theory, looking through the psychology lens at why some people try harder than others. Later, Snyder and colleagues (1989, 1991, 1994a, 1994b, 1995, 1998 & 2002) looked at the concept of hope that lies within self-efficacy. Within learned helplessness, hope or hopelessness was also found (Maier & Sielgman, 1976, 2016). Prior to late twentieth century research on hope within the psychological discipline, hope was saved for religious purposes, something that was God-given or of God. It was an ideology left to philosophers to study (Eliott, 2005, p. 3).

Hope in Health

Once psychology had taken ownership of hope, the medical community began to dominate the concept, measuring hope against survival rates of patients with terminal illnesses (Herth, 1989; Lee, 2001). In addition to the beginnings of research with regard to survival rates (Bulsara & Ward, 2004), the medical community began to look at patient quality of life if there was a perception of control over the illness (Wonghongkul, 1999) and in the patient's psychological adjustment to the illness (Brockopp,1989) and (Bulsara, 2004). For some scholars, like Groopman (2004) a Harvard medical professor, in his study *Anatomy of Hope*, the idea the patient having the perception of no control or a loss of control over what is happening can erode hope over time.

> "Hope can only flourish when you believe that what you do can bring a future different than the present. To have hope is to acquire the belief that you have some control over your circumstances, that you are no longer entirely at the mercy of forces outside yourself" (Groopman, 2004, p. 45).

Hope in Education

Hope measured in educational settings, now being used as a predictor in success or failure of high school graduates and in longitudinal studies, demonstrates a propensity of students to complete high school (Dweck, 1999). Within the discipline of education much time and effort has been expended in trying to discover what will advance or inhibit academic achievement (Cantril, 1964). What is it that leads a particular student to do well or learn to do well enough to complete course work and graduate? Hope theory was used near the turn of the new millennium as a predictor of success in college students. A six-year longitudinal study measured hope of individuals entering college, using Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale. The study predicted better overall grade point averages while controlling for entrance exam scores. Students scoring high on the hope scale compared to those with low hope scores continued on a trajectory of higher grades (Snyder, et al., 2002). Researchers, participating in this study, used results to assert the belief that hope can determine the success or failure of a student (Dweck, 1999). Drawing on Bandura's (1982) self-efficacy theory and Snyder's (1995) Hope Theory, a correlative demonstration was shown as those with higher hope went onto complete college and those with lower hope could not overcome some barriers. Snyder's (1994b) study revealed that while barriers exist for almost all tasks or goals, low hope people are less likely to find alternative routes to success or work arounds, simply because they may give up.

Hope in Economics

The economic price tag of depression, within psychology studies, has been estimated at $31 billion in the United States alone (Sobocki et al., 2006). This, along with other prevalent conditions that fall under the umbrella of psychiatric diagnoses such as substance abuse, bring that total even higher (Stewart et al, 2003). Economists look at drug use and drug abuse as having substantial economic costs to the United States' economy (Becker & Murphy, 1988). However, there is far less research and discussion centered on depression and its causes, which can often lead to substance abuse. It is surprising that more attention has not been given to understanding depression, its causes, and how both can correlate with stagnant or lower economic stability in individuals, communities, and entire regions.

A little more than a decade ago economists began to look at hope as one way to determine the economic success or failure of entire regions (Bertrand et al., 2004). In Wuepper and Lybbert's (2017) "Perceived Self Efficacy, Poverty and Economic Development," it is stated that economists are now looking at low perceived self-efficacy, a theory that is closely related to hope, as a factor in moving out of poverty. There is also a growing interest in economists to consider concepts from psychology, sociology, and anthropology, as exemplified by economic models on identity, confidence, and self-motivation, (Boardman & Robert, 2000).

While keeping mind that other factors representing strictly economic mechanisms like employment availability, must also be in place, perceived self-efficacy does affect the aspirations of people, how persistent they try (Bandura 1977, Bandura, 1982, Bandura 1986, Bandura 1989, Bandura 1997). This concept is relevant to

economics and especially development economics, as argued by Alkire (2005), and more recently, Carter (2015), and Lybbert and Wydick (2017). The Lybbert and Wydick (2017) study explores the causes of the poverty trap and in doing so reveal that it is probable that low income can bring about feelings of hopelessness that can result in feelings of low self-efficacy. This low self-efficacy causes lower effort in trying to become successful in other economic activity, thus, bringing about continued low income, or in some cases lower income, resulting in a continued sense of helplessness which feeds lower hope.

Johannes Haushofer of Princeton, with co-author Jonathan de Quidt, presented research called "Depression for Economists" at the 2016 National Bureau of Economic Research conference (de Quidt & Haushifer, 2016). The work asserts that those who dwell in hopelessness unknowingly create an ongoing circle of pessimism and accompanying lesser than favorable outcomes that some researchers are now referring to as self-fulfilling prophecy that leads to an individual lingering in poverty for longer periods (de Quidt, 2016). Haushofer and de Quidt (2016) engaged in their study by which a negative shock made individuals more pessimistic about recurrence of effort. In other words, when negative occurrences happen to an individual, effort is reduced because there is no a positive return for the energy that is expended toward a goal or goals. This model represents how low hope in levels of achievement, economically, can directly contribute to poverty traps (Barrett et al., 2019).

As a complement to recurring research on developmental economics, de Quidt & Haushofer's (2016) study is based on an economic model to demonstrate a rational basis for depressed people's most prevalent behaviors. The work urges that even one

unforeseen, unfortunate life event can cause an individual to experience a downward spiral into depression. One of the reasons cited for this single, pivotal unexpected thrust into depression is that most individuals believe they have control over their own lives and circumstances and therefore will believe they have greater locus of control over outcomes. So, when the person encounters negative consequences, in this study (de Quidt, 2016), a random shock during random times, they attribute this to having lower ability than they had first thought. Once the individual believes they have lower ability to control their own circumstances, the result is a lower perception of self-efficacy. The individual then begins to associate rewards from their efforts being lower than expected and, more importantly, lower than they had previously believed.

The work of de Quidt & Haushofer (2016) also demonstrates how this lower belief in one's own abilities, lower perceived self-efficacy, may lead to behaviors that perpetuate even lower ability to have control over one's economic stability. The behaviors that emerged in the study that were all variables in the model were over-sleeping, over-eating, reduced investment in education, and increased use of cigarettes and alcohol.

The underlying theme from the de Quidt & Haushofer study (2016) demonstrates that if an individual continues to exert high effort with less than optimal results then that person will exhibit: 1) pessimism about the future, and 2) a decrease in effort. The combination of 1 and 2 leads to a drop in income, overall consumption, and finally utility, which leads to depression. Lastly, lower confidence about positive results from high effort plays a role in other behavior that can also affect less than positive results from effort. Lower confidence levels play into how a person feels physically and

lowers mental resilience, in particular sleeping and eating behaviors and patterns. The de Quidt and Haushofer (2016) study also revealed that if the person experiencing low results from high effort has a tendency toward oversleeping and overeating that the individual will exhibit these behaviors to a greater degree. The study also found that if a person experiencing low results from high effort is an under-eater and under-sleeper, the individual will eat even less and sleep even less, making this piece of the study results bi-directional. Respondents in the de Quidt and Haushofer (2016) study also tended toward consuming more temptation-type goods while investing less in human capital. Once these aforementioned mechanisms are reduced to a sum zero labor effort, that also causes the individual to stop learning from effort either high or low, the extreme effect is a poverty trap or something very much like it. This extreme effect edges toward the findings of other researchers that revealed within their studies that it isn't so much the depression that causes the trap because of decreased labor and effort, but rather the depression undermines the individual's motivation to exert the effort (Piketty, 1995) and (Ali, 2011).

Snyder and colleagues (2002) agreed with the PSE concept and used it in hope theory to assert that individuals can internalize external constraints. Examples of how this works in practice is in business, particularly sales and marketing. It is often said the best time to try and make a sale is after you have just made a sale. Conversely, the worst time to try and make a sale is right after you've been rejected (Burg, 2011). An ongoing study based in the United Kingdom called Young Lives (Poverty & Inequality, 2011) is following 12,000 youth in Ethiopia, India, Peru, and Vietnam, over a 15-year time span. This research is continuing to reveal that PSE evolves throughout a child's life, and it is

suggested that it is then carried forward into adulthood. This study also asserts that low PSE can also be carried forward into the next generation, therefore reinforcing low PSE into the future. Studies are beginning to emerge that reflect upon the ideology that if PSE can be lowered it can also be raised through targeted programs (Glewwe et al., 2017), and because people can learn about their own capabilities, empowering them throughout their lives (Krishnan & Krutikova, 2013).

Media Effects Framing and Perspective

Framing theory, although mostly interpreted through the lens of communication and media effects, is rooted within a number of disciplines, including psychology, economics, and sociology (Scheufele, 1999).

Framing research suggests that news frames exist to explain how audiences interpret an issue or event. Scholars, though divided on exactly how or how much framing influences audience behavior and public opinion, agree that frames do have a substantial amount of authority on citizenry beliefs and attitudes about any given subject. Powerful frames invite the viewer or reader to think about an issue in a particular way.

There are three other processes that resemble framing with only subtle differences in how they are used and/or interpreted: 1. Information Effects, 2. Persuasion Effects, and 3. Agenda-Setting Effects. Perhaps one of the most widely known studies of information effects was reported by Simon and Jerit (2007) after conducting a framing experiment in which participants read three news articles about an abortion procedure. Two of the articles were identical other than the word “fetus” was used in one article and the word “baby” used in the other to describe the object of the

procedure. Those who read the article with the word “baby” showed favorable attitudes toward regulating the procedure than did those who read the article with the word “fetus.” A third article with both “baby” and “fetus” used equally, also produced an outcome that was favorable to more regulation of the procedure. This is one example in which changing one single word can affect people’s attitudes and actions toward an issue or occurrence.

Similar to information effects, persuasion effects using words and visuals can be used to change beliefs and attitudes about an issue or occurrence. The difference is that unlike information effects, the focus for persuasion is on the receiver of the information and typically concerned with responses to either the acceptance or rejection of a persuasive message. Persuasion effects are largely defined as interpretation effects rather than attitude effects (Kinder & Sanders, 1990).

Agenda-setting effects are described as those topics or occurrences that receive the most attention and believed by most researchers to be the most important, with all else being equal (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). One overly simple explanation to describe agenda-setting effects is an example of three local news stations, one airing at 5 p.m., another at 5:30 p.m., and another at 6 p.m. Each station’s news editor decides to make the lead story for the evening a report about a car theft from a local grocery store. All three stories have content about the same car and the same theft but still just one occurrence. However, public perception may reveal that car thefts at public parking areas are big problem and ask the local police department to step up patrols, even though the incident was only one single occurrence.

This is a simplistic scenario to describe agenda-setting, but an example on a small scale of how the media can place importance on an issue or occurrence. This type of news reporting about the car theft is not telling audiences what to think about the incident or who is to blame, but rather, what they should be thinking about – in his case, car thefts.

Within framing and frame building as these concepts are related to communication, research suggests there are five aspects of news media and the work that reporters and editors engage in daily that could influence how reporters and editors frame various issues: 1. Larger societal norms and values, 2. Organizational pressures and constraints, 3. External pressures from interest groups or other policy makers, 4. Professional routines, and 5. Ideological or political orientations of reporters and editors (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) and (Tuchman, 1978).

In other words, the way the news media tells or shows a story and the words and images they use matters a great deal with regard to the public perception of a topic or occurrence. Also at play are journalist, reporter, and editor individual biases, beliefs and prescriptions to stereotypical beliefs and norms that inevitably and inescapably effect the way a story is told. A most notable example of just how powerful frames can be with regard to inviting the public to think about the issue in a certain way, is the Nelson, Oxley and Clawson (1997) effects test of news stories about a Ku Klux Klan rally. The given frame presented that the public should think about the issue from an entirely constitutional right to free speech standpoint. This frame prompted more participant tolerance toward the KKK rather than the usual and expected outrage of the racist group's presence.

The Power of Social Media

Getting human hope trending upward does not necessarily take a major overhaul in which one's goals, agency and pathways all need to be simultaneously changed. Often, changing only one component will serve as a catalyst for change in the other components (Snyder, 1995). Perhaps a pathway to success is blocked but seeing someone else with that same roadblock being successful may be all that is needed to spur someone on to try harder. Maybe seeing someone else develop a skill that is needed or get more education as a way to become more successful or reach a goal, is all that is needed to give someone that extra sense of urgency they need to get started on meeting their own goal. Using the powerhouse of social media as a means to reach as many people possible, is one way we can reach out to those who otherwise would be unreachable. As of January 2014 Facebook, hailed as still the most popular social medium, had 214 million users in the United States with an average usage rate of 39 minutes per day. Facebook also has 1.8 billion active users worldwide (Clement, 2018). The United Sates' Facebook usage far surpasses *Life's* reign of popularity during its golden age – from 1936 to 1972, even by per capita measures of the time. During the magazine's heyday, *Life* had 13.5 million readers or 10 percent of the American population, assuming market domination, during the time when America's War on Poverty was ongoing and the "Valley of Poverty" 12-page spread was published in its January 1964 issue (Levinson & Fletcher, 1986).

Through the dissemination of positive social media, communities and regions can set their sights on attempting to increase higher hope levels that could serve as a piece of the undergirding for funding programs like Appalachian Regional Commission

investments to be more successful. Higher hope can also augment financial efforts in communities that struggle economically by rebuilding hope, eroded over several decades through negative media and political stereotypes. With most of Americans now getting news from social media (see Figure 2.2), studies indicate that it has been used to improve political image and even entire cities with image issues across the U.S. (Avraham, 2004).

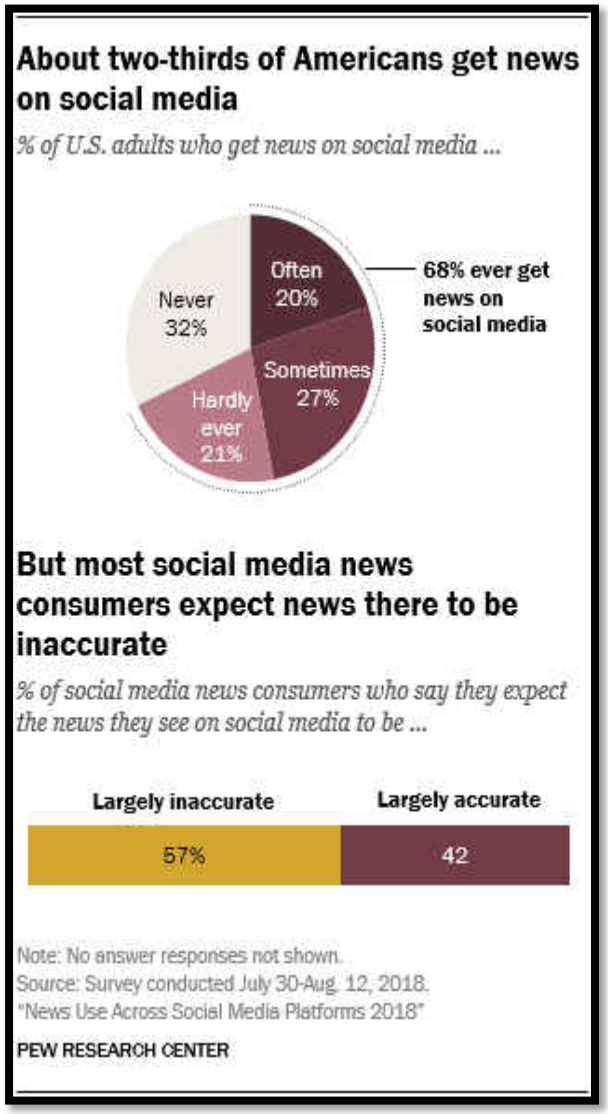

Figure 2.2 Social Media Use in the United States Pew Research Center study on Figure 2.4 a news use (Matsa & Shearer, 2018).

Twitter, for example, is frequently used as a kind of radar by classic media, such as news publishers or television stations to pick up stories (often from eyewitnesses) at a very early stage. In the context of online firestorms and other social media activities, the following procedure can be observed. Social media users create a story. This story is broadcast by some traditional media with reference to an online phenomenon that results in much larger online activity – largely triggered by the social media hooks connected to the media story (for instance, buttons saying Tweet this story). Greater online activity

triggers additional media coverage, and the result is an echo chamber between social media and traditional media (Peffer, 2014).

The power of social media, however, is not limited to those who would use it as a game changer with regard to erasing negative stereotypes and building hope.

Social media is also used in harmful ways and what readers find there isn't always truthful. In some cases, it has been linked to spreading propaganda and political agenda-ridden untruths. Fake news, is the most recent title given to any item mimicking credible news media with one of the most prevalent causes being the lack of resources in which to check facts and conduct research to get at the truth with accuracy and credibility (Lazer et al., 2018). In 2016, the term gained popularity among politicians who would oftentimes use it to describe any news media item that was contrary or damaging to their political agenda. One study examined how often those in the United States encountered fake news and revealed that during the 2016 election, Americans encountered from 1 to 3 false items per month, (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

Those spreading fake news are certainly using social media to their advantage, with 68 percent of U.S. adults reporting they at least occasionally get news on social media, according to a new Pew Research Center survey (Matsa & Shearer, 2018).

Social media platforms are key conduits for fake news sites. According to congressional testimony, Russia successfully manipulated all of the major social media platforms during the 2016 U.S. election. Because of social media's powerful reach, it has the capability of permeating fake news as real, even in the most well informed news consumer, (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

With such powerful statistics regarding the use of social media to disseminate fake news an untruths, surely that power can be harnessed to do the contrary. The public, at large, with this massively effective communication tool should be able to wield it in such a way as to erode the negative stereotypes embedded in Kentucky's Appalachia.

Significance of the Study

Since 1965, the Appalachian Regional Commission, (formerly PARC) has made nearly 25,000 non-highway investments in the Appalachian Region, now covering all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Since President Johnson first declared the nation's official War on Poverty in the winter of 1964, the PARC, now the ARC, combined has invested $3.8 billion in the region to support projects aimed at decreasing unemployment, increasing per capita income, lowering poverty, raising educational attainment, and augmenting and creating infrastructure to support economic success. In addition to the almost $4 billion in aid, the ARC has allocated $9 billion for the Appalachian Development Highway System. Once completed, the 3,090-mile highway system will have alleviated isolation to the region by connecting almost every piece of it to an interstate quality highway. Despite the federal investments over the past six decades, Appalachia continues to lag behind the rest of the country in many areas with regard to economic stability, with government transfer payments accounting for a quarter of all personal income. The region, which also has higher mortality rates than the rest of the

nation, is losing population to outmigration, and poverty rates continue higher as compared to the national percentages (Appalachia Then and Now, 2015).

"Poverty, Aspirations, and the Economics of Hope" (Wuepper & Lybbert, 2017), lays out a theoretical model based on the work in positive psychology by C.R. Snyder (1995). Snyder examined the concept of hope in terms of goals, agency, and pathways and in doing so helped inform future economic research about various types of developmental interventions. The assertion is that external interventions in an individual's surroundings affecting the day-to-day interactions with the world outside themselves, is not quite enough to improve on hope or perceived self-efficacy. As a result, well-intended programs meant to re-train those who have lost jobs, providing more education to those who are underemployed, and even attracting new business and industry into communities to create a better chance of changing the economic circumstances of its citizenry, do not address internal constraints that have been developed over time due to high effort and low return. In other words, the adoption of negative mantras like, "No matter what I do, it never works out anyway," leads to giving up even before any effort is exerted into a new endeavor that could improve the quality of one's life. If even a wobble in one component can change the trajectory of one's hope through positively affecting pathways and agency (Snyder, 1995), then seeing other like-situated individuals breaking out of the trap could soften some of the internal constraints felt by those who have been disempowered with regard to their own ability to control outcomes through effort.

The billions of dollars, which have been invested over the past six decades and even more invested since the 2012 ARC's report "Appalachia Then and Now,

Examining Changes to the Appalachian Region Since 1965" (Ezzel et al., 2012), have made marked improvements in lowering poverty rates but the region still lags behind the rest of the country. From 1960 to 2012, poverty rates in Appalachia have declined. Some changes have been more drastic than others. However, in Kentucky, only 11 of the 54 ARC designated counties have made significant changes in poverty rates that actually moved them above the lower than the average poverty rate in all of the United States. Other states have shown a larger percentage of poverty rate change with respect to their individual county designations (see Figure 2.3).

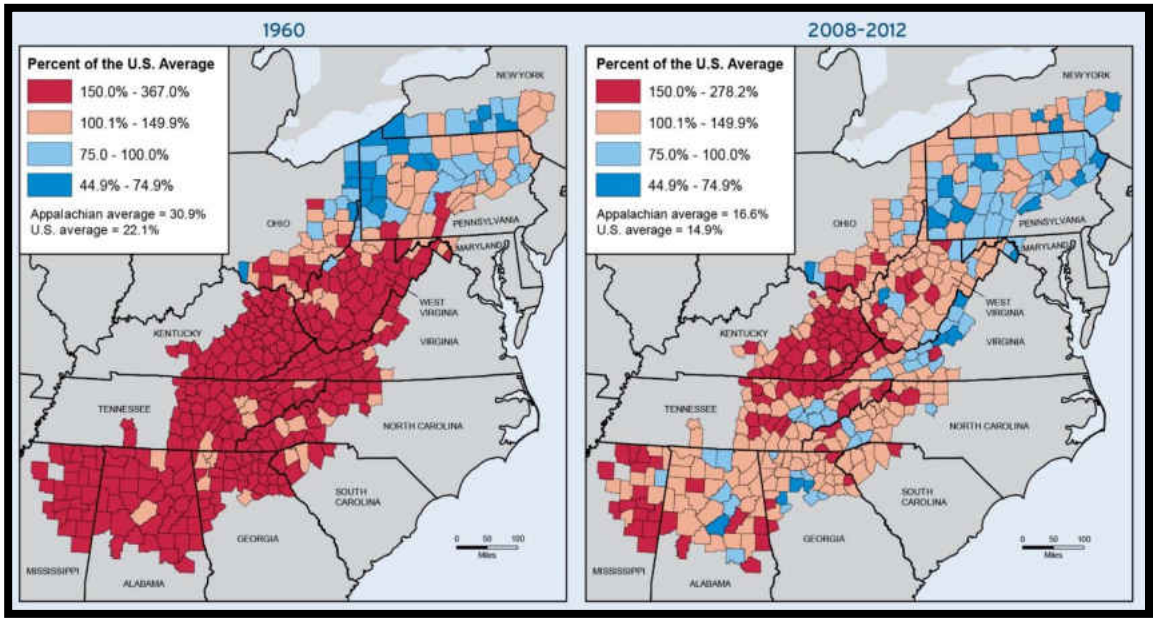

Figure 2.3 Appalachian Poverty Rates 1960 to 2008-2012
Poverty rates in Appalachia, Relative to the U.S. (Percentage of the U.S. Average).
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1960 Census and 2008–2012 American Community Survey
Notes: A poverty rate is the ratio of persons whose income falls below the poverty level, to the total number of persons for whom poverty status is determined. The percent of U.S. average is computed by dividing the county rate by the U.S. average and multiplying by 100 (Appalachia Then and Now, 2015).

By comparison, those states with a similar history of coal dependency, neighboring Appalachian states of Virginia and West Virginia have fared much better than Kentucky (McCarthy, N., 2017). Virginia had all but three of its designated ARC

counties listed as above the United States poverty rate in 1960. In 2012, Virginia listed only four of its 25 designated Appalachian counties as having poverty rates higher than the nation. West Virginia, with 55 Appalachian counties, in 1960 had nine counties listed below the national poverty rate. In 2012, West Virginia had only eight counties listed below the national poverty rate. While both West Virginia and Virginia have seen a significant decrease in poverty rates per county, Kentucky has enjoyed a much smaller decrease in poverty rates per county (Appalachia Then and Now, 2015). The four Kentucky counties where the 1964 national media coverage took place via *Life* and *The New York Times* continue to have a poverty rate higher than the United States' average poverty rate.

In Floyd County, where national media coverage on poverty took place in the community of Happy Hollow, the poverty rate has gone from 60.6% in 1960 to 28% in 2012; in Martin County, where national media coverage on poverty took place in the communities of Inez and Beauty, the poverty rate has gone from 70.1% in 1960 to 35.7% in 2012; in Letcher County, where national media coverage on poverty took place in the communities of Neon and Thornton Gap, the poverty rate has gone from 62.2% in 1960 to 25.7% in 2012; and in Johnson County, where national media coverage on poverty took place in the community of Paintsville, the poverty rate has gone from 60% in 1960 to 22.6% (The Appalachian Region: A Data Overview from the 2011-2015) American Community Survey 2017; and Appalachia Then and Now, 2015).

These percentages show reductions in poverty but they are still well above the national average of the 2012 14.9% (Ezzel, et al., 2012) (see Figure 2.4).

According to the Appalachian Regional Commission's 2010-2014 Poverty Rate Report, the poverty rate across the US was 15.6% compared to 19.7% in the combined Appalachian regions of Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Even within these states, there are vast differences among poverty rates.

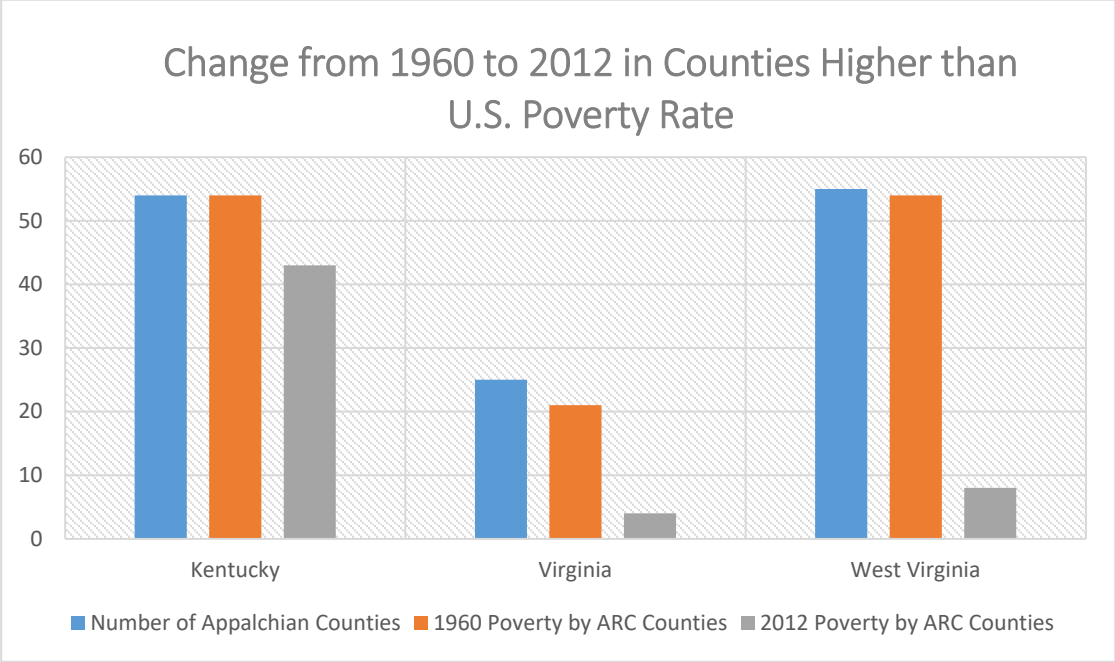

Figure 2.4 Change from 1960 to 2013 Poverty Rates Kentucky, Virginia, W. Virginia Changes in poverty from 1960 to 2012 in counties with already higher than U.S. poverty rate.

The state with the worst poverty rate in the region was Kentucky with a 25.4% rate in the Appalachian counties versus 18.9% rate for the rest of the state. Reports compiled by the Appalachian Regional Commission from the 1960s Census and the 2008-2012 Community Survey, indicated that Appalachian poverty rates in 1960 were 30.9% as compared the U.S. average of 22.1% from that same year. Appalachian poverty rates from the 2008-2012 American Community Survey were 16.6% as compared to the U.S. average of 14.9% from that same period, (Appalachia Then and Now, 2015).

The First Promise Zone Designation

On January 7, 2014, just before the 50th Anniversary of LBJ's War on Poverty, President Barak Obama designated the nation's first Promise Zone. The designation, in Kentucky, was hailed as a federal partnership dedicated to improving quality of life in high-poverty, rural areas through job creation, economic development, affordable housing, and access to technology, education, employment training, substance abuse counseling, and more. Kentucky's Promise Zone encompassed eight counties in southeastern Kentucky: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry and parts of Whitley (see Figure 2.5). Through resources coordinated by Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, the Promise Zone counties gained access to partnerships among local, state, and federal governments; the non-profit sector; schools, colleges and universities; law enforcement; and, private sector investment, all aimed at improving the economic well-being of the designated eight county area.

Figure 2.5 Kentucky's Designated Promise Zone Counties: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry, and Whitley. Letcher County was a focus of mainstream media coverage in 1964's New York Times' Mountains of Poverty.

The Promise Zone designation was created in partnership with Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, at that time an almost five decades old community development non-profit that was working to bring together community assets and programs to find ways of developing strategic collaborations aimed at improving its region's economy (Rogers, 2018).

Kentucky Promise Zone's task would be to create "measurable return in terms of jobs created, increased tax base, decreased government spending on social programs, technology improvements, crime reduction and private investment" (Kentucky's Promise Zone Mission & Vision, 2018, page 1). In addition to what was deemed measurable, the Promise Zone coordinators were working toward something they thought might be immeasurable: self-esteem, and community well-being. These seemingly immeasurable goals for the Promise Zone are what inform this study through the data the organization collected with regard to raising hope under a part of the organization's vision to: "Build a sense of hope and optimism for change through the implementation of the regional plan's action strategies" (See Table 2.1 and Table 2.2) (Kentucky's Promise Zone Mission & Vision, 2018, page 1).

Studying hope levels within the eight Promise Zone counties can provide meaningful research for current and future studies on poverty and hope and how the two relate to growing successful economies within impoverished areas. The eight Promise Zone counties share a relationship to the four Kentucky counties featured in the *New York Times'* "Mountains of Poverty" (1964) and *Life's* "Valley of Poverty" (1964), with one county, Letcher, located within Kentucky's Promise Zone.

The Promise Zone's overall poverty rate is 30.41%. Four of the eight counties have a countywide poverty rate above 30%, with the highest in Clay County at 36.54 percent. There are individual census tracts in the Promise Zone where the poverty rate exceeds 50%. In fact, only eight of the 58 census tracts in the Promise Zone had a poverty rate under 20% as of 2018 (Kentucky's Promise Zone, 2018).

Table 2.1 Kentucky Promise Zone's Strategic Goals

GOAL 1	Build a sustainable regional economy that benefits all persons regardless of county of residence. Implement a regional community and economic development plan that mobilizes shared resources.
GOAL 2	Collaborate to assure geographically comprehensive and affordable access to high-speed broadband/Internet and cell phone service throughout the Promise Zone.
GOAL 3	Seek competitive advantages based on natural, built, economic, and human capital by coordinating the diversification of the economic base of the region.
GOAL 4	Assure geographic and affordable access to post-secondary education and workforce training for youth and adults in the region through enhanced pre-K through adult education.
GOAL 5	Coordinate programs to assure the availability and affordability of critical health services, particularly drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services within the counties.
GOAL 6	Increase access to affordable, energy efficient and quality houses for individuals and families of all ages and income levels.
GOAL 7	Expand transportation access within the region.
GOAL 8	Revitalize the downtowns in the region as retail and residential centers.
GOAL 9	Increase recreational, arts, and community engagement opportunities for youth and adults.
GOAL 10	Expand and diversify the pool of community leaders in the region and create opportunities for them to be engaged in civic dialogues and decision-making.

Table 2.2 Kentucky Promise Zone's Vision

The people and organizations of the Promise Zone will mobilize their human, natural, cultural, historic, and economic assets to design communities where:

- A competitively trained workforce can find meaningful work which provides wages and benefits capable of supporting a family;
- A healthy environment which provides diverse economic and recreational opportunities for a healthy population;
- Regional and personal histories to provide a context for the continued growth in the culture, artisan and crafts skills and knowledge that helped create such resilient people and places;
- There are opportunities for persons of all ages, abilities and interests to develop their talents as a foundation for personal development;
- Community and regional decisions reflect the broad engagement of all those who live here including the disabled and elderly thus energizing participation in civic life and
- Build a sense of hope and optimism for change through the implementation of the regional plan's action strategies.

Literature Review Summary

Even before 1964's official declaration of the nation's War on Poverty and up until the 50th anniversary of that declaration, Appalachia and more specifically Kentucky's Appalachia has been the poster child for poverty in the mountains.

At the base of this complicated misunderstanding of what it meant to be poor in the mountains, was Harry Caudill's Night Comes to the Cumberlands (1963). The book is credited for making Kentucky's Appalachia the focus of the War on Poverty. Caudill's text, a culmination of thought, opinion, and observation, has been described as the definitive text on poverty in Appalachia among journalists, academics, and politicians concerned with economic equality. It was, and still is, considered the

standard on which to find the basest knowledge about Kentucky's Appalachia and its residents.

Caudill's book established the foundational knowledge of poverty in Kentucky's Appalachia with powerful words and images, some from news media and others just as often from those with a political agenda. This gave strength to an already burgeoning stereotype of the backward mountain people. President Johnson, appointed after President Kennedy's assassination, vowed to end poverty in the United States. Soon after, President Johnson was stumping to survive re-election in 1964 as an incumbent to the Whitehouse. Campaigning against Arizona Republican Senator Barry Goldwater, President Johnson made the fight against Appalachian poverty part of a regular national conversation, supported by growing news media interest. *Life*, reaching millions of readers, gave the public a first view of Appalachian poverty. As a well-respected publication for the masses and the Presidential administration, *Life* enjoyed many exclusive stories, becoming at times the only lens in which to view current events (Levinson & Fletcher, 1986). From Mussolini's love nest to Hitler's suicide to intimate coverage of President Harry S. Truman's family vacations, *Life* became the higher standard that all news media of the day wished to attain (Wainwright, 1986). Life's 12-page spread on Kentucky's small community of Inez, brought an onslaught of other national media, prompting like coverage.

One example of just how powerful *Life* had become must include the deal with NASA in 1961. Just three years before *Life's* 12-page spread, "The Valley of Poverty," the magazine was enjoying an exclusive contract with NASA, paying its astronauts from the newly formed space program aimed at beating the Russians to the moon,

$200,000 a year each and securing individual life insurance policies worth $100,000 in benefits. Even under scrutiny from the rest of the free press, angry that taxpayer dollars were supporting NASA and the astronauts and thus should be free and open to public domain, *Life* continued with the unimpeded power to negotiate these contracts stopping only when the excitement of the space program began to wane, (Wilford, 1970).

After President Johnson won by a landslide against Goldwater in 1964, Republicans rallied against the series of proposed domestic programs taking hold that were at aimed at helping the poor. The sweeping reforms that historians mark as the high tide of modern liberalism in the United States included an expansion of the New Deal with the Great Society. After taking office, President Johnson, won a passage of a major tax cut, the Clean Air Act, and the Civic Rights Act of 1964. After his election, President Johnson passed other sweeping reforms, which Republicans viewed as liberal – the Social Security Amendments of 1965 and two government-operated healthcare programs still prominent today, Medicare and Medicaid. As Republicans argued against what they viewed as liberal policies and fiscal irresponsibility, poor helping evolved into poor shaming and continued through the next four Republican Presidencies – Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974), who was the only president in United States history to be impeached; Gerald R. Ford (1974-1977); Ronald Reagan (1981-1989); and George H. W. Bush (1989-1983). The national debate on the deserving versus the undeserving poor, culminated in a successful presidential campaign hinged mostly on welfare reform, led by Democrats and more specifically then Presidential candidate Bill Clinton, who entered the Whitehouse in 1993 (Kohiert, 1989).

Poverty in Appalachia, only at first gaining sympathetic support, had evolved into poor shaming via politicians, news media, and even entertainment media portraying those receiving benefits for the poor as lazy swindlers who were taking advantage of hard-working taxpayers.

How people felt about the poor became a mixed bag of complicated emotions with an image of mountain poverty, however right or wrong, ever etched into the public psyche (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 1987). Appalachia has been associated with being an unacceptable place that is both foreign and to be feared. Above all, it has been depicted as so unacceptable that it is used a reference point for much of what is outside of normal behavior (Cooke-Jackson & Hansen, 2008). The stereotype used in movies, books, and depicted for nearly a century in *New Yorker* cartoons, has no need for explanation. The average American knows that the Appalachian, so often portrayed as a hillbilly, is primitive, dirty, uneducated, lazy, prone to violence and incestuous. Much like the Native Americans and African Americans, the people of Appalachia have been dehumanized for the cause of extracting resources, both natural and human, so those with power can assume it without fear of repercussions, providing a solid foundation for oppression (Fraley, 2007).

The people of Kentucky's Appalachia cannot extract how the world views them from how they view themselves. Decades of negative stereotypical images and words have been internalized by those who have been the butt of a national joke they do not wish to be a part of but cannot escape (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 1987).

As the U.N.'s 2017 report established, the media has been allowed to frame the Appalachian narrative for over six decades, with negative stereotypes, "keeping the poor perpetually impoverished, in many cases generationally" (Alston, 2017, page 12).

As the economic and psychology disciplines continue to study the correlation between economic success and failure and PSE, which influenced hope theory and the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991), a study in how to raise hope levels is timely and necessary.

As researchers continue to examine the growing power of social media over mainstream media, some studies reveal that social media's influence on an agenda (Agenda Setting Theory) or a frame (Framing effects) can act as a focal point for mainstream media (Farrell & Drezner, 2008). Studies are now suggesting the emergence of social media as the agenda setter for journalists and news outlets is growing (Kaplin & Hainlein, 2010).

As PSE and hope, by extension, is considered a contributing factor in economic success or failure (Wuepper & Lybbert, 2017), through looking at internal rather than only external constraints, then the Appalachian narrative, through the use of social media for dissemination of positive news, can influence agenda and frame, combatting decades of the erosion of hope through news media's negative stereotyping of the region. Prior to the boon of social media, there were only a handful of media outlets that could communicate to the masses, and it was a costly endeavor. Now, anyone with a computer or Smartphone and internet access can mass communicate messages at no cost at all (Pulizzi, 2012).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Origins of Measuring Hope

Unlike Bandura's (1977, 1986, 1989) theory of self-efficacy and Scheier and Carver's (1985, 1987) similar theory of optimism, both of which rely heavily on a person's self-confidence and therefore expected outcomes, Hope Theory and Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale use both pathways and agencies, the two necessary components in meeting goals, with four self-report questions from each of the subcategories, to measure a person's hope. The agency items – 2, 9, 10, and 12 measure a person's willpower or energy that gets them moving toward a goal – "the will." The pathways items – 1, 4, 6, and 8 measure a person's perceived ability to find a route to reach the goal – "the way." Looking at goal reaching or the hope to reach a goal, Snyder and team (1995) were measuring both the will and the way and these two reflected a person's mental energy as well as their sense that finding a way to achieve a goal is within grasp. In other words, (Snyder et al., 1991, p. 571) hope is defined as a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals) with neither agency nor pathways alone, sufficient for high hope.

Filler items are 3, 5, 7 and 11 and are added to the instrument as distractors, making the content of the scale less obvious for participants. Without measuring responses to the filler questions, the highest hope score a participant can receive is 32 – scoring a 4 on each of the agency and pathways items – 8 questions total. The lowest

score a respondent can score is 8 – answering with a 1 on each of the agency and pathways questions (See Appendix A).

The Hope Scale's Validity, Reliability and Utility

Hope Scale research reveals that internal reliability is acceptable and that remainder coefficients for each item are significant, with ranges from .23 to .63. Cronbach's alphas of .74 to .84 are acceptably high and evidence of internal consistency. Within the agency items, the correlation of responses is high and within the four pathways items, the correlation is high, with factor-analytic procedures confirming the appropriateness of both pathways and agencies as able to, together, create a hope score. Snyder (1995, p. 7) reports that in several studies, the agency and subscale scores have correlated in the +.41 range. Within Snyder's (1995) report, 30% of those respondents participating in completing the Hope Scale have both high agencies and pathways, showing high hope. At the lower end of the scoring, about 5% have low agency and pathways scores, showing lower hope.

Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale was given again to participants after both three and ten weeks, with results typically in the +.80 range, supporting the assertion that hope is dispositional. When the scale was measured against other similar types of scales, like those measuring self-esteem, perceived problem-solving capabilities, perceptions of control of one's life, optimism, positive affectivity, and positive outcome expectancies, shows concurrent validity. The Hope Scale correlates negatively with those who report being an introvert socially, being depressed, and having anxiety. With regard to construct validity (Does the scale measure that it is meant to measure?), those participants who were administered the scale reporting either high- or low-hope

demonstrated other cognitions indicating what the scale would theoretically predict. Individuals reporting pursuing a goal without roadblocks, indicate high mental energy. Snyder's (1995) more interesting finding was that those higher hope individuals, when faced with circumstances impeding progress, reported even higher mental energy and as Snyder (1995, p. 6) puts it, "When the going gets tough, the hopeful keep going."

Problem Statement

Decades of Media framing and Low PSE

The media has been allowed to frame a collective public picture for over 60 years of what being poor in the Appalachia region looks like, augmenting a prevalent stereotype that continues to erode hope and serves to create and sustain low perceived self-efficacy, and by extension, lower levels of hope among the population.

Research Questions

Effects of Human-Interest Social Media on Hope

Q1: What is the effect of a positive human-interest social media campaign on Hope for self in Kentucky's Promise Zone counties?

Q2: What is the effect of a positive human-interest social media campaign on Hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties' population?

Q3: What is the relationship between the effects of a positive human-interest social media campaign on Hope for self and Hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties' population?

Q4: Is there a difference between hope for self and hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties' populations after a positive human interest social media campaign on Hope for self and Hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone population?

Research Objective

Study of the Relationship between Positive Social Media and Levels of Hope

This study investigated the relationship between positive human-interest social media postings and levels of hope for self and hope for an individuals' region within Kentucky's Promise Zone counties, part of Kentucky's Appalachian Region.

Data Sources

Results were measured from existing data collected from a "good news" public relations/marketing campaign that was launched on the Kentucky Promise Zone's social media channels. The PZ campaign asked those who follow existing PZ social media channels to participate in a survey called Future Survey about Kentucky's Promise Zone counties. The PZ Future Survey was based on Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale. Respondents participated in an electronic survey with questions about hope for self and hope for others who live within Kentucky's Promise Zone eight county geographical area. The first survey was administered July 6 – Aug. 4, 2017, with 173 respondents. After the initial survey there were ten (10) weeks of positive human-interest stories posted to the social media channels, with original content about various people and places within Kentucky's Promise Zone counties. These stories included individual posts about people helping others, being successful within their endeavors, or being mentors or role models to those within their own communities; and local business spotlights called "Promise Zone Business of the Week." Once the ten (10) weeks of good news stories was concluded, a post-test asking the same questions (with three additional questions pertaining to social media influence and social media usage levels)

was administered to the respondents via their unique identifier (an email address). The post-test survey was administered Nov. 17 – Dec. 8, 2017, with a final 58 respondents.

Collected data included results from the first web survey (the pre-test) with background information such as: gender, race, age, education level, employment status, marital status, and income level (with option given "prefer not to answer"), and in which county the respondent resided. The survey collected information by asking respondents to select their agreement level (using a four-point scale – Definitely False, Mostly False, Mostly True, and Definitely True) toward questions indicating an action or feeling statement. The second web survey, called Future Survey 2 (the post-test), collected the same information as the pre-test with the exception of the background information already collected. There were three additional questions pertaining to social media influence and social media usage levels. Participants' email addresses were used as the unique identifier so respondents from Future Survey 1 could be matched with their same completed scale to compare to Future Survey 2.

Data Testing

For research questions (1) and (2), a paired samples T-test was used to compare the results of these responses independently of one another: (1) effect on hope for self and (2) effect on hope for others in Kentucky's Promise Zone; and research question (3) to examine the relationship from responses (1) and (2), a bivariate correlation test was used. For research question (4), which examines the hope scale survey with regard to a comparison of hope for self and hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties, two paired samples T-tests were used: a) pre-test hope for self as compared to pre-test hope for

Kentucky's Promise Zone counties and b) post-test hope for self as compared to hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties.

Reliability Results

Hope for Self Pre-Test had a reliability score (Cronbach's Alpha) of .843 and the Hope for Self post-test had a reliability score of .777, demonstrating the Hope Scale's reliability within this this context. Hope for People of the Promise Zone Pre-Test had a reliability score (Cronbach's Alpha) of .857 and the Hope for People of the Promise Zone post-test had a reliability score of .893, demonstrating the Hope Scale's reliability within this context (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Reliability Statistics

Hope for Self Pre-test Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.843	8

Hope for Self Post-test Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.777	8

Hope for People of the Promise Zone Pre-test Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.857	8

Hope for People of the Promise Zone Post-test Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.893	8

Limitations of Study

The Hope Scale has strong tendencies to advance implications for counselors and for work with patients within the discipline of psychology. Through the study of pathways and agencies as they relate to the "will and the ways" of individuals, there are clear advantages to the development of concrete goals. The individual must be able to visualize a goal or goals and figure out a way to get there, (Snyder, 1995). Outside of the discipline of psychology, and superimposing the Hope Scale into a tertiary study in

communication's media effects, the end goal of measuring pathways and agencies as a way to identify levels of hope in individuals includes sameness. However, the idea of building hope by reading about and seeing hopeful situations and scenarios within a familiar community draws from only two of Snyder's (1995, pg. 359) agency and pathway enhancing lessons. Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale has mainly been used to measure student successes and failures as well as those receiving some type of counseling. Applying treatments to these two groups in an attempt to manipulate hope levels has a distinctive advantage over using the scale within a social media population, which has no one-to-one relationship with those who wish to change hope levels and those needing help with hope. Both educational and psychology settings demonstrate different social dynamics than does a community with a historical culture and specific economic structure. Educators and counselors can help get hope moving by assisting individuals in setting concrete goals; the treatment in this study cannot. The relationship between teacher-student and counselor-client allows for creative engagement (Snyder, 1995) while this study's treatment did not.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Participants indicated their agreement with items using the 4-point Likert-type Hope Scale (Snyder, 1991), ranking from 1 (definitely false) to 4 (definitely true). For questions (1) and (2), the results were reported independently: (1) effect on hope for self and (2) effect on hope for others in Kentucky's Promise Zone. Question (3) searches for any relationship between the responses from (1) and (2), with a bivariate correlation test. Question (4) examines the Hope Scale survey with regard to a comparison of hope for self and hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties.

Hope for Self Pre-Test

Hope for Self Pre-Test revealed a much higher than mid-level score, (M = 3.52) for the question: "My past experiences have prepared me well for the future." With the highest score for each question being a possible 4, the Hope for Self Pre-Test indicates an already high hope level for participants. The lowest scoring question was also greater than mid-level (M = 3.17) for the question: "I meet the goals I set for myself" (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Hope for Self Pre-Test Results

RQ 1: Hope for Self Pre-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.	58	3.52	.628
I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.	58	3.45	.597
I energetically pursue my goals.	58	3.45	.597
I've been pretty successful in life.	58	3.36	.667
I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.	58	3.31	.598
There are lots of ways around any problem.	58	3.29	.676
Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.	58	3.19	.576
I meet the goals I set for myself.	58	3.17	.566
Valid N (listwise)	58		

Hope for Self Post-Test

Hope for Self Post-Test revealed a higher than mid-level score, indicating that the sample population already had high hope for self in the pre-test and continued to show higher hope in the post-test. The highest scored question on the post-test with (M = 3.45) was: "I energetically pursue my goals; and the lowest scored question with (M = 3.10) was: "I meet the goals I set for myself" (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Hope for Self Post-Test Results

RQ1: Hope for Self Post-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I energetically pursue my goals.	58	3.45	.535
My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.	58	3.43	.596
I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.	58	3.36	.485
I've been pretty successful in life.	58	3.34	.637
I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.	58	3.31	.537
There are lots of ways around any problem.	58	3.28	.488
Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.	58	3.14	.437
I meet the goals I set for myself.	58	3.10	.447
Valid N (listwise)	58		

Hope for Self Pre-Test and Post Test Results

Testing the effects of a positive human-interest social media campaign with a pre-test and a post-test regarding hope for self, the results of a two-tailed paired samples *t*Test indicated no statistical significance (at the 0.05 level) at .413, revealing that there was no effect on Hope from the positive human interest social media campaign with paired differences (M = .04095, SD = .378) (see Table 4.3 and Table 4.4).

Table 4.3 Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Pre and Post

RQ1: Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Pre and Post

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Pre-Test	3.3427	58	.42442	.05573
	Hope for Self – Post-Test	3.3017	58	.32783	.04305

Table 4.4 Paired Samples Test Hope Pre and Post

RQ1: Paired Samples Test Self Hope Pre and Post

		Paired Differences					
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Pre-Test Hope for Self – Post-Test	.04095	.37856	.04971	.824	57	.413

Hope for the Promise Zone Pre-Test

Hope for others (people who live in Promise Zone counties) Pre-Test revealed lower scores than Hope for Self Pre-Test, but still in mid-range of the four-point scale. The highest (M = 2.97) score was for the question: “The people in the Promise Zone can think of many ways out of a jam;” and the lowest score (M = 2.26) was for the question: “People who live in the Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life” (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Hope for Promise Zone Pre-Test

RQ 2: Hope for Promise Zone Pre-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The people in The Promise Zone can think of many ways out of a jam.	58	2.97	.748
The people in The Promise Zone energetically pursue their goals.	58	2.83	.798
The people who live in the Promise Zone think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to them.	58	2.81	.736
Even when others get discouraged, people who live in The Promise Zone can find ways to solve problems.	58	2.71	.795
The people in The Promise Zone know there are lots of ways around any problem.	58	2.67	.825
People who live in The Promise Zone meet the goals they set for themselves.	58	2.52	.755
The past experiences of people from The Promise Zone have prepared them well for the future.	58	2.50	.843
People who live in The Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life.	58	2.26	.690
Valid N (listwise)	58		

Hope for the Promise Zone Post-Test

Hope for others (people who live in Promise Zone counties) Post-Test, revealed lower scores than Hope for Self Post-Test, but in mid-range of the four-point scale. The highest score (M = 2.84) was for the question: “The people in the Promise Zone think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to them;” and the lowest

score (M = 2.38) was for the question: “People who live in the Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life” (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Hope for Promise Zone Post-Test

RQ 2: Hope for Promise Zone Post-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The people who live in the Promise Zone think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to them.	58	2.84	.745
The people in The Promise Zone can think of many ways out of a jam.	58	2.72	.854
Even when others get discouraged, people who live in The Promise Zone can find ways to solve problems.	58	2.69	.799
The people in The Promise Zone know there are lots of ways around any problem.	58	2.64	.810
The people in The Promise Zone energetically pursue their goals.	58	2.57	.840
The past experiences of people from The Promise Zone have prepared them well for the future.	58	2.52	.755
People who live in The Promise Zone meet the goals they set for themselves.	58	2.48	.682
People who live in The Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life.	58	2.38	.768
Valid N (listwise)	58		

Hope for the Promise Zone Results

Testing the effects of a positive human-interest social media campaign with a pre-test and a post-test regarding hope for people in the Promise Zone, reveal the results of a two-tailed paired samples *t*Test indicating a value of no statistical significance (at the 0.05 level) with (M = .06964, SD = .530), $r(57) = .461$, $p < .001$, showing that there was no effect on Hope from the positive human interest social media campaign with paired differences (see Table 4.7 and Table 4.8).

Table 4.7 Paired Samples Statistics Promise Zone Hope Pre and Post

RQ2: Paired Samples Statistics Promise Zone Hope Pre and Post

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test	2.6573	58	.54840	.07201
	Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	2.6056	58	.59272	.07783

Table 4.8 Paired Samples Test Promise Zone Hope Pre and Post

RQ2: Paired Samples Test Promise Zone Hope Pre and Post

		Paired Differences					
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	.05172	.53035	.06964	.743	57	.461

Relationship Between Hope for Self and Hope for the Promise Zone

Testing a correlation of effects of a positive human-interest social media campaign on Hope for Self and Hope for People in the Promise Zone produced 2 two-tailed paired samples *t*Tests, which indicated a value of small statistical significance (at the 0.05 level). The items were positively correlated, pre-test, $r(.036) = .277$, $p < .001$; and post-test, $r(.011) = .331$, $p < .001$ (see Table 4.9 and Table 4.10).

Table 4.9 Pearson Correlations Pre-Test

RQ3: Correlations Hope for Self and Hope for Promise Zone Pre-Test

		Hope for Self – Pre-Test	Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test
Hope for Self – Pre-Test	Pearson Correlation	1	.277*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	58	58
Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	Pearson Correlation	.277*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	58	58

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.10 Pearson Correlations Post-Test

RQ3: Correlations Hope for Self and Hope for Promise Zone Post-Test

		Hope for Self - Post	Hope for Promise Zone - Post
Hope for Self – Pre-Test	Pearson Correlation	1	.331*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	58	58
Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	Pearson Correlation	.331*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	58	58

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Difference in Hope for Self and Hope for the Promise Zone Pre-Test

Tests indicated a value of statistical significance (at the 0.05 level), showing a correlation with regard to a comparison of hope for self and hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties within a Pre-Test comparison, with N: 58, Hope for Self Pre-Test showed paired samples (M = .685), (SD = .593), $r(.000) = 57$, $p > .001$. This test reveals through the samples statistics mean that respondents have less hope for the Promise Zone than for themselves (see Table 4.11, Table 4.12, and Table 4.13).

Table 4.11 Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test

RQ4: Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Pre-Test	3.3427	58	.42442	.05573
	Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test	2.6573	58	.54840	.07201

Table 4.12 Paired Samples Test Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test

RQ4: Paired Samples Test Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test

		Paired Differences				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Pre-Test Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test	.68534	.59339	.07792	8.796	57

Table 4.13 Paired Samples Test Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test Significance

RQ4: Paired Samples Test Self Hope Pre-Test vs. PZ Pre-Test

		Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Pre-Test Hope for Promise Zone – Pre-Test	.000

Difference in Hope for Self and Hope for the Promise Zone Post-Test

Tests indicated a value of statistical significance (at the 0.05 level), showing a correlation with regard to a comparison of hope for self and hope for Kentucky's Promise Zone counties within a post-test comparison. This test reveals, through the samples statistics mean, that respondents have less hope for the Promise Zone than they do for themselves, similar to the results revealed in the Pre-Test comparison (see Table 4.14, Table 4.15, and Table 4.16).

Table 4.14 Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test

RQ4: Paired Samples Statistics Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Post-Test	3.3017	58	.32783	.04305
	Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	2.6056	58	.59272	.07783

Table 4.15 Paired Samples Test Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test

RQ4: Paired Samples Test Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test

		Paired Differences			t	df
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Post-Test Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	.69612	.57455	.07544	9.227	57

Table 4.16 Paired Samples Test Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test Significance

RQ4: Paired Samples Test Self Hope Post-Test vs. PZ Post-Test

		Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Hope for Self – Post-Test Hope for Promise Zone – Post-Test	.000

Table 4.17 Agency and Pathways Enhancing Lessons

1. Learning self-talk about succeeding	
2. Thinking of difficulties encountered as reflecting wrong strategy, not lack of talent	
3. Thinking of goals and setbacks as challenges, not failures	
4. Recalling past successes	
5. Hearing stories of how other people have succeeded (e.g., movies, tapes, books)	**X**
6. Cultivating friends with whom you can talk about goals	
7. Finding role models that you can emulate (everyday heroes are closer than you think)	**X**
8. Exercising physically (relearning that the body and mind are connected)	
9. Eating properly (remembering that you need fuel)	
10. Resting adequately (recharging for the next active goal-directed output)	
11. Laughing at oneself (especially when stuck)	
12. Re-goaling (persistence in the face of absolute goal blockage deflates agency and pathways)	
13. Rewarding oneself for small sub-goal attainments on the way to larger, long-term goals	
14. Educating oneself for specific skills, as well as learning how to learn	

*Above, marked with **X** are the matching study concepts.*

While two of the 14 Agencies and Pathways Lessons were utilized in this study's treatment of 10 weeks of good news stories: 5) Hearing stories of how other people have succeeded (e.g., movies, tapes, books; and 7) Finding role models that you can emulate (everyday heroes are closer than you think), the other 12 are only possible within a counseling or teaching environment and not present through a study of social media. Certainly, having the intervention of teachers and counselors to help individuals construct or reconstruct agency and pathways can lead to higher hope (see Table 3.18).

Teachers and counselors help individuals to set concrete goals in which to measure agency and pathways; therefore this study is limited in its effectiveness. However, sometimes, just seeing others succeed may help individuals to make a concrete goal imaginable, which allows a social media treatment to play a part in the role of raising hope. “This alone can unleash the person's sense of energy to pursue the goal, as well as the capability to generate pathways” (Snyder, 1995, pg. 358).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Lessons from Enhancing Hope

This study, utilizing Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale to measure increased, decreased or stationary hope levels after participants had been exposed to ten (10) weeks of good news stories, indicated the Hope Scale itself as a significantly appropriate tool for this research. However, the study's pre-test measures showed mid-level scores that consistently remained mid-level after treatment and after post-test measures. Does this mean that hope cannot be raised, somewhat, using social media and the Hope Scale? To the contrary, the outcome more likely demonstrates that the demographic for this particular study was not an accurate representation of Kentucky's Promise Zone population.

The study was conducted using the Kentucky Promise Zone's Facebook channel, which at the time had fewer than 2,000 followers. Those who follow the social media channels are accustomed to seeing positive news about the counties in the Promise Zone as part of the mission and vision of this entity, which is essentially to report good things about the community. While the main focus of the Promise Zone's social media had been largely about businesses, things to do, places to eat, and emerging industry over the eight-county area, stories about individuals or the unsung hero or regular citizen had not been prominent until the Promise Zone Profiles project and this study that ensued with its implementation. Even so, posting ten (10) weeks of good news stories about individuals, following a history of posting good news mostly

about business-related topics, made seeing an increase in hope levels much more difficult.

In other words, elevating hope levels in those who were already seeing hopeful (although different types of) stories, and possessing higher or mid-level hope is more difficult than raising the hope of those exposed to a good bit of negative social media and also those who have lower hope, thus creating a ceiling effect.

A more effective social media platform in which to study the effects of exposure to good news stories on hope, would be a traditional community news source. Utilizing a local news media's social media platform in which to inform this study would be ideal for a few reasons. Often local news media are short staffed and journalists must focus on items that are the most immediately important to readers, such as those related to safety issues and tax collection and spending transparencies. In other words, much journalistic efforts must be expended covering crime and government because these require the most urgent public disclosure so readers may react quickly. Because of the current trend of short staffed local news media, we should also reason that augmenting local news coverage by providing feature-type story coverage from a project like studying effects from positive human interest stories on social media would form a complementary and mutually beneficial service for both the study and the local media outlet. The local media claims more community news coverage and enjoys the benefits of storytelling of a different type, which can lead to higher readership of their products, while the study would reap the benefits of disseminating positive news to an audience that is mostly accustomed to negative news.

This approach would allow the study to reach a demographic that may have lower hope, thus eliminating the ceiling effect experienced in the current study. Because news media and journalists pride themselves in autonomous reporting in the sense that it is not controlled by any outside community interventions and because their reading public trusts the media outlets to remain unbiased and not manipulated by any outside influences, a relationship must first be established between researchers and the local media outlet. In order for researchers to utilize a traditional local media platform, they must first build trust that demonstrates helping power for the community, then proceed in partnership with the study.

The study's sample indicates that those who follow the Kentucky's Promise Zone social media may have higher hope due to higher income. These higher income levels may also indicate that those who follow the Kentucky's Promise Zone social media may be the helpers within those communities, meaning they are the solution seekers to the negative issues in the eight-county area. As such, these helpers and solution seekers, would be more focused on positive outcomes as they work to develop a more positive future following the outlined Kentucky Promise Zone's mission and vision.

Utilizing a local media outlet's social media platform as outlined above, would also ensure that a study's demographic would be more representative of the local population. A more diverse set of individuals are more likely to be followers of a community news social media outlet, than an organization with a goal of creating and implementing a strategy to increase economic and community viability with its region. The local news media outlet's social media would be more likely to include not only the

helpers from an initiative like Kentucky's Promise Zone, but would also the population seeking or needing the help.

Those who follow Kentucky's Promise Zone reported 82% were employed and 5% out of work and looking. The sample was not representative of the Promise Zone counties as a whole with regard to income, with nearly 80 percent reporting income at the $50,000 to $74,999 level, as compared to Kentucky Promise Zone median income rates from 2017 estimated at $27,872 (SAIPE, 2017) (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Survey Participant Income

Gross Income

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Prefer Not to Answer	7	12.1	12.1
	Less than $15,000	2	3.4	15.5
	$15,000 to $24,999	3	5.2	20.7
	$25,000-$34,999	4	6.9	27.6
	$35,000 to $49,999	12	20.7	48.3
	$50,000 to $74,999	18	31.0	79.3
	$75,000 to $99,999	6	10.3	89.7
	$100,000 to $149,999	4	6.9	96.6
	$150,000 or More	2	3.4	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

A Revitalization of Hope

Researchers from disciplines such as psychology, economics, education, social work, biological health, anthropology, communication and others should dive ever deeper into the study of how an intangible internal mechanism like hope has external consequences on individuals, thus often creating tangible outcomes. As this work continues, it is necessary to draw a more distinctive line connecting this human condition called hope to various successes or failures in individuals' lives with a focus on examining how it eventually flows up to entire communities.

The first part of the aforementioned Ghandi quote bears repeating, "Man often becomes what he believes himself to be" (Deats & Jegen 2005, p. 108). For Kentucky's Appalachia, the narrative regarding who they are as people was created long before the 1964 official declaration of the War on Poverty. However, this pivotal moment in the history of the United States moved the spotlight of American poverty to the region, bringing both unwelcome and seemingly unrelenting attention. This moment in time brought forth by both politics and media, both news and creative, set the stage for a derogatory portrayal of the mountain family, particularly in Kentucky's Appalachia, still existing today. Kentucky's Appalachia and the people who live there seem to be a part of the last acceptable American culture that the public feels no remorse for humiliating and dehumanizing. Stereotyping has been defined as "a fixed mental image of a group that is frequently applied to all its members" (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 1987, p. 556). Much like the Holy Grail has become the cliché used to describe things

amazing, awe inspiring, wondrous, and unique; Appalachia has become synonymous with disgusting, ugly, and shameful.

Even as equivalent derogatory terms describing Native Americans and African Americans are no longer acceptable in polite conversation (Fraley, 2007), stereotypical and derogatory terms used to describe Appalachia and its people are still widely used. Used as an adjective, the word Appalachian, conveys an image of slovenly people, poverty ridden, and now drug saturated. No further explanation needed.

A recent setback to the more positively proposed narrative and one that could be as damaging with regard to stereotypical portrayals of the Appalachian people as Caudill's "Night Comes to the Cumberlands," is "Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis" written by J.D. Vance. The memoir follows Vance's life from Appalachia to an Ivy League school and traces his steps into Silicon Valley. Vance's story offers accolades for himself touting his resilience in overcoming poverty and, escaping an unhealthy family dynamic (Garner, 2019). "Hillbilly Elegy," has become a controversial narrative to the already strained Appalachian story. Some claim the narrative takes the region backward, blaming the poor for their own plight. Those who find the book oppressive, assert that Vance portrays poverty as escapable but the people of Appalachia cannot rise to the challenge the way Vance did because they are unwilling to do the necessary work – in other words, they are lazy (Sexton, 2017). Young Appalachians are demonstrating that they are quite willing to put in the work to rise up against Vance and others who they feel are oppressive to Appalachia and its people. Vance was publicly shunned during a speaking engagement forum in 2018 at an Appalachian Studies Association conference. A group called Y'ALL (Young

Appalachian Leaders and Learners) staged a protest and then turned their chairs away from him. Y'ALL booed Vance and sang Florence Reece's anthem "Which Side Are You On?" (Kline, 2018). "Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy" is another example of those in the region rising against Vance's memoir. The anthology features several writers and has gained attention as a medium whose scribes are set on changing the Appalachian narrative to a more positive one (Garner, 2019).

Thousands of copies of Hillbilly Elegy were sold after the first printing in 2016. In 2019, a movie produced by Ron Howard with the same title was in the works. This attention contributed to the emergence of Vance as a spokesperson for all Appalachian ills, much like Harry Caudill in the 1960s.

After publication of Hillbilly Elegy in 2016, by Harper Publishing Company in New York City, political conservatives began to use Vance's words to rally against the people of Appalachia. In the early spring of 2017, Republican Representative Jason Chaffetz, in an act of defiance over ridicule of the Affordable Care Act replacement plan for The Affordable Healthcare Act, referenced Vance's book, saying that (poor) people should invest in their own healthcare instead of buying iPhones (Sexton, 2017). Although Chaffetz later apologized for what he referred to as an insensitive statement, the throwback to the Reagan administration when poor shaming was on the rise, was evident (Smith, 2017).

A younger generation of Appalachians are now giving a voice to combat the unrelenting, negative stereotypes surrounding their entire region. Now is the time to expand research, looking through the lens of psychology, economics, education, social work, biological health, anthropology, and communication to determine to what extent

the negative narrative can be reversed, if at all, in favor of raising hope, optimism and self-efficacy for generations to come.

The War on Poverty and the establishment of the Appalachian Regional Commission, whose mission has been nimble to changing times over the years, still has the same basic goals to lift the region out of poverty. Other agencies working alongside the ARC are working toward these same types of goals for the entire country. These goals include a good bit of economic restructuring that supports entrepreneurial endeavors; new workforce trainings and education to increase knowledge and skills for a ready workforce; leveraging natural and cultural assets to capitalize on economic opportunities; and developing the next group of leaders who understand the importance of advancing communities and focusing on economic development. ARC supported 522 projects aimed at economic development and economic diversification in Appalachia from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018, totaling $125.6 million (ARC 13-State Profile, 2019).

While these economic development goals and strategies are paramount to rebuilding Appalachia, there may be a missing element. The internalized constraints that individuals from these communities carry with them as they try to make a better economic path for their families. Without future studies and research on what low hope and, by contrast, high hope can do to and for a community, Kentucky's Appalachia, due to years of seeing themselves in a negative light, may always struggle. No matter the monetary investment, without an investment in individual hope levels and a search for solid methods to raise them, the ebb and flow of successes equivalent to those who live

and work in the rest of the United States, may continue to be minimal for Kentucky's Appalachian counties.

Taking a note from education and psychology, communication professionals and scholars from the aforementioned disciplines will need to look at what is already happening within classrooms, schools, and even in entire school districts with the concept of raising hope among students, teachers, and administrators (Snyder et. al, 2002).

Future research implores scholars to look at the effects of internalized stereotyping over time and go one step further to find out how the effects can be reversed, or at the very least not carried forward into the next generation. When groups internalize negative stereotypes, it becomes difficult for members of the subculture to value themselves or the unique aspects of their culture (Sullivan, 2004). Entire communities, who have experienced the effects of negative stereotyping for decades, are standing ready to write their own story. The people of Appalachia are, quite frankly, tired of everyone else telling them who they are and, possibly more importantly, who they aren't. Destiny Caldwell, a young aspiring filmmaker from Harlan, Kentucky, spoke volumes within just a few sentences during the winter of 2017 in an interview with AJ+, a global news community highlighting human struggles and achievements.

> "Mainstream media has come in here and told the same story over and over and over again. I mean our own people from northern Kentucky have come in here and told the same exact story. And we get it, Appalachia has a lot of poor people. We get it. We have a really big drug problem. We know this. We know the outside world knows this. They've known it for a really long time and continuing to tell that story is what perpetuates these stereotypes that we live in barns and don't have shoes or floors." – Destiny Caldwell (AJ+, 2017)

In addition to healing the hope of the Appalachian people, scholars, news media, creative media, and entertainment media need to charge themselves with doing no further harm by finding new ways to tell and show the story of poverty without shaming the subjects, who are kind enough to share their lives. A more thoughtful approach to storytelling is needed, while keeping in mind the ripple effect of how hope can flow from one person to the next (Snyder, et. al., 2002).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

The Hope Scale

Hope Scale

Permissions:
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Hope Scale

Items

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided.

1 = Definitely False; 2 = Mostly False; 3 = Mostly True; 4 = Definitely True

_____ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam. (Pathways)
_____ 2. I energetically pursue my goals. (Agency)
_____ 3. I feel tired most of the time. (Filler)
_____ 4. There are lots of ways around any problem. (Pathways)
_____ 5. I am easily downed in an argument. (Filler)
_____ 6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me. (Pathways)
_____ 7. I worry about my health. (Filler)
_____ 8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem. (Pathways)
_____ 9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future. (Agency)
_____ 10. I've been pretty successful in life. (Agency)
_____ 11. I usually find myself worrying about something. (Filler)
_____ 12. I meet the goals that I set for myself. (Agency)

APPENDIX B:

Future Scale Instrument as Administered for Study

Future Scale Instrument as Administered for Study

Pre-test
Future Survey 1 – administered by Promise Zone July 4, 2017 (open date) – August 4, 2017 (close date)
CODE BOOK for Promise Zone Profiles Survey
UNIQUE IDENTIFIER

1. What is your email address?

1 = Definitely False
2 = Mostly False
3 = Mostly True
4 = Definitely True

2. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam. (Pathways)
3. I energetically pursue my goals. (Agency)
4. I feel tired most of the time. (Filler)
5. There are lots of ways around any problem. (Pathways)
6. I am easily down in an argument. (Filler)
7. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me. (Pathways)
8. I worry about my health. (Filler)
9. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem. (Pathways)
10. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future. (Agency)
11. I've been pretty successful in life. (Agency)
12. I usually find myself worrying about something. (Filler)
13. I meet the goals that I set for myself. (Agency)

1 = Definitely False
2 = Mostly False
3 = Mostly True
4 = Definitely True

14. The people of the Promise Zone can think of many ways to get out of a jam. (Pathways)
15. The people of the Promise Zone energetically pursue my goals. (Agency)
16. The people of the Promise Zone feel tired most of the time. (Filler)
17. The people of the Promise Zone know there are lots of ways around any problem. (Pathways)
18. The people of the Promise Zone are easily down in an argument. (Filler)
19. The people of the Promise Zone can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to them. (Pathways)
20. The people of the Promise Zone worry about their health. (Filler)
21. Even when others get discouraged, the people of the Promise Zone can find a way to solve the problem. (Pathways)
22. The people of the Promise Zone have past experiences that have prepared them well for the future. (Agency)
23. The people of the Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life. (Agency)
24. The people of the Promise Zone usually find themselves worrying about something. (Filler)
25. The people of the Promise Zone meet the goals they set for themselves. (Agency)

26. What is your age?
    18-29 = 1
    30-49 = 2
    50-64 = 3
    65+ = 4

27. What is your gender?
    Male = 1
    Female = 0

28. What is your ethnicity?
    White = 1
    Black or African American = 2
    Middle Eastern = 3
    Hispanic or Latino = 4
    Native American = 5
    Asian/Pacific Islander = 6
    Other = 7

29. What is your marital status?
    Singer, never married = 1
    Divorced = 2
    Married or Domestic Partnership = 3
    Widowed = 4
    Separated = 5

30. What is your employment status?
    Employed = 1
    Out of Work but Looking = 2
    Student = 3
    Unable to Work = 4
    Retired = 5
    Self-Employed = 6
    Out of Work but not currently Looking = 7
    Military = 8
    Other = 9

31. What is your gross income?
    Prefer not to answer = 0
    Less than $15,000 = 1
    $15,000-$24,999 = 2
    $25,000-$34,999 = 3
    $35,000-$49,999 = 4
    $50,000-$74,999 = 5
    $75,000-$99,999 = 6
    $100,000-$149,000 = 7
    $150,000 or more = 8

32. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.
    Completed some high school = 1
    High School graduate = 2
    Completed some college = 3
    Associate's Degree = 4
    Bachelor's Degree = 5
    Master's Degree = 6
    Ph.D., Law or Medical Degree = 7
    Other advanced degree = 8

33. Do you live in the following counties?
    Clay = 1
    Whitley = 2
    Knox = 3
    Bell = 4
    Letcher = 5
    Harlan = 6
    Perry = 7
    Leslie = 8
    Other = 9

Post-test
Future Survey 2 -- administered to respondents of Future Survey 1 by Promise Zone, Nov. 17, 2017 (open date) – Dec. 8, 2017 (close date)

1. What is your email address?

1 = Definitely False

2 = Mostly False

3 = Mostly True

4= Definitely True

2. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam. (Pathways)
3. I energetically pursue my goals. (Agency)
4. I feel tired most of the time. (Filler)
5. There are lots of ways around any problem. (Pathways)
6. I am easily down in an argument. (Filler)
7. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me. (Pathways)
8. I worry about my health. (Filler)
9. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem. (Pathways)
10. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future. (Agency)
11. I've been pretty successful in life. (Agency)
12. I usually find myself worrying about something. (Filler)
13. I meet the goals that I set for myself. (Agency)

1 = Definitely False

2 = Mostly False

3 = Mostly True

4 = Definitely True

14. The people of the Promise Zone can think of many ways to get out of a jam. (Pathways)
15. The people of the Promise Zone energetically pursue their goals. (Agency)
16. The people of the Promise Zone feel tired most of the time. (Filler)
17. The people of the Promise Zone know there are lots of ways around any problem. (Pathways)
18. The people of the Promise Zone are easily down in an argument. (Filler)
19. The people of the Promise Zone can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to them. (Pathways)
20. The people of the Promise Zone worry about their health. (Filler)
21. Even when others get discouraged, the people of the Promise Zone can find a way to solve the problem. (Pathways)
22. The people of the Promise Zone have past experiences that have prepared them well for the future. (Agency)
23. The people of the Promise Zone have been pretty successful in life. (Agency)
24. The people of the Promise Zone usually find themselves worrying about something. (Filler)
25. The people of the Promise Zone meet the goals they set for themselves. (Agency)
26. I see things on Promise Zone's social media that change my thoughts/feelings toward the Promise Zone.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT PREFERENCES

27. What is your favorite thing to see on Promise Zone's social media?

    Business of the Month = 1
    Published Stories = 2
    Person of the Month = 3
    Upcoming Events = 4

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

28. How much time do you typically spend on social media a day?

    0-2 hours per day = 1
    3-4 hours per day = 2
    5+ hours per day = 3

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM PREFERENCES

29. What social media platform do you use most?

    Facebook = 1
    Instagram = 2
    Twitter = 3
    Snapchat = 4
    None = 5

VITA:

Melissa L. Newman, Ed.D.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Eastern Kentucky University
Executive Director of Regional Programming & Regional Stewardship
October 2019 – Present

The Executive Director of Regional Programming & Regional Stewardship provides executive and academic oversight to EKU's Regional Campuses in Manchester, Corbin, Hazard, Lancaster, and Somerset; as well as for the four Aviation Maintenance Technician programs in Hazard, London, Big Sandy, and Richmond. Implements student success and retention programs for all schools and leads the regional campuses with advising, academic coaching, marketing, course offerings, and recruitment and retention efforts. The executive director works closely with the Senior Vice President of Operations & Strategic Initiatives, Regional Stewardship and Regional Programming Advisory committees, EKU College Deans and Department Chairs, as well as other high level administration to create and/or augment regional programing opportunities and promote regional stewardship, service learning, civic engagement, and outreach within the university, community, and region. The executive director has budgetary oversight and responsibility for regional campuses and aviation maintenance training programs.

Eastern Kentucky University
Regional Stewardship Director
Jan. 2016 – October 2019

The Regional Stewardship Director connects the EKU service region to student internship opportunities and acts as the faculty supervisor. Through the successful creation and implementation of a program called LINC (Liaisons Improving Networks & Connections), these responsibilities include internship negotiations, oversight of student work, and maintaining ongoing relationships with businesses and non-profits in Kentucky's 54 Appalachian counties. LINC began with incorporating meaningful service-learning projects into classroom curriculum with a tight focus on student learning and delivering various types of expertise into a region, which was trying to diversify its economy. Student work includes asset mapping, community volunteer recruitment efforts, marketing, public relations, graphic design,

social media management and media relations. This program, which began inside the classroom and in short order encompassed all of Kentucky's Appalachian counties, is now recognized by the University as a career track for students. To date, LINC has a 100 percent career placement rate after graduation for participating students, with all students going on to work in their field of study for companies and organizations in Kentucky's Appalachian region. In addition to these responsibilities, the director engages in prospect research and grant writing to support these internship opportunities and to create programs for EKU's regional campuses and EKU's 22-county service region.

Internships negotiated, funded, supervised for the Regional Stewardship LINC program:

- Shaping Our Appalachian Region - S.O.A.R (12)
- The Promise Zone (6)
- Southern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce (2)
- East Kentucky Leadership Foundation (12)
- Harlan County Economic Development Board (1)
- Jackson Energy (3)
- All "A" Classic (2)
- London/Laurel Chamber of Commerce (1)
- Clay County Tourism Development (1)
- U.S. Forestry – London District (1)

Projects/Programs in progress:

- Career Academy Partnership/School Districts in Kentucky's ARC counties: This work includes finding funding and partnerships, both government and business, and grant research, writing and final implementation. The EKU Board of Regents approved this project spring 2018. Once the funding is secured, the building erected, and the coursework implemented, the Career Academy will house career paths to higher education and technical trades with a focus on construction management and carpentry, tourism hospitality and parks and recreation administration, media arts, and health services and nursing.
- EKU Aviation Scholarships and Program Expansion
- EKU Workforce Development Aviation Maintenance Technician program
- Project co-leader for area Rural IMPACT team; designation by the Presidential Administration of Barak Obama as a two-generation approach to ending childhood poverty
- Eastern Kentucky Scholar House (work in progress) – an education program with Section 8 housing and daycare for parents (single and coupled) accepted to any accredited institution of higher learning or certification program.

Eastern Kentucky University

Visiting Instructor, Public Relations, Journalism and Communication Studies Instructor and EKU S.O.A.R. Liaison and Intern Supervisor

Jan. 2013-
Dec. 2015

As the supervisor for student interns and a visiting instructor, I was tasked with building a brand for Shaping Our Appalachian Region (S.O.A.R.). This work, which began the summer of 2013, included supervising student interns as they delivered creative services such as website support, social media platform building, media planning and placement, writing news and feature stories, and fundraising campaign development. The internship program began in collaboration with the Rural Policy and Research Institute (RUPRI), the staff of Kentucky's Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers and Kentucky's then Governor Steve Beshear. Students under my supervision were also tasked with building a brand for the East Kentucky Leadership Foundation and its annual event, East Kentucky Leadership Conference. This work led to what is now known as EKU LINC, a regionally and University recognized internship program that places students in career path paid internships throughout Kentucky's Appalachian counties with work that addresses economic diversification needs, and outmigration of population while allowing students to work and learn in the region and then gain meaningful career employment after graduation. As a Visiting Instructor, I taught a variety of courses in public relations, journalism and communication studies (specific courses listed under Professional Teaching Experience). During my three-year position I taught as many as six courses per semester with as many as five individual course preparations, all with excellent student course and instructor reviews.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The courses below reflect a diverse set of disciplines and areas. Within all courses, service learning, through engagement with community stakeholders, government services, and connections within the University's service region, were strategically incorporated. These service-learning projects included both non-profit and for-profit entities and work with more than 30 organizations and businesses. It was this service-learning coursework that caught the attention of RUPRI, SOAR, The Promise Zone and EKLF. Preliminary discussions then began that would undergird the first efforts in the creation of EKU's Regional LINC internship program. In addition to teaching the courses below, I also taught many of these same courses as an adjunct instructor prior to my full-time teaching assignment.

Public Relations

- Marketing, Advertising, Copy & Production (COM 325)
- Public Relations Writing (PUB 380)
- Public Relations Principles (PUB 375)
- Design for Mass Media (PUB 320)
- Public Relations in Appalachia (Special Topics Class PUB 400)

Journalism

- Feature Writing (JOU 305)
- News Writing (COM 201)
- Editing (JOU 310)

Communication Studies

- Introduction to Human Communication (CMS 100 – Public Speaking)

Teaching Philosophy

Because most of my courses are writing intensive, I begin by teaching writing mechanics, including parts of speech, subject/verb agreement, verb tense confusion and proper word usage. This gives those who have mastered these tools a refresher course and those who have somehow escaped these lessons a chance to finally grasp the concepts without feeling defeated. I believe many from our region are natural-born storytellers and, if given the right tools, can, become great writers and communicators. I am an advocate of meaningful student work, embedding them in communities where they are most needed as they gain work and life experiences.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

President/Publisher, Martin Sisters Publishing Company
August 2010 - present

Martin Sisters Publishing Company is a boutique publishing agency was created in 2010 with the intent to publish books for a small group of authors who wanted to gain more control over the publishing process. Within two years, due to the quality of editing, design and distribution, MSP was named in the top 50 independent publishers in 2012 by Writer's Digest. MSP is a traditional, royalties paying publisher with all revenue gained from the sale of its authors' books. www.martinsisterspublishing.com

- Currently more than 85 books in publication from authors all over the world
- Works with over a dozen editors all over the United States and Canada, along with award-winning cover designers
- Authors are paid above the industry standard at 10 percent for print and 35 percent for digital royalties

Annual Fund Director/Public Relations/Alumni Affairs, Union College, Barbourville

March 2008 – November 2011

- Donor relations and gift management, legacy and planned giving
- Maintained relationships with more than 12,000 alumni and donors
- Managed Annual Student Impact Fund
- Supervisor/director for alumni online presence through main website
- Managed social networks (online/in-person) for alumni/friends/donors
- Facilitated Union College Alumni Association meetings/activities
- Co-created and managed alumni/student mentoring program U-Connect
- Oversight of Alumni Magazine and Alumni e-Newsletter
- Annual budget oversight

Advertising/Marketing Director, Times-Tribune, Corbin

March 2005 – March 2008

- Supervised staff responsible for revenue in advertising and commercial printing
- Supervised creation of special sections, special advertising and publications
- Oversight for approximately $250,000 in revenue per quarter.
- Public speaking engagements, Kentucky Press Association
- Annual budget oversight

Publisher, Laurel News Journal, London

August 2004 – March 2005

- Supervised full-time staff, along with part-time and contract employees
- Responsible for both advertising and editorial
- Creation of special sections, special advertising and publications
- Annual budget oversight

General Manager, Advocate Media, Barbourville

March 2002 – August 2004

- Supervised full-time staff, along with part-time and contract employees
- Responsible for both advertising and editorial
- Creation of special sections, special advertising and publications
- Annual budget oversight
- Awarded C-Train Grant (100 % funding) for employee technology training

Editor, The Kentucky Standard, Bardstown, Ky. (Landmark Community Newspapers, Inc.)

January 2001 – March 2002

- Supervised full-time staff, along with part-time and contract employees
- Responsible for both advertising and editorial
- Creation of special sections, special advertising and publications
- Annual budget oversight

PLG-TV 13 – Newscaster (also part of Landmark Media)

General Manager, The Ada Herald, Ada, Ohio, Brown Publishing Company

August 1998 – January 2001

- Supervised staff and responsible for editorial content, advertising revenue and commercial printing
- Supervised creation of special sections, special advertising and publications
- Budgetary oversight for approximately $500,000 in revenue per year.

ADDITIONAL JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE

1991-1998

- The Times Tribune – journalist and section editor
- The Sentinel-Echo – editor in chief
- Laurel News Leader – journalist
- Mountain Advocate – editor in chief
- The Kenton Times – journalist

PRESENTATIONS/PUBLICATIONS/RESEARCH

Research in Progress

The Impact of Positive Human-Interest Stories on Raising Hope through Social Media in Kentucky's Promise Zone Counties uses C.R. Snyder's Hope Theory to measure the impact of storytelling in contrast to decades of news and entertainment media stereotyping of the people of Appalachia. This will become ongoing research as stakeholders in Kentucky's Appalachian counties continue work to redefine how the world views them and how they view themselves. This ongoing research will explore how good news can combat years of stereotyping and raise hope in various constructs. The first geographical area to be explored is the Promise Zone, the next will be all of Kentucky's Appalachian counties – with minor research studies in individual communities, and finally including all of Appalachia as a study. This research will culminate with an exploration of economics and hope and how the two can merge in an effort to end generational poverty.

Brushy Fork Institute, September 2018

Storytelling for Change Interactive Workshop & Presentation

Raising Hope as an Economic Driver dives into a new idea that pairs well with an older, but still useful and highly used, Theory of Hope. A 2017 report from the United Nations supports the notion that news media continue to perpetuate negative stereotypes among the poorest and most economically disadvantaged populations within the Appalachian Region of the United States. United Nations special reporter on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston, was granted permission by President Barack Obama's administration in 2014 to engage in a poverty fact-finding mission within the United States. The final statement findings reveal negative stereotypes as a factor in what is keeping America's poor submerged in poverty. Furthermore, the statement asserts that the media have been allowed to frame a collective public picture of what being poor in America looks like, giving definition to the ongoing welfare versus work public debate. Recently, research has emerged suggesting a correlation between higher hope and a region's economic success. Economists are increasingly recognizing that focusing on external forces, such as more or varied funding sources, government regulation or deregulation to stimulate economies, may not be all that is needed to create a successful economic development plan within regions with a history of economic struggle. Internal focus on the individuals who populate these areas are now seen as playing an integral role in the failure or success of a region's economy. *Raising Hope as an Economic Driver* explores a positive news campaign project that actually raised levels of hope in Kentucky's Promise Zone, eroding a decades-long negative stereotypical narrative. This presentation, based on preliminary research findings, gave attendees the tools they need to replicate the raising hope process in their own communities.

Kentucky Communication Association Annual Conference, September 2017

Eroding Negative Stereotypes in Kentucky's Promise Zone Counties presented a project that was grant funded to hire five students to immerse Kentucky's Promise Zone Counties in the good news that was happening in PZ communities. Attendees learned about the process of working with area high school teachers and their students to find, report and then refine the stories to ready them for social media publication. During the presentation, tools and best practices were made available. Discussions regarding the forthcoming research, *The Impact of Positive Human Interest Stories on Raising Hope through Social Media in Kentucky's Promise Zone Counties.*

Kentucky Communication Association Annual Conference, September 2016

Storytelling in Appalachia's Public Relations and Journalism Classrooms: Tales from Professors Relaying Student Perspectives

Abstract: Storytelling in Kentucky's Appalachia is now considered a best practice for public relations and journalism students. For PR students, storytelling is vital in creating public relations campaigns for non-profits like SOAR (Shaping Our Appalachian Region). In addition to aiding with fundraising efforts and creating general goodwill in the region, these stories help to alleviate the negative stereotypes that Kentucky's Appalachia has worked decades to overcome. For journalism students, who remain invested in their home communities far more than in their college towns, seeking out public documents that address key public issues gives them the tools to tell the stories of their hometowns.

Kentucky Campus Compact, January 2016

University, Department, Faculty and Community: Service Learning Harmony

Abstract: If successful, service learning can be rewarding for the student, faculty member, the department, the university and the community. For a successful service-learning experience to take place, faculty must commit to designing an "outside of the classroom" curriculum and fill the role as the "face of the project" for the client, and learning objectives must be interwoven into the work produced. Reaching out to the community with student-produced services can be risky. If not done well, service-learning projects can do more harm than good.

So much is at stake: the university, department and faculty member reputation; student learning can either be enhanced by the experience or irrelevant; faculty can feel fulfilled and leave the experience with valuable take-a-ways which can be used for promotion and tenure or feel cheated out of valuable time spent on planning and implementation without tangible rewards.

Published Novels

"Sister Blackberry" was published in 2008 with midlist publisher, Whiskey Creek Press. This work of fiction, an 86,000-word novel, sold more than 5,000 copies in its first three years of publication. This novel chronicles the life of Viola Garland and her two daughters, spanning 1930s to 1990s and reaches into discussions of domestic violence, cult-like religion and ambiguous gender and how it was viewed in mid-20th century society.

"House of Cleaving" was published in 2010 with the same midlist publisher, Whiskey Creek Press. This work of fiction, an 89,000-word novel, follows a young woman's life just after she lost everything, including a young son, in a car accident. This protagonist, who has always blamed her mother's pacifist nature for many of her own woes, is forced to travel the country in search of property deed signatures in order to keep her family home. She learns the mother that she thought she knew was someone entirely different. The characters in "House of Cleaving" and "Sister Blackberry" are loosely, but generationally connected in life changing and meaningful ways.

"Growing Up Wilder" is an 85,000-word novel set in the 1970s that dives into a changing world where women and men were learning new roles and changing the rules of what it meant to be family. Of a different type of family saga than the previous two works of fiction, this novel weaves modern day vices into a generation that wasn't quite ready for them.

ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY

- 2016 – 2019: East Kentucky Leadership Foundation Board Member
- 2013 – 2016: Kentucky Commission on Women-Speaker's Bureau
- 2010 – 2016: Governor's Kentucky Commission on Women-Equal Pay Day
- 2014 – 2015: SOAR Regional Identity & Collaboration Committee Member
- 2008 – 2016: Governor's Kentucky Commission on Women
- 2011-2013: Kentucky Harvest Southeast president
- 2008-2011: Kentucky Harvest Southeast, committee fundraising
- 2007-08: Kentucky Press Association Board of Directors
- 2007-08: Kentucky Press Association Chair of Advertising Board

COMMUNITY COURSES PRESENTATIONS

- 2016 - Maximizing Your Marketing

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2013 Seminar – Teaching with Panache – Dr. Brad Garner
- 2014 Seminar – Creating Significant Learning Experiences – Dr. L. Dee Fink
- 2014 Seminar – Preventing & Responding to Disruptive Students
- 2015 Certificate – Faculty Certification in Online Course Instructional Design (Blackboard)

COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

- 2018 – London/Laurel Chamber of Commerce – EKU Regional LINC
- 2016-2017 – Southern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce – EKU Regional LINC
- 2014 – Kentucky Commission on Women and Union College – Makers: Women Who Make America
- 2013 – Governor's Kentucky Commission on Women - "When Domestic Violence Comes to the Workplace" – area Chambers of Commerce, civic organizations
- 2013 – Knox County Democratic Women's Organization
- 2012 – pre-interview panel for Miss Kentucky and Miss Kentucky Teen
- 2011 – featured speaker for Delta Kappa Gamma, Regional Chapter
- 2011 – featured speaker at Knox Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution
- 2010 – featured speaker for Association of Women in Communication, Cleveland State University
- 2010 – Keynote at groundbreaking, Art Circle Library, Crossville, Tenn.
- 2009 – Barbourville-Knox County Chamber of Commerce Annual Women in Business
- 2007-introductory speaker Kentucky Press Association

MEDIA AWARDS

- 2007 Kentucky Press Association General Excellence Second Place
- 2006 Kentucky Press Association General Excellence Third Place
- 2003 Kentucky Press Association (8) First Place Advertising Awards

EDUCATION

Eastern Kentucky University

Doctorate Degree Educational Leadership & Policy

University of Kentucky

Graduate Coursework in Communication Theory

12 Hours Completed

(These 12 hours in addition to 6 hours in Communication from Master's program satisfies SACS requirements to teach post-secondary Communication)

Union College

Master's Degree, Secondary Education

Union College

Bachelor's Degree, Business Administration