INTERNATIONAL
STORYTELLING CENTER

# Out-Migration: Spreading Appalachia Abroad Transcript

*(Please note: This transcript was created from live closed captions and as such may have errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics.)*

>> Good afternoon and thank you for joining us for today's public discussion and freedom stories. We are talking today about spreading Appalachia outside of the region. Out-migration, the idea of the movement of people from the south to the north into an industrialized America. Just as always, I have to remind you that freedom stories is an international story telling initiative designed to bring the often underappreciated, ignored and neglected aspects of African-American history in Appalachia into the present. And to show the interconnectedness of the past, the present and the possible American future we hope to design.

As NEH funding project, freedom stories bring together the folk art of storytelling with is humanity scholarship with the intent of guiding us through public discussion to a deeper appreciation of the role of African-Americans in creating American culture. It's based in central Appalachia but the projects multimedia tool kit and recorded presentations are resources that are available to the nation and the world. Eager to highlight the diversity of Appalachia communities and Appalachian histories and the role the region has played in the creation of U.S. history, all of which have been subject to misunderstanding and stereotypes. The International Storytelling Center is fortunate to be able through this grant for national endowment for humanities.

As always, today ice discussion is recorded along with prior freedom stories discussion which is are made available online to the public through YouTube, International Storytelling Center website, Facebook page and viewers, if you missed today's discussion, feel free to go back and view it any time type. I would encourage the viewers if you have questions for me or any panelists' text the questions to Facebook page and we will try our best to get to as many questions as soon as possible during the discussion.

I was regarding upcoming freedom stories can always be found in international story telling web page which has the most update information. So as always, we are glad to start today's discussion with the benefit of the story teller and so today we are fortunate to have a nationally recognized storytelling Omope Carter-Daboiku. It's a native of Ohio, mixed race Appalachian ancestry. She migrated and part of this out-migration from the region to Cincinnati in 1972 and Dayton in 2012. She's a cultural geographer and award-winning teller of tales and she's affiliated with the Ohio arts council since 1990 and the Cincinnati's art's association since 1997. She has performed and led storytelling circles across the United States and abroad and she is known as dressing the issue of using quilts as industry, African-Americans employed to support their families. Her company entitled home side specializes in art's based, culturally academic curriculum and seasoned -- she's a seasoned stage performer and actor with multiple production credits ands and without further we are going to hear from Omope Carter-Daboiku.

>> Thank you, sister Turley, I appreciate you very much and to my colleagues here with us in the Zoom room. I am so honored to be among you. Our ancestors told stories to invoke the past, present and the future. The context explain the web of life, retold events that calls cultural shift, profile the struggles of being human and sow dreams across time. Stories were told to explain phenomena and warn against dangerous behaviors and inspire one's consciousness. Some like Jack Tales and Bear Rabbit stories entertain in delivery. Others like Taley Poe are told in serious tones. It's important to known that unlike European fairytales and said life was filled with folklore. I found myself found my family's genealogist by the stories told by my grandparents and

their siblings. So I admire Sister Tony, she too survived as a single parent and her characters are often drift emotionally seeking stability and purpose. So today, I am telling a story from her book a Mercy, it has two characters, Linea and Florence. Lina became Christian Indians with the Europeans lost son during massacre in the village. Florence is a young child given away by enslaved mother rather than be separated from nursing son. Despite cultural differences, Lina and Florence become family. Lina is the surrogate mother and Florence is the surrogate child.

Rocked her like she was her own child and Florence said, tell me this story about the eggs and Lina smiled in the darkness and said, one time long ago somewhere this this country there was an eagle sitting high in the top of a tree, sitting on her nest of eggs that were about to be born. She had them high in the tree where neither snakes or any other predator could find and swallow them. She settled herself and fluffed her feathers to give them warmth and nurture them to their hatching. One evening as she was settling on her eggs, she heard a strange noise and looked with her eagle eyes across the valley and saw climbing a mountain a man carrying a tall stick with which he was using to climb, higher and higher, she noticed and said nothing to herself except my children need to be warm and she resettled herself on the nest.

Suddenly as she was sitting there she heard a piercing sound, unnecessary Thunder, no clouds in the sky, just a noise. A rich, deep resounding echoing sound of mine and it startled and she twist today see where the sound was coming from and with those sharp eyes she noticed that the man was standing with his hands up in the air, all of this is mine. Mine, mine, from the lake across meadow of wild flowers and with that noise one egg cracked prematurely which set the mother blazed with anger. She Rose up from her nest with feathers bristling and her sharp going down directly for the man's face when he raised up his stick and smacked her sending feathers everywhere. My child, some of us say when the north wind blows and those white feathers settle on the grass, that winter is coming soon.

But Lina, if she left the eggs, what happened to them?

And Lina, replied, they hatched alone.

Did they survive, Florence asked?

Lina smiled gently and looked at her in her eyes and said, we have, my dear. We have.

As folks used to say in olden days, you might not know who your Daddy is but you're entitled to know who your mother is. Imagine your mother having been sold when you were only 3 and only thing you have is a memory of her is knowing what her name was before she departed. And so this is a classic story that leaves the listener wondering how did that situation resolve itself. But Lina knows that both she and Florence are abandoned eggs and they have found support in unknown place that is have allowed them to survive and I appreciate Tony Morrison and her ability to hold onto the deep understanding of how folklore for the folk.

Thank you all for listening.

>> Thank you very much for that. Very powerful words for us. Is this a book? If our viewers want to read more of this, where would they go?

>> They would go to their favorite bookstore and order Tony Morrison's book A Mercy.

>> A Mercy. All right. We will make sure that's in our tool kit and we are able to share that.

We are being joined today in conversation by two other well-known scholars and community leaders, Dr. Ted Olson and Dr. Frieda Outlaw. Eggs in new places beyond the mountains into mainstream America. So Dr. Ted Olson holds Ph.D in English from the University of Mississippi and MA in English from the university of Kentucky and BA from the University of Minnesota and currently serves as professor of Appalachia studies at east Tennessee University and Fulbright senior scholar at American studies in the university of Barcelona and university of Barcelona in Spain. Dr. Olson was president of the folklore society and festivals. Attended

by estimated 1 million people in Washington, D.C. So welcome Dr. Olson, thank you for joining us in conversation.

We are also joined by Dr. Frieda Outlaw and member of the psychiatric mental health expert panel. Dr. Outlaw has over 40 years of experience as clinician, researcher, educator and policy maker and public mental health and substance abuse matters. She's currently the academic consultant for minority fellowship program at the American Nurses Association but prior to that she was an associate professor at Medical College and director of Mahray Youth Wellness Center, health center that delivered systems of care for adolescence with the special focus on the LGBTQ youth. Tennessee department of mental health and substance abuse services and also an associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania school of nursing for a number of years. Thank you, Dr. Outlaw for joining us today.

So, we've heard quite a bit that's going on today in American society and putting this PowerPoint together, I was struck by the places African-Americans settled once they left Appalachia like Detroit and like flint, Michigan which is still suffering some very serious racial divides in these communities. I thought I would just start by getting each of your perspectives on how Appalachia has spread from the region from your perspective and the impact of that spread. So I will start with -- and we can all unmute. Everybody should be on mute right now so we can hear you.

[Laughter]

So we've talked about the black culture, but let's talk about what you see in the nation that you can easily identify as something that came from our region and has spread throughout the nation that people take for granted. Test start with Ted.

>> Well, thank you so much for allowing me to participate in this very important discussion today. It's a pleasure to be with you, folks. Appalachia is everywhere across the United States. It's -- Appalachia's pulse beat is heard in the music of America. It's tasted in the food of America. It's found in the religious observation across America. Appalachia language contributions is heard in American speech. The mainstream American media is absolutely fascinated with Appalachia albeit mainstream media have often resorted to stereotype, depictions of Appalachia culture and people. It's a complex interrelationship between Appalachia and America. But certainly Appalachian culture has found its way across the United States and around the world and one other thought I have about Appalachian culture, sometimes when I teach the subject to students I stress the plurality of it that, in fact, Appalachia cultures, plural. We have to keep in mind that there's not one monolithic Appalachia, there are many Appalachias, many different cultural environments and many different traditions. So I thought I'd mentioned that as well. But Appalachia has certainly out-my grated to the rest of the United States and around the world. The perceptions of what Appalachia is complex and maybe we can talk about it in the next hour or so that we have together.

>> We definitely want to talk about that and come back to all of the things that you mentioned in terms of food, music and words. I haven't thought about words but can you give us an example of words that are Appalachian in origin but folks have adopted inside. Certainly if people listen to old-time music or country music, for example, certainly the blues as well, one would hear expressions that are traceable back to Appalachian high land region, expressions like ain't and double negatives. These are linguistic forms. A colleague of mine who passed away last year named Michael Montgomery has been one of the foremost linguists to study the influence of Appalachian speech on the country I refer people to his work, Michael Montgomery as a great scholar. If anyone wants to see this story explored in the popular media, I do recommend an episode of a PBS series that was released maybe 5 years ago, 30 years now, dedicated to exploring the various influences upon Appalachian speech and the impact of Appalachian speech on the rest of the country, so there are a lot of influences about Appalachian speech. It's found even in literary form, Appalachian writer that I think is well worth our time and attention is named James Steel from eastern Kentucky. I worked on finding home for poems and I worked with him in the last couple years of his life. He

died in 2001 but he wrote entire novels and full short stories in a literary approximation of Appalachian speech and it's pure poetry but it's also very much in the folk vernacular and he had the gift of kind of converting it like Tony Morrison into rarefied narrative but Appalachian speech was important dialect of American English. One thing that my friend and colleague Michael Montgomery always stressed that the world has looked down upon Appalachian, the Appalachian language, so to speak, dialect of American English. But that's completely unjust. Appalachian speech is not incorrect American English, it's perfectly correct and wonderfully suitable for the living conditions in these mountains and in these valleys for people who learned powerful ways to express themselves using speech that was basically inspired by their home environment and you find a lot of expressions that may derive from old-world influences to new-world influences and highly poetic.

>> Michael Montgomery, another name that we need to add to reading list if folks want to know about this topic. We will come back to Ted but let's go to Dr. Outlaw, you grew up in community of Lynch and explored the world and you're a person that migrated out. Why don't you share what you discovered about Appalachia and other parts of the country and what motivated you to leave?

>> Okay, so let me just start first thank you and I've so enjoyed working with my colleagues as we talk about the subject and also the question intrigued me so much about Appalachia culture and me and my lived experiences. And I really get to thinking about this whole notion of intersectionality because I founded within myself it was very hard for me to, just discern what was from Lynch, Kentucky in Appalachia and what was from Alabama and Mississippi where my father migrated from. Now my mother, my mother's parents and parents before them were from Summerset, Kentucky. They were original Kentuckians. My mother was born there and lived for the most part all of her life there. I was born actually in Chicago. I was a friend -- people use today talk about us together. They would say Louis and Frida like we were one person. When I was a teacher at Penn I took her one summer and she went to class with me and we were doing genealogy and I said to my students, I was born in Chicago. No, you weren't. The intersectionalities is hard for me because I have a hard time saying, where did this come from? Where did that belong to? I'm gonna, I'm gonna was one of the things that my father said all of the time and I was like does he mean he's going to, is he going to do something. And I couldn't, I don't know where that came from, Alabama, I don't know whether that came from -- I know most black people that I knew in Lynch that were of his generation, they use that word and so, you know, I don't know. So Ted was brilliant in talking about the -- the academic scholarly part of this. I think for me because I haven't studied it, obviously I'm a nurse and that's where my head has been, but I've lived it and so let me just try to capture some of what I -- and I started thinking about my grandmother and I have to say, I really was -- I'm always moved to tears when I hear Bill Withers talk about her mother's hands and how you're trying to influence your grandchildren because you know you're not going to be here to -- to buffer some of what they are going to experience. But I remember my grandmother, we milled in with my grandmother. I was an only child for a bit. We moved in with my grandmother and grandfather because in Lynch, Kentucky, back if those days if you didn't work for the mines anymore, you couldn't keep your home and my grandfather had had a home and he couldn't work anymore. And my grandmother had a big yard and -- we called it the park. That's how big it was. It was like a big park. Big trees, it had strawberry Bushes, it had acorn trees, my father had a big garden, my grandmother had a big garden. They had flowers. The whole appreciation of space, you know, I think I got there. The whole appreciation of space and flowers, although I'm a lousy gardener. I always want my garden to look good and I always don't want to do all the work that they did but my father had a beautiful garden and my uncle Jay has a beautiful garden. And the other thing is that the whole community thing was really big. My father and his friends had -- I call it the illegal farm across the street there was some land. They had pig pens there and my Uncle Charles had a barn with cows and they would go up in the mountains in the day and the -- the dog would bring them down at night and they milked them and made the butter. So the appreciation for space and I laugh when you go to whole foods and they talk about organically grown food. That was the community

that I knew. Most people had organic food because most people grew. When making leap to organic food for me, wasn't a big leap for me and I think that had to do with my father coming from where he did as well as the opportunity to have the land so it was that kind of thing. Now, the culture -- the Appalachia culture in Lynch, Kentucky was influenced by United Steel. They were unionized and, you know, we have what we call now socialized medicine or we had in that there was physicians hired by U.S. Steel. So you could go and get those services without having to pay and we had white doctors which I learned from my black friends when I went other places that that was not so common everywhere else. It was things like that. It was common things around funerals, culturally that I think partly was mountain culture and partly was the intersectionality of people migrating from the Deep South to Kentucky. So it's always the wonder in my mind and the push and pull and so I've been inspired from listening to the story today from Tony Morrison told so very well and Ted the scholarship, to try to push and pull or maybe not, maybe to just say this is what came from this. Now, when I went to college I migrated out because my mother said, you are going to college and I will always give her that credit because when -- at the time that I was doing that, early 60's, that was not the absolute culture like it is now that a lot of people didn't see going to college. At least people of African descent in my community, there were many places that people went. Some went to the city where they had relatives or connections to get a job. Some went to the armed services especially men and then there were some that went to college but mother wanted us to go to college and she really wanted me to go to college to be a nurse and she wanted me to go to college to be a nurse and not the hospital schools which was prevailing way to teach nursing at the time, black, white, green or indifferent. So I went to Berea College and that's where I got a sense of a real Appalachia culture that's stereo typical thought of in terms of associated with white people and those -- those white people, those groups of white people. And there was country dancing and, you know, we didn't -- I was like, what, you know, and that kind of folk music and so forth and so on. But threaded in Lynch, Kentucky and all my friends, if any of them are listening, will know that we couldn't get any radio stations up in there and still can't hardly. But we could get country music and my father was always a lover of country music because he said it wasn't nothing but the blues. When he got older and he came here, I had moved to Nashville, that was the first place he insisted I take him to the auditorium and that's what we did. Late at night we could get Randy's record program and we would get in -- had to get certain places in the house to get Randy's record so that was the infusion of that kind of black culture, if you will, or music into -- into our settings and so I think for me it will be always looking at how these two cultures mix and came together to produce the kind -- the kinds of memories that we serve and the kinds of things that we took out into the world as we migrated. I think, though, the biggest thing I can say is maybe a sense of community and sense of connection and infusion of a religious orientation to all of that surrounded both your social life and your spiritual life, sort of coming together and meshing because church where you got to look at your boyfriend or see your girlfriend because otherwise you weren't getting out of the house on Sunday or Sunday evening, you know, so those kind of things that we -- that -- that I hold dear as what I think migrated out of there but really the sense of community.

>> We definitely have to come back to Randy's Record mark. We will talk about this. I think every black person in Appalachia was probably doing the same thing. Wandering the house trying to get the signal.

>> To me it was like the connection to another world.

>> Yes, yes. Did you ever wonder who was Randy?

>> Yes. I did.

[Laughter]

>> I had no idea because you have no point of reference for that that Randy was white. It was muscle show, we discovered that the musicians at muscle show were white. Oh, my God, you could not believe it.

>> Right. It was amazing information and the fact that Aretha performed with them. Oh, my gosh. A whole new world, but --

>> Whole new world.

>> Yes.

>> I'm sitting with my magic pen making notes. Let me just say in my family we hold stories that we wait until you're married and in front of the new wife or the new family before we bring them out because that's how we orient people to our family and one is my brother using triple negative to make a point. The double negative is remnant I know language comes out of Southwest Nigeria and one day he was about 4 and he was really, really upset with my mother, our mother, I isn't not and she said, well, I think you made your point.

[Laughter]

>> Every negative of the verb to be that he could remember. My grand mother used outdated language. I call her arcade language. Make sure you take your boom shoot with you, the umbrella. If you ain't careful, the Patty rollers will get you and put you in the -- these were old words that I heard that still come up in my writing. You ask what have African-Americans given to Appalachia or out of Appalachia, what came and wrote down the things that are most important to me. Corn bread, kale, green and more. Anything in the list that we crossed over. I told people, I said, you know in my county, you know what the difference is between white gravy and brown gravy, a cow in the backyard. Black folk can't drink milk well, the African gene that doesn't digest cow's milk make many of us sick and if we lived in the city and worked in the factory or mill we didn't have a cow in the backyard but the white colleagues out in the county who had a cow, the milk was another major source of protein for them and so they put it in their gravy. Our gravy was brown flour. You talk about livestock. My dad's dog had hogs in the city limits when allowed but the pin us up the yard and hillside. The hillside was part of Wayne national forest. He was using federal resources to feed his hogs, to feed his children and my dad said to me, yeah, we were never hungry. My father is one of 12. His mother never worked outside the home. She worked because she had to work for them 12 children but she didn't have to work outside the home because my dad's dad came north as recruit for the Sienna railroad and lived in Russell Connecticut and helped build the brown house and moving to Ironton and was unique place. My ancestors migrated from deep Appalachia to north central Appalachia. They never really left out the region until they got to Ironton. Ironton in 1920's was an industrial hot bed and center of hanging rod district in 1840 's , it had put steel, pig iron on the monitor -- on the federal ironclad ships on the civil war. Limestone in the Washington monument and the kids in Ohio, fourth grade history had to learn about that part of Ohio. So for me I too, Dr. Outlaw, understand intersectionality and where you are settled will -- well, at least from our time period. I was born in 1952. So I'm on the edge of the social change baby but Ironton was found as abolition town. It was a documented part of the Underground Railroad legends and myths. There are stories about children in Ironton the being kidnapped and taken back across the Ohio River and enslaved in Kentucky. That's John legend's family story, the Hale family out of Ironton, Ohio and the antislavery league founded in 1799 that becomes providence missionary church association, those annual meetings were courtship opportunities.

>> Yes.

[Laughter]

>> Travel opportunities. We went to Little Town to little town to Middle Port, Palm Roy. No hotel, you stayed in people's houses. I learned how to dress like a real woman and the sisters would come 3 a day clothes, you know what Dr. 3 a day clothes.

>> I'm not sure.

>> You can wear 3 outfits a day. You go in the morning with warm stuff and then you have your afternoon gear which might include a small hat but that whole African-American church wearing hat thing that people talk about, that's got to be an urban thing because where I come from, somebody would have tapped you on the shoulder and said, sister, would you remove your shapo, I can't see the preacher. So between the Randy's record shop we heard when we were traveling south, we couldn't get it in Ironton, we had to go on the way to Chattanooga or Lynchburg to get that. We could get the crop report. The weather. But we couldn't get anything and we could get church on the radio. Church all day Sunday. Somebody was going the ask you lay your hand on the receiver so you could get a blessing and then $10 in an envelope so we can continue this ministry. But if it were not for the upbringing I had on the landscape of Appalachia and that's the specific place that I say because you're right. Multiple cultures and sub cultures on the Appalachian landscape. It's not ethnicity. It created kind of sort of made one when the national park system decided to bring in some money into the great smoky mountains and they created this image of the southern mountaineer that was always white, but as I tell people, some of them scotch Irish and Welch people live inside of me. I know their names. I knew their addresses you know what I'm saying. I'm real clear that Appalachia had influenced. I often call Appalachia America's first frontier, you can understand that that borderline was always a populated by -- what we would call down home, mixed blood people. A little bit of this and a little bit of that and whole lot of something else. He really gives a big insight into the impact of Appalachian culture on the rest of the world. Can you say NASCAR out of our folks in Pennsylvania and West Virginia trying to get moonshine from one place to the other as fast as they could before sheriff caught up with them? Can you talk about the fast break in basketball that didn't exist until African-Americans started playing and I can remember the University of Kentucky coach Bryant, he wasn't going to have negroes on his team and he got trashed by a group of kids and he said, find me some of them. I need some of them and that's how the University of Kentucky got integrated. We are real clear those of us who live on the landscape and then went out for economic enrichment, we are real clear of what it was that we got from home that allowed us to survive on the urban landscape and allowed us to thrive on the urban landscape and I give thanks and praise for living long enough to able to be an elder so that I can give that back to the people who grew up on concrete, because we are in a situation now that we really going to have to do the -- reach back and get that pearl of wisdom so we can survive in these tumultuous times.

>> The idea of being close to nature and knowing how to coexist with nature. All of these things. You had another comment?

>> Orderly gardens, while she was saying that my hand was so busy because I could hear the voice saying, if we couldn't create order anywhere else, we could create it in our backyard. We had control of that. It was our glory. It didn't cost much except to seed that you saved from the previous year and it was a source of pride. I wrote a poem of jars of sunshine in a dark, dark cellars, jam Christmas day.

>> I don't believe anybody -- my friends will tell me if they are listening to this if I got it right but it was turned-up greens and my aunts used to come back to Kentucky from Milwaukee, Wisconsin to pick poke salad.

>> Yes.

>> Which grows in every alley.

>> I have it in my front yard now.

>> Went together.

>> They put it with other greens. But you had to know what it was otherwise you might pick something. Short little story and give honor to my uncle SJ who was from Lynch. He had a drinking problem which a lot men did and -- I won't go into my training about why. He worked every day, every day. And he would drink a

lot on the weekends but he had -- he would win a prize. He always had a spectacularly beautiful garden. It was the prize of the neighborhood.

>> They were always in my community, they were always shared gardens.

>> Oh, yes.

>> So you were making food and so there was never an instance where you had a neighbor who would be hungry because we in addition to have the garden you had Apple trees, peach trees, walnut trees.

>> Yeah.

>> All of those things that people were welcome to if they needed them. So there was always that idea of sharing.

>> Right.

>> So I know that I want to get back to Ted in this double negative because I didn't even realize that that was an Appalachian thing. You know, and I know that I'm guilty of using double negatives. People remind me of that now and I have to consciously try not to do it. So can you give our audience an example of an Appalachian double negative? Does one come to mind?

>> You know, I'm sure that one of our other guests can come up with something that was used possibly in their family experiences. You know, there is a lengthy list of Appalachian expressions produced by my friend Dr. Michael Montgomery in the encyclopedia of Appalachia's language section.

>> One -- let me see if I can help. One that comes to mind is I don't care to do that.

>> I don't care --

>> I think one time I said that and people said, well, if you don't want to do it just say you don't want to do it. And I was like I just said I want to do it. That's a double negative that you hear people use so common that --

>> Here is one. I ain't going to study war anymore.

>> I ain't going to war no more.

>> Now we know, it's an Appalachian --

>> I'm trying to show this encyclopedia of Appalachia book that I can't -- I'm trying to hold it.

>> The background is blurring it out.

>> Because she has the background.

>> Right.

>> Yeah, that's -- so, Ted, tell us about how music -- I know that's something that most of the audience can relate to and I know your skill in the area. Talk about how the Appalachian music has influenced us. We heard a little bit in the PowerPoint but can you expand on that a little more?

>> Sure. The thought of how Appalachia had transformed American business can certainly visit the story of the recording industry. You know, you could talk about the bristle sessions of 1927 as having contributed to the creation of modern-country music. And so music certainly has been a major cultural force in making, you know, a lot of people famous and wealthy but far more important is that the music is the life blood, you know, the cultural life blood of a lot of people, it helps people know who they are and through the music but also through the lyrics have an understanding of their identities and what they value. And so music in Appalachia has certainly been a major cultural force. In some ways you might say it's been one of Appalachia's cultural exports because of the recorded sound industry converting Appalachian sounds to

commercial success. We visited Nina Simone and Bill Withers in the first part of this program and both of those masterful artists sang from their own experiences. Grandma's hands was a true life story and converted by a record company into part of, you know, a money-making enterprise that the great Bill Withers participated in and creating songs and musical expressions that -- that conveyed, you know, his complex experience as being an Appalachian who also was a man of the world. Nina Simone, very similar. The folks had strong visions of who they were and music expressed cultural experience and was not at the end of the day of making money, they were about something else. And so one thing I would like to say is that I have done is aye explored recorded sound history in Appalachia started in the 20 's when a lot of -- frankly when the first Appalachian artist were recorded in the 1920's and tracing that story to the present day through the medium of recorded sound. Well, what recorded sound does is it takes a cultural tradition that's very fluid and owned by everybody. I mean, everybody owns a song, everybody owns a gospel song or a blues or, you know, any form of musical expression, a tune, for example. Recorded sound industry tried to convert that material and profit upon it and in the process they changed the nature of the music, they packaged it for a mainstream population and they made some artists stars and others they completely ignored because their music was, shall we say idiosyncratic and not packable. German record company called Bear records. It show German record company to show interest in home-grown music which is an irony. It was a set of recordings that were made in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee in 1929 and 1930. And there were over 100 recordings made over two session that is were made there for the Brunswick labels. These are record companies of that time period. And among those recordings, approximately 16% of those recordings were of African-American musicians. This is very important because just a few years earlier other record companies came to bristle to make the bristle sessions or Johnson city to make the Johnson city sessions and only a handful of African-American musicians showed up for those recording sessions. So Knoxville really transformed the -- kind of the image of Appalachian music to the outside world by this record man whose name is Richard Voy who was from Chicago and was a white jazz player with an important band. He played with a musician named Vic, early 20's, white jazz musicians who were deeply moved by African-American jazz, and so Richard comes to Knoxville in 1929 to represent his record company and the Brunswick record company which also released some recordings under the Vocalian label and he seeks out African-American musicians in Knoxville and as my friend points out, Knoxville has always had a very shall we say large and vital African-American cultural scene and not only do we have amazing records by Knoxville session by artists like Liola Manning, amazing singer in the mold of Betsy Smith, the same generation, urban blues, albeit Liola Manning was a gospel singer. Recordings made by the trio that was featured in the side show of Howard Armstrong and Carl Martin and Roland Armstrong and they were a perfect illustration of the integrated musical environment in Appalachia in the 1920's because Howard Armstrong, Carl Martin, Rowland Armstrong were -- they were blacks performing the music of the African-American experience but also performing music that they learned from other places such as what were then called hill-Billy bands, that's not meant as prerogative, but the way they used to describe, country music of the 20's and the trio of the Armstrong brothers and Carl Martin performed their own kind of fusion of the traditions and made some records that are absolutely powerful in their creativity and they were part of this Knoxville session's project that I did for the Bear family records that was released about 8 years ago now and I worked on that project with the British scholar named Tony Russell and I just wanted really to point out the international side of things. International people are fascinated by this other representation of Appalachia that in some ways had been overlooked in the United States and so that creates a more complex kind of scholarly environment where a lot of people around the world care about the stories, care about the music, wanted to be heard and -- and make these projects possible.

>> And so, Ted, if people wanted to access your music and what you've done in interpreting the music for modern audiences, where do they go, how do they -- how do they listen to what you've been describing?

>> Sure. The Bear family records label is quite well known in the record industry for issuing huge box sets. If you've never seen one, picture a New York City phone directory, in the old days, that thick, very, very large multi-disk sets with thick hard covered books with information and photos and glossaries and allow people to reenter the time period whenever the box that pertains to, that's the time period recreated in the box sets. The box sets, just warning folks, can be on the pricey side. They're not commercial enterprises, they are lost leader arraignments and subsidized by male-order business in Germany to underwrite these box sets and I've worked on a bunch of those box sets for Bear family records. I did one for the bristle sessions, one for the Johnson City sessions, one for the Knoxville sessions and one for Tennessee Ford's music of the 1950's who was another artist that integrated Appalachian experiences in the music. People knows 6 tons.

>> Oh, my gosh.

>> Incorporates African-American experience in blue sensibility. Meryl Travis and Ford made it famous, but Meryl Travis learned how to play guitar from an African-American bluesman. But also humanize that mystery and make it access and enjoyable and so those recordings from the 20's sound like they were made yesterday and that's not exaggeration, no expense is spared to create the -- recreate the sounds to create new remasters that takeaway the sound of frying sausage in the background of those old 78RPM records and once that is removed, you can actually reenter that moment when that music was made and so those -- those box sets are not on Spotify. They're not on YouTube. They're purposefully kept in a pure arrangement where the record itself is the experience.

>> Wow. So -- so much to explore especially if you're in the area of music and I'm learning -- I'm learning. I certainly new Tennessee Ernie Ford and we have some questions coming in and someone offered a double negative that is -- that they're familiar with. Ain't got no.

[Laughter]

>> Thank you.

>> And I do -- I know I have used that quite a bit as a kid. I ain't got no. So a question about the dance culture that found its way out of Appalachia into America?

>> So you want to go first?

>> I was going to say in my elementary school we had to learn how to square dance and how to call and how to respond, so when I went the away to college I could do the Virginia Barea.

>> That was on the curriculum. We all had to learn how to square dance. That was part of what you learned at Bari and I think I had seen square dancing before that. So that's why I think for me, this is the question that's plaguing me. In Appalachia culture who we talk about Appalachia culture, I cannot talk about it as a black woman of African descent that grew up in a segregated community. Segregated by not. The coal miners worked together and although there were hierarchy in terms of discrimination in -- you know, in the mines when things started to be not so -- so manual labor and became mechanized with machinery and all of that. But given that, we lived surrounded by white people, we knew them and we were in the store with them because there was a company store and I always say that's why I learned to really good clothes because the company sold only the best things because the idea, I think, underneath it was to get people to purchase things that were very expensive so they were always in debt but that's a whole other things. So for me that intersectionality, I cannot talk about one without the other. Now, the dance things that we learned, you know, in that culture. I don't -- we saw that on TV when we started getting television in the day. We saw country music places where there were people doing square dancing. But for us black kids at the time, we went to this -- we out-migrated to the cities a lot of times in the summer and came back with what was the dance popular in Detroit.

>> Right.

>> Chicago and like that and we talked about like the Madison and all of those things. So everybody was waiting for people to come back to tell them what was going on in the city. It was like translators almost.

>> Right, right.

>> What is going on in the city, what records? People who got to go to Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Chicago, they came back with all of that. I think that's how we country kids, a lot of times when we would go to the city they would call us country black. They didn't call us hillbillies.

>> No.

>> That was already -- that was taken and stigmatized and even today I start a lot of times when I'm giving a talk, I will say -- talking about diversity and all of that, I will say if you look at me and I will say you will have certain assumptions about me but nobody in this audience would assume that my father was a coal miner, I'm from Eastern Kentucky and I'm pretty much usually right. But I think that we kids in Lynch, Kentucky and Lynch, Binham, Harlan, all of us I see as one big stone gap although people -- people were from Lynch, Binham and Harlan were trying to incorporate urban spirit into our country ways, into the things that we had no transparency to.

>> Well, don't you think part of that is because -- I know growing up, the idea of being black in Appalachia, that just wasn't the case. I mean, we really did not have the -- in my neighborhood, you didn't have the right to call yourself an -- if someone had called me an Appalachian I would say, what. That wasn't how we referred to ourselves.

>> But we referred to ourselves in Southern Ohio as hillbillies. I tell people I knew I was a hillbilly before I understood what it meant to be black.

>> I heard you say that and I thought that was very interesting to take -- to talk even about how it is that you grow up in similar circumstances. But, but it's translated different. Like in Lynch if we went to the city, the kids would call at least they used to call me when I went to Milwaukee country. Country girl. And but we didn't -- Appalachian, hill-Billy, all of those other names. I don't even recall ever hearing them, but somebody may have heard them. I may have just forgotten because it's been a lot of years but none of that, none of that.

>> It was the language that cemented my identity because all of our television stations came out of Charleston and hunting, West Virginia and we were closer than Columbus or Cincinnati. I would have to -- tell the audience, I am not making fun of anybody except myself because I used mountain dialect to tell Jack tales and my cousin said to me, he's deceased now. I close my eyes and I don't know what color you are because the language for me. I go to places and I speak to king's English and queen's English but when I really want to make a point, I will as my momma said, I will crack my English in a heartbeat and speak dialect.

>> So I think some of that had to do too, because I think I remember you saying, yours was a more integrated.

>> Completely integrated. Everything integrated. Even marriage.

>> Everybody in that school was colored. Ms. Mabel Harris, God, she could play classical music. I know because she was one of my piano teachers, but she taught us in the second grade, lift every voice and sing, every word and she would work every -- in every verse and she would walk past you and if you were mispronouncing or something, she would pinch you. Now, baby, she'd say, so there was -- this real thing about speaking properly and annunciating to the point that some of them you sounded really weird.

>> Yeah.

>> Because you pronounced every syllable in a slow motion way, but the other thing was the emphasis was on the importance of your blackness and the excellence of being black and excellent and so, therefore, my

identity. I've been thinking about this a lot that my identity formation of black women of African descent had a lot to do that with grounding.

>> Yeah.

>> Of those teachers who taught us that about -- about yourself and then --

>> And I didn't learn, quote, the Negro National Anthem until I was in college. I had left home. Only black history was I knew my family's genealogy. I knew a little bit of something, one of my great uncles had been a red cap, that's how he got in the family so I knew about the railroad history and I read books and I knew biographies of famous people but the only stories being told in my house were bible stories and then the color in my family ranges from Captain Ted here to deep, deep, deep dark chocolate, my daddy. So I never had a family -- my family wasn't color struck. If there was anything that we had issues about them is them with the light skin wound up with the unmanageable hair and them with the dark skin wound up with the smooth hair. That was the contention in the cousins that I grew up with. I had one black teacher in my whole entire 12 years of school and that was in the eighth grade after enough people had gone to college and he was from Ashland, Kentucky, he was a family friend. We knew him. I mean, when you're in a town of 20,000 people and 12% of are of African descent. Sometimes you have to leave town to find somebody to marry because you're blood-related and it was survival.

>> We have questions from our audience. Wasn't of them is for Ted, they want to -- Ted, how are you spelling Bear. Can you spell that for our audience?

>> Sure. I think it's in reference to the record company that I mentioned? It's like the animal, BEAR. Bear Family Records.

>> Bear Family Records. If someone is searching for that, that's what they would type in.

>> I guess I should mention too, is that although we produced the four big box sets that are huge and expensive but well worth it, of course, if you one wants to delve into the stories, but in the last 2 years the company in Germany has asked me to consolidate the stories and kind of compile shorten versions of the cultural stories from Appalachia. So, for example, this -- last year in 2020, I put out a single CD of the bristle sessions which includes the highlights from the box sets. So one can consolidate down to a smaller core group of recordings and get the bristle sessions CD. I also did that for the Johnson City sessions, box set and the process right now of consolidating the massive story of devoted to the Knoxville sessions and that whole box set down to a single CD. That won't be out for, you know, a number of months now but the goal behind that Family Records would want to keep the pricey box set and undercut and they don't think that way. Working with me as a scholar of Appalachian music, they want the stories to reach more people in the more democratic format of the smaller less costly CD release, so I just thought that's appropriate to mention that people can get the jest of those large complex stories in -- in smaller units at much more affordable prices. So it's really the degree to which people want to delve into the stories but there are options there.

>> That's good for people to know. I have a feeling that there will be folks that want to explore that. And for each of the panelists, I personally would like to know what Appalachian social movements and antiracism movements have spread outside of our region to others?

>> The first one that comes to me in my mind is the labor movement but I would be interested what other social movements can you think of that was exported from Appalachia?

>> Most people are not aware of how many cities in Appalachia Martin Luther King marched through and how many people within the Appalachian region joined together to fight issues of segregation. We hear his stories. We know that there were groups of people but Birmingham is at the southern end of the Appalachian rake and considered by the commission to be part of the region.

>> Pittsburgh and Birmingham.

>> That's right.

>> All of those regions, Ohio too -- Berea, that was one of the places they recruited heavily in some of those counties in Ohio that was considered the Appalachian --

>> And Miami University was a training ground for freedom writers even though it's not in Appalachia, people from throughout the region came to Miami University at oxford, Ohio to train people who were going South to the voter registration drivers which is so dramatically different from the personality of that campus today.

>> Well, and also I guess we have to mention the highland center. Rosa Parks and many other civil rights activists were trained at the highland center and even though it's a little outside of the region I have to the country of pin center.

>> Yeah.

>> In South Carolina where many African-American, Martin Luther King, Jr., certainly trained a lot of his people there. So -- so much of what gets transported outside the country, what about organizing, labor organizing?

>> Could I talk about one that is not often thought of as a civil rights but see the ones that work in health care, we think about health disparities and health inequities or as civil rights issues and one of the movements that for my way of thinking that people don't often associate the two. They do think of the difficult ones like labor movements and the whole notion of expanding the health care profession of the nurse practitioners and all of the people who have expanded access to health care, high-quality healthcare and diversity and lots of those movements started out in Appalachia and a lot of time because of need. For instance, up in Kentucky in county you have frontier nursing services.

>> Yeah.

>> Which was -- came from Mary who came from England to start that -- to meet the need of infant mortality. Disparity in infant mortality there. That's where I did my public health training out of Berea College used to send us and we used to moan and complain, our senior year out to that county. We had to live there. That's why we moaned because there were -- they were really progressive in their thinking. They said you have to be of the community if you were going to work with people in -- you couldn't just run in there and do it and run out. So we had to -- can you imagine when you're getting ready to graduate, your first semester, last semester, senior year having to move away from campus and live, immerse in the community. So for me those are some of the atypical ways that civil rights and -- and all of the human needs that people have that we don't -- and the organizing to expand the system that's broken that doesn't serve everybody that -- that we have expanded and it came out of a lot of it came out of the thinking, the innovation came out of Appalachia.

>> Yeah. We still -- I think in Appalachia, Dr. Outlaw don't they still stress midwives?

>> Midwives have become a thing in the country now. Most highly-researched school, nursing schools like the University of Pennsylvania and many schools have programs now and frontier nursing service now has a complete program of nursing education where they treat, where they are training nurse practitioners across all of the specialties to feel -- to provide that kind of holistic family centered care in -- in the regions where they come from because research says oftentimes people go back to where they come from to -- to serve and, so, yes.

>> My great grandmother --

>> I know we could keep talking but can you believe our time is up.

>> It is.

>> Oh, my goodness.

[Laughter]

>> Time has gone quickly and I want to thank, take an opportunity to thank all of our guests today who provided such wonderful information and to encourage our viewing audience to make sure they visit the tool kit on the International Storytelling Center website. If you want to know more about the panelists, I would encourage you to visit the tool kit online to kind of keep these resources going. We are going to add their contact links that they've shared with us for you. So I just want to say that this has been a great discussion and please join us may eighth for our 11th public discussion on civil rights, on the civil rights movements as it developed in Appalachia, speaking of the Highland Center and some of the other things that Martin Luther King training in the Appalachian region. So from the freedom stories project and from the International Storytelling Center, thank you so much for joining us and we will be back with you next month. May eighth. See you then. Thank you.