

English 352, Special Topics in Appalachian Literature, Spring 2021

Ann Pancake

T/R 11:30-12:45

**LOVE AND GRIEF:
APPALACHIAN LITERATURE OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Being Appalachian often means grappling with painful dilemmas involving the natural world. We grow up being taught to love our homes, that we come from one of the most beautiful places in the world. At the same time, we grow up learning that if we don't want to be poor, we must sacrifice that natural world that sustains us, physically and also psychologically.

Through fiction, nonfiction, poetry, music, and film, English 352 will explore these dilemmas and grapple with other pressing questions like

- What are the psychological effects of suffering loss of place, land, home, and beauty? Are these effects related to mental health and addiction in our region? To political mindsets?
- What can we learn from the Native American perspective, past and present, on Appalachian land? From the African-American perspective?
- What are the connections between mythologies of gender and mythologies of land?
- How might we imagine a different relationship between Appalachians and their land?
- “Do I Stay or Do I Go?”

I also want you to bring your own questions for us to explore. Course assignments will include literary analyses but will also encourage projects like oral history, creative writing, music, visual art, or community service. I think we can have an amazing time in this class. I can't wait.