THE CULTURAL DISCONTINUITY HYPOTHESIS:

AN APPALACHIAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

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Abstract

K.M. Tyler et al. (2008) propose a quantitative method to measure differences between school and home experiences had by students of ethnic minority status and how such differences (cultural discontinuity) may affect psychological factors related to student achievement. Although study of cultural discontinuity has been applied to understanding African American, Asian American, Latino American, and Native American student populations, little attention has been given to the ways in which cultural discontinuity may manifest in the Appalachian American population. This study conceptualizes the socio-cultural conditions that would warrant such an investigation, establishing evidence from ten interview subjects of the presence of cultural values associated with Appalachian Americans from Eastern Kentucky. The interviewee evidence provides a necessary starting point for investigating regional culture and marginalization effects that may occur based on membership within the Appalachian American community in Eastern Kentucky.

KEYWORDS: Appalachian American, Socio-cultural Conditions,
                    Education, Regional Culture, Marginalization

The Cultural Discontinuity Hypothesis: An Appalachian American Perspective in Eastern Kentucky

The Cultural Discontinuity hypothesis suggests that a contributing factor to the psychological antecedents to learning and subsequent academic differences between racial and ethnic minority students and their mainstream counterparts might be related to the lack of alignment between home and school socializing practices had by those marginalized student populations (Deyhle, 1995; Gay, 2000; Ndura, 2004; Nieto, 1999; Parsons, 2001, 2003; Parsons, Travis, & Simpson, 2005; Solano-Flores & Nelson-Barber, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003; Webb-Johnson, 2002) (see Appendix A for a model of cultural discontinuity).

Although study of cultural discontinuity has been applied to understanding learning disparities of ethnic and racial minority students in America (African American, Asian American, Latino American, and Native American students), the literature is silent as to the ways in which cultural discontinuity may manifest for other student populations that can be viewed as marginalized and for whom educational attainment has been less than for the mainstream population, such as the Appalachian American student population (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2009; Brown-Ferrigno, & Knoeppel, 2004; Bush, 2003; Tang & Russ, 2007).

This study seeks to conceptualize the socio-cultural conditions that would warrant such an investigation, suggesting not only that Appalachian American students should be seen as a distinct cultural group, but also acknowledging the importance of examining the role of culture in the educational attainment of this particular student population. As this specific line of inquiry has yet to be applied to the Appalachian American student group, there is a need for unbiased scholarly inquiry to verify that Appalachian Americans are a specific cultural group and to

understand the role of Appalachian culture in education from the perspective of those studied (Glesne, 2006).

Specifically, because literature conflicts as to whether clashes between mainstream and Appalachian Americans' cultural values should be included in the discussion of disparities that exist in Appalachia (see Eller, 2008 and Jones, 1991, for examples), it is prudent that researchers begin with asking the source of study (Appalachian Americans) about their perspectives—not only concerning cultural identity, but more specifically the degree to which educational experiences were similar or different from the values and practices present within their home environment. Finally, it would seem necessary to ask about the ways in which educational experiences proved helpful in the overall development of the individuals interviewed, particularly when these potential cultural discontinuous experiences may have generated conflicts as individuals worked towards success in mainstream school environments. For example, learners with alignment between home and school (no cultural discontinuity) may report that the emphasis placed on the individual working toward her/his own best outcomes in a class resonates well with the learner and in turn, the learner may achieve high levels of academic and perhaps subsequent professional success. However, students that experience culturally discontinuous events may, in the same example, not perform well, as their home values endorse a horizontal and communal orientation, resulting in confusion about the best way to get ahead. In this example, one may stay home to take care of the family rather than try to "climb the rope" toward academic and professional success.

Purpose of the Study

Although an ever growing body of literature is emerging on this issue of cultural discontinuity, along with a conceptual paper discussing a quantitative investigation (Tyler et al.,

2008), one criticism of the hypothesis and associated literature thus far is that researchers have only focused on traditional ethnic minority student populations, thereby ignoring other groups that have recognized cultural customary practices and expressed values. It is with this criticism that I propose a study seeking to examine another historically marginalized group of Americans who (a) have been shown to have a distinct cultural background that does not necessarily align with mainstream cultural values and (b) have experienced a tradition of underachievement as compared to the White, middle-class, suburban dominant group—Appalachian Americans (Brown-Ferrigno & Knoeppel, 2004; Bush, 2003). As the scholarly pursuit of cultural discontinuity between the home and school experience of Appalachian American students has not yet been investigated, the purpose for this initial investigation is to glean Appalachian perspectives concerning cultural values, education, and any relationships that Appalachian Americans believe exist between these two factors. Specifically, this study seeks to provide answers to the following question: "Do the residents of Appalachia report feelings of cultural discontinuity between those values and practices endorsed at home and those values and practices endorsed at school, and if so, do the students who reside in Appalachia ever express the idea that perceptions of cultural discontinuity, or at least the manner in which schooling takes place, make learning and/or performance difficult for them?"

Method

Participants

The study consisted of 10 adult participants from locations within the Appalachian region of the United States. The Eastern Kentucky section of Appalachia has been selected as the target region within the entirety of Appalachia, as it is the part of the region where the greatest evidence of marginalization effects exists (extremely high poverty, low educational

attainment, and low wages) (ARC, 2009). The research seeks to identify Appalachian

perspectives on Appalachian cultural values, educational outcomes/experiences, and the

relationships between the two; therefore, the sample to be interviewed should include individuals

from Appalachia who come from various levels of educational attainment. As hypothesized that

the participants interviewed will affirm the Appalachian cultural values described in the literature

as well as account for ways in which the cultural discontinuity phenomenon manifested in their

educational experiences, the researcher chose participants from a variety of educational

backgrounds. Two participants had not completed a high school level education; two had

completed high school only; two had attended but did not graduate from a college or university;

two had completed a four-year (Bachelor's) degree from a college or university; and finally, two

had earned advanced degrees beyond the undergraduate level.

One male and one female participant from each of these educational categories were recruited

because gender differences seemed to be an appropriate division for consideration in this

psychological and educational study. After establishing an initial contact by way of a personal

reference known to the researcher, other word of mouth and snowball sampling techniques

(described below) were employed. That said, the following table illustrates the interviewees for

this study: Note the demographic data included in this initial chart (see below).

Table 1

Interviewees from Appalachia (Eastern Kentucky)

Educational Attainment	Male	Female	Ages (M, F in years)
Less than High School	1	1	63, 62
High School Graduate	1	1	40, 24
Some College	1	1	24, 33
Four-Year Degree	1	1	22, 34
Advanced Degree	1	1	81, 31

Materials and Procedure

The materials for this study included a numbered tape recorder (for recording interviewee responses), a laptop computer (to house consent forms and take notes during the interview), the interview protocol (Appendix F), informed consent, and contact cards for participants to keep should they have questions following the study. The additional follow-up questioning was somewhat unstructured, but allowed within the scopes of this particular method of interviewing as it allows the researcher to gather information important to the study, but not necessary directly related to the framework used for the study" (Glesne, 2006). At the end of this report, along with the informed consent forms, the researcher included the list of interview questions. (see Appendices F and G). Additional follow-up questions were related to the key ideas addressed within these included questions.

Procedures

Using snowball sampling techniques, whereby more and more participants are provided through connections in context (Nardi, 2006), particular participants (those that fit the above table) were interviewed for 60-120 minutes in a mutually agreed upon location and space. The

protocol for the interview was identical for each interview and followed the following format:

greetings, explanation of the study, and informed consent. After informed consent was collected,

the tape recorder was started and a new document was opened on a laptop for entering notes

collected during the interview. At this time, the researcher asked the interview questions,

following-up as needed in order to fully understand the respondent and to be sure the respondent

had ample opportunity to answer the question completely. In this sense, the interviewing of each

participant was a recursive process in that necessary questions for follow-up should emerge from

the analysis of the responses given to the interview protocol by the respondents (Nastasi, Moore,

& Varjas, 2004).

Analysis

Data were analyzed by way of "thematic analysis" (Glesne, 2006). In thematic analysis,

data are coded according to themes relevant to the research questions and then analyzed to

determine what significance emerges from the information that has been provided by the

respondents in the interviews (Glesne, 2006). As suggested by Glesne (2006), one method of

early qualitative data analysis that was utilized in this study involved analyzing data as they were

collected and storing it according to relevant themes as the researcher proceeded with the study.

Prior to the interviewing process, a coding scheme was established whereby particular letters

represented each of the cultural values found in the literature for Appalachian Americans, along

with a code for cultural alignment between home and school and a code for discontinuity

between home and school. There was also a code for an "other" category, in the event that a

respondent provided information that was relevant to the research question of the study but not

directly linked to the cultural values or cultural discontinuity phenomenon as proposed in the

study. As the respondents made statements that appeared to be particularly relevant to one of the

themes identified, the researcher noted the numerical code on the tape recorder as well as bolded the statement with the appropriate code on the type-written notes being collected during the interview. This served to assist in the analysis as it provided a mechanism for finding and gleaning the most pertinent information from the interviews (Glesne, 2006).

The researcher examined the coding scheme as the study went on, ensuring that it was appropriate for the data collected. In order to do this, the researcher reread each interview, checking the codes and as relevant to make sense of the data provided (Glesne, 2006; Maxwell, 2005). This occurred in two-phases: after the first interviews (such that information could be shared with those studied) and after the second interview (again, to ensure the validity from the members of the population) (Glesne, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

After rereading the interviews and determining that no changes were necessary to be made with the coding structure, the data were organized and coded by themes, into sections that allowed for coherent and logical understanding of the relationship between the data, the research question, and the hypotheses (Glesne, 2006). This final arrangement allowed the researcher to glean findings from the information gathered for purposes of interpretation and reporting (Glesne, 2006). The final coding structure from which the thematic analysis was made came in the form of examining the interviewee responses for evidence (or contradictory evidence) of each of the cultural values previously discussed. For the sake of clarity, this too is how the results are being reported.

Results

Evidence of egalitarianism. The first of the cultural themes discussed in the literature about Appalachian American cultural values was egalitarianism, or the belief in the importance of being humble and modest (Beaver, 1986; Hicks, 1976; Jones, 1991, 1994; Keefe, 1998 as

cited in Keefe, 2005; Tang & Russ, 2007). This particular value was represented to various

degrees within most of the interviewees' responses. One example that captured this theme well

was in the interview of "David," a twenty-two-year-old male Appalachian American with a

Bachelor's degree. When asking him about values taught within home areas in Appalachia as

opposed to educational values, David responded as follows:

David: You know, maybe there's almost a kind of fatalism to it, a fatalistic element there.
                 What's the saying? Getting above your raisin'.

Researcher: Yeah?

David: Yeah. A lot of times, you know, I would hear people who had gone off to college
                 and had come back and, you know, they had family members who would say,
                 "They went off to college. They're trying to get above their raising" or whatever.

Researcher: Oh. What do you think that means to them when they say that?

David: I guess maybe it's trying to get out of what, like if the family's always been in
                 poverty and then all of a sudden you've got this person who they're not satisfied
                 with the way things have always worked. They're trying to do something else,
                 and it butts heads with the family.

Researcher: So, not being content with the way things have always worked.

David: Yeah, kind of an appeal to traditionalism there. You know what I mean?

Researcher: Yeah. OK, that makes sense, too.

        As can be seen here, in discussing his own experiences as an Appalachian American with

a college-level education, David provided evidence vital to this research. Not only did David

discuss the endorsement of egalitarianism (it is not appreciated to be heard as an "educated"

person above others in the family), but also, evidence of the clash between home and mainstream

values held in educational institutions can be inferred as one outcome of a college education is

the ability to speak with professional language that has been internalized for use by the student.

In other words, if David's family's values were aligned with mainstream values in academe, then

one would expect David to discuss how proud his family would be in hearing evidence of

David's intellectual growth. However, David provided the opposite as a claim, discussing how

some evidence of a successful college matriculation can be viewed by his family as an attempt to

be less egalitarian. This cultural clash might prove problematic for students from Appalachia (or

at least, Eastern Kentucky) as they navigate the social space between their professional and

personal lifestyles.

   Evidence of independence and individualism. The second cultural theme that emerged

from the literature was really a collapse of two reported values: independence and individualism.

Taken together, the statements gathered from the literature spoke to the desire not to rely upon

others; to take care of oneself (Beaver, 1986; Hicks, 1976; Jones, 1991, 1994; Keefe, 1998 as

cited in Keefe, 2005; Tang & Russ, 2007). Again, the interviews were full of documented

evidence supporting the endorsement of these values within Appalachia. Although several

examples were found throughout the interviews (in fact, eight of the ten provided obvious

examples), one of the best examples was in the interview of "Kevin," a sixty-three-year-old

Appalachian American male from Eastern Kentucky with an eighth-grade education. In

discussing his life choices concerning going to work or continuing down the path of a traditional

high school education, Kevin strongly endorsed these values by repeating how important it was

to continue his work instead of pursuing an education:

Kevin: No, I could've went on with school education. It was me: I didn't want to 'cause I just, like what I did, I went to work early and got to makin' money, so the money was more important to me than the education.

   Further evidence emerged from the interviews when subjects discussed trying to use their

education for the purposes of employment. For example, when responding to the conflict of

attaining education or seeking employment, "Will," an eighty-one-year-old Appalachian

American male with a graduate education stated the following:

Will: I would hope that most of them realized how important education is…but they do not; most of them just want money.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Will: You know?

Researcher: Me, too. I hope that, too [that people realize how important education is]. *(Laughs.)*

Will: Of course, when I was on the GI Bill after I came back, I only got a hundred and thirty-five a month. My wife worked, and you know, you've got to pay rent, you've got to eat, I had a car payment at that time. So, it was not a life of luxury going to college. Many decided to work, especially here.

Although Will went on to finish a graduate education and retire as a school guidance counselor and pastor, his statements illustrated the conflict faced by Appalachian Americans living in the Eastern Kentucky region. Although some may even endorse or value the mainstream cultural imperative in education (that of attainment of earned degrees), their lived experiences made educational advancement secondary to earning money and thereby, becoming better able to care for oneself with perhaps a secondary interest in further advancing one's career in the few jobs that require higher education. The incomes earned were gift enough, and in the eyes of many of the interviewees, educational goals were secondary and mostly considered for the purposes of job advancement.

   Evidence of avoidance of conflict.   Another value expressed during the interviews was that of avoidance of conflict. Statements that were coded within this value represented a behavior of avoiding or desire to avoid confrontation, even if that avoidance meant opportunities were lost or outcomes were postponed. As asserted by Jones (1991) and others, this value leads to behavioral practices which deny Appalachian Americans opportunities if attaining said opportunities involve argument or conflict with others or other agencies. The presence of this theme can be found throughout the process of conducting the interviews, as many of the interviewees went right along with what the researcher said. It seemed at times that even if the researcher contradicted the statement of the interviewee, rather than correct the researcher, the interviewee agreed. For example, when speaking to "Kathy," an Appalachian American woman in her 60s with an eighth-grade education about money and work in her childhood, the researcher

misunderstood her. Rather than correct the researcher, she agreed and went on with the

conversation. Here is part of that exchange:

Researcher: Now, was that true for your family, or was it true, do you think, for most families
where you lived that whatever anyone brought in went toward what the family...

Kathy: You know, I think back when I was young, that is mostly for the family. All
families that way.

Researcher: Right.

Kathy: I don't know that, but that's my feelin'.

Researcher: I know. I'm only asking about what you think or feel or remember, that kind of
thing. So you kept some money for yourself, right? Just tell me your opinion.

Kathy: Mm hmm.

Researcher: That's all I'm asking about. So, the focus, like, nowadays, a lot of kids go, "I did
this job so I can make this money and I can buy that. I...I...I...I..." But, you're
saying that what you remember...

Kathy: Well, I know what I made, it mostly went to the family.

Researcher: Yeah, OK. OK. I thought you received some also. I must have heard you wrong.
Um, so that's an important lesson, that, that when you're in a situation... Would
you consider yourselves wealthy or in poverty or in the middle back then?

Kathy: I'd say middle at le...or lower at least.

Researcher: Low, OK. So, um, that's probably an important lesson, that when you don't have
a whole lot of money, everyone has to pull in...

Kathy: Right.

Researcher: ...to make the whole family function.

Kathy: Right.

Researcher: So you didn't get much after all? It went toward everyone. I suggested earlier you
kept some. Which is it.?

Kathy: I didn't keep any of it. I just didn't want to correct you.

Researcher: Please feel free to correct me if I mistake what you are trying to say, okay, Kathy?
So, would you think that's a lesson that...

Kathy: I would think it would be a lesson.

Unbeknownst to Kathy, the cultural value of being agreeable or not correcting for the

sake of avoiding conflict was illustrated in this one exchange. Luckily for the researcher, Kathy

was one of the earlier interviews, and through that experience, the researcher learned to listen

more intently and not infer anything for the interviewee as they were being interviewed. Still, it did raise the concern that should this be a behavioral practice that occurs as part of a cultural norm, getting to a place of real understanding will have to include developing a sense of trust among the population being studied.

Evidence of neighborliness. The next cultural theme examined was the emergence of neighborliness. This value is expressed by the need to watch out for one another, remembering to offer all that can be offered to those in need within the community (Jones, 1991). Again, behaviors that would endorse the cultural value of neighborliness were found in the statements made by several of those interviewed. One subject, named "Cally", was a thirty-something female Appalachian American with a Bachelor's degree. In reading the following exchange, there is clear evidence that Cally behaved and endorsed values consistent with the idea of neighborliness:

Researcher: . . . but if someone were to say what, what makes coming from Appalachia what is most valuable pieces, do you hold onto that make you say (inaudible).

Cally: I think it would be our sense of family and sense of community.

Researcher: Umhuh.

Cally: Um and I see that's still here, ya' know I know M-town isn't this huge city, but it's much bigger than S-county is.

Researcher: Right.

Cally: Uh huh. Um I think in S-county, because where we lived we were out in the country, um we relied on our neighbors to, you know if we were gone somewhere, ya' know, if we took a, took a trip for the weekend, we relied on them to kind of watch out for us if we weren't there or if my parents left us at home by ourselves, they kind of watched out for us, ya' know our neighbors would, if, if there was any body, any vehicle that they didn't know.

Researcher: Uhuh.

Cally: They would call and check on us. Um, so it was that close-knit kind of feeling where you felt very safe.

Researcher: Umhum.

Cally: Um, you didn't have to lock your doors, you didn't have to lock your vehicle, you didn't have to worry about that kind of stuff because everybody that came through

there were people that you knew, sometime people that you were related to, so around…

As can be seen, Cally's admission that it is commonplace to leave one's home and possessions accessible to others, even while away because of trust of the neighbors definitely exhibited an endorsement of the value of neighborliness. Again, such exchanges emerged throughout the interviews, and when brought up, nearly every interviewee expressed feelings of safety associated with living within the Appalachian community. What is particularly interesting about this exchange is not only that explanation of safety, but also that the interviewee went on to explain her perceived positive correlation between where one lived in Appalachia and the level of neighborly trust and safety felt by members of an Appalachian community:

Researcher: So different from my experience growing up in C-City (large urban city).

Cally: (Laughter.)

Researcher: But go ahead!

Cally: I, I can, well even here, even here in M-town I, I don't feel, it's not that I don't feel safe...

Researcher: Umhum.

Cally: ...but I don't feel that same sense of security that I had at my mom and dad's.

Researcher: So a lot of people would think that R-county is culturally Appalachian, but you think maybe the further, this isn't on here but now that you're talking about it, the further east that you head out toward the state of Kentucky do you think the more greater sense of (inaudible)…greater sense of these Appalachian values?

Cally: ABSOLUTELY! I definitely think there's even places in M-town that probably feel this way but there places that are near the city.

Researcher: Right downtown…

Cally: Yeah.

Researcher: I gotchya', I gotchya'. Alright so being really, really tight knit with, with neighbors, almost to the point that their like family, babysitting, watching out for kids.

Cally: Yeah…

Researcher: Watching out for your things, anything else that you could think of?

Cally: Um.

Researcher: You said being close, really close to family, I mean...a lot of people…

Cally: Definitely…

        In this exchange, it would seem that Cally not only understood, practiced, and noticed the behaviors of neighborliness being practiced by others, but she also was sure to note that there was an association (perceived, of course) between how deeply one lived within East Kentucky (the portion of Appalachia studied here) and the practice of the behaviors outlined above. It would seem from this exchange that those who most endorse the values associated in the literature with Appalachian culture would be those who live most centrally within the Appalachian region.

        Evidence of strong religious (and Christian) values. Another value that previous scholars have noted exists within Appalachia is a world view shaped most strongly by religious doctrine and ideology (mostly Christian). As referenced in the literature, evidence of this cultural theme is taken from statements made that reinforced the idea that life-changing ideas or events that occurred in life were rooted in church approval over any other source of acceptance (Beaver, 1986; Hicks, 1976; Jones, 1991, 1994; Keefe, 1998 as cited in Keefe, 2005; Tang & Russ, 2007). In other words, decisions concerning life's choices are made within the frame of what is deemed appropriate by one's church. Again, many of the interviews endorsed the important role of faith in the lives of the families and communities where they lived, and many discussed the tradition of attending church, followed by large dinners with large numbers of family members. This alone is not explicitly Appalachian; however, what might provide better evidence of the degree of Christian-based theology being an integral part of the behaviors and lives of the citizens within Appalachia is what was said by "Steve," a middle-aged male (early forties) and Appalachian American with a high school diploma. When asked about the role of religion in his family, Steve noted not only the importance of church, but he also demonstrated an implied concern for not attending church now:

Steve: We went to church when I was young. I remember when my papaw passed away. That was a big loss of mine. I still remember that. My mom's passed away now, so...

Researcher: Sorry.

Steve: It's...

Researcher: My mother's passed, too. Uh, were, church, was that common?

Steve: Yeah.

Researcher: I know some of my questions are gonna' sound silly, but remember that people reading this potentially might not have had any experience in this region, so I have to ask questions that may seem obvious.

Steve: That was pretty common back when I was growing up.

Researcher: Do you think it still is now?

Steve: I don't think it is as much.

Researcher: As much?

Steve: Yeah.

Researcher: OK, OK. So uh, in the home, then, were Biblical, like did your grandparents or parents use, talk about the Bible or talk about how you should act in reference to the Bible?

Steve: My grandparents sort of did more than my parents.

Researcher: Uh huh.

Steve: They went to church more.

Researcher: Oh, I see.

Steve: So but...

Researcher: So, that was sort of...

Steve: Yeah.

Researcher: OK. Uh, and what about now, do you all routinely go to church in your house?

Steve: No, I've rea... No, not now we don't.

Researcher: Uh huh.

Steve: It seems like we're so busy, we just...

Researcher: Yeah, you want...

Steve: We want to, we do, but I have to work three jobs and...

Steve noted the commonality of people in the community attending church, and he also

indicated that his inability to attend church with his family, due to having to work so many jobs

to survive, resulted in some level of discomfort for him. If this alone were the only interview

that addressed the importance of faith within the home, it might be easy to assume the practice

has diminished overtime. However, from the ten interviews used for this research, several noted

the presence of behavioral practices held at home related to church. For example, when

discussing what was most important for her to do as a child (from the perspective of her mother),

"Josephina," a twenty-something female Appalachian American with a high school diploma

noted the following:

Josephina: ...from her. Um, it was you've gotta' do the chores, you gotta' put out the right
                perspective for the community, you've gotta' go to church all the time every
                Sunday, you have to be prim and proper and perfect, and...

The exchange was not meant to be a conversation about religion, yet the practice of being

sure one attended church every Sunday was emphasized as an expectation for Josephina growing

up. In another example, Cally highlighted the difficulty she had in being able to live outside of

the influence of her faith. Note how integral faith-based practices were to the behaviors

endorsed as acceptable in this statement:

Cally: **...**we were constrained by our dad because he was very religious, and so we
                weren't, since we weren't allowed to do a lot of things, of course when we were
                teenagers, we really had a hard time with that because while other people were
                going to football games and going to dances, we weren't really allowed to go.

As can be noted, Cally and Josephina also recognized the important power of religion

over the behavioral expectations that were had of them, and in that explanation, both appeared to

frame the relationship of religion to their behavioral practices as restricting, confining, or at least,

part of some show of how to act when around others in the community. These inferences might

imply both the salience of the value as expressed in the behaviors of the interviewees, and also

the prevalence of the value as an entrenched expectation for being part of an Appalachian

American community.

Evidence of love of the land. The next value expressed during the interviews and also present in the literature discussing Appalachian values was that of a tie to homeplace, or love of land. Often compelling members of the Appalachian community to return home rather than explore life in other regions or countries, this tie to homeplace serves as something to be proud of, and potentially, something that might prevent said individuals from having external experiences (Beaver, 1986; Hicks, 1976; Jones, 1991, 1994; Keefe, 1998 as cited in Keefe, 2005; Tang & Russ, 2007). When asked about the importance of family and the relationships that develop amongst family, several of the interviewees endorsed the presence of this cultural value, even if it was not practiced in their individual case. For example, in the case of "Sally," a thirty-one-year-old woman with two graduate degrees that lived in Appalachia (Eastern Kentucky), when asked about the presence of this value leading to behaviors of keeping individuals within the community, Sally noted the following:

Sally:	No. Um: "Where there's jobs, where you want to be... We want you to go to college, but we want you to also choose your life." So, we were very support, well supported.
Researcher:	Mm hmm. You kind of were saying that, like, uh... Well, let me ask you this question.
Sally:	Mm hmm.
Researcher:	Is that the norm, from your perspective?
Sally:	No.
Researcher:	In this region?
Sally:	I don't think it is.
Researcher:	Describe what you think the norm is.
Sally:	Um, I think that the norm in this region is most families really stress the importance of keeping their kids close to home.
Researcher:	Uh huh.
Sally:	There's not a lot of encouragement about go out and explore and see the world and gain your own life experiences. Um: "I want you to kind of follow in my footsteps. This is the job I had, so you need to have this kind of a job, too." Um, you know, it's under, you know, a lot of people: "You need to get married, stay

here, you need to have kids." Um, I'm all, I was, I always get asked, "So, when are you having more kids?" You know, things like that. I have one child, and I think I'm just going to have one child. But you know, a lot of the norms in this area are get married, the male works, the female is the primary care giver at home, but I didn't have that pressure put on me, you know, growing up.

Researcher: Mm hmm. And you sound thankful for that. *(Laughs.)*

Sally: I am. You know, I'm very thankful. I had a great... I was spoiled in a lot of ways, but my parents also taught me the value of working.

Although Sally did not have a lifestyle in which her parents expected her to return home, she definitely noted the strong power of the cultural value to compel others within Appalachian American communities to return to where they were raised, and even to take on the same jobs as their parents. Further, Sally continued that people within her life today still follow the tradition of "male works, the female is the primary care giver at home," and even though she did not have that "pressure placed upon her growing up," she did admit that others within the community were always asking her about her role in having more children and tending to home. This extension of the love of land and tie to homeplace could be somewhat problematic for individuals that aspire for careers that are not prevalent or deemed as appropriate within the gendered expectations of the area.

Evidence of preference for the concrete. In continuing on with cultural values discussed in the literature, another value held by people from Appalachia is a preference for the concrete, or preference of thinking about and dealing with tangible objects in life, as opposed to thinking about or envisioning abstractions or ideas not yet come to life (Tang & Russ, 2007). Reading the interviews for evidence of this particular cultural value was difficult at first, but upon subsequent readings, a focus on the present and preparation only for what existed was located within the interviews, as was a certain sense of what has been referred to elsewhere as a sense of cultural fatalism. For example, notice in this conversation with Steve (discussed above)

how his thought process concerning past, present, and future did not allow for any suggestion of

malleability or any hint of altering the way things have been, are, or will be:

Researcher: Do you ever feel like, um... Well, let me ask you this first: do you feel like keeping your family connected is something that was taught to you here as very important?

Steve: Yeah. I think yeah.

Researcher: Yeah?

Steve: That's the way our parents done me. We was all a pretty tight group.

Researcher: Yeah. And, do you think that, um, I'm trying to think how I can ask this... Do you, does it, does it ever upset you, I guess, the idea that, that we don't have as much time with our kids and stuff anymore?

Steve: Nah, well, a little bit, but that's just the way the world is, I guess.

Researcher: Mmm.

Steve: It always seems like everybody's busy.

Researcher: So, there's just not much you can really do about it?

Steve: No.

Researcher: Except do it or, you can't, you won't have to pay to feed your kids.

Steve: That's right.

As noted above, Steve (the person with three jobs), noted a sense of understanding that is

rooted in the concrete and unchanging. He indicated not only that keeping his family

"connected" was important in the past and therefore, important in his present, but also that the

fact that life is "busy" is some state of being that is unchangeable. Granted, the researcher did

not go on to ask if Steve could somehow envision a different possibility or if he thought there

could be another set of outcomes in life other than those based on his own experiences growing

up, it would appear that the responses from Steve were based on what can be lived as the world

exists now, with little exploration of other outcomes.

Having a focus on the "here and now" with little demonstrated ability to think about

alternate realities that do not exist may to some degree endorse this notion of Appalachian

Americans having a preference for the tangible, the real, the concrete. However, included with

the sense of fatalism described above, there were also examples of the value in the connections

made between educational goals or educational outcomes and practical, concrete ends. Put

simply, when discussing the importance of education or why people should get an education,

many of the participants focused on the connection of a degree (measured educational

attainment) to attaining a job. The suggestion that educational achievement is important for

economic reasons alone shows, arguably, a thought process that does not provide evidence of

other, abstract notions of wanting an education, such as for the love of learning or to better one's

ability to understand the world. One clear example of this type of thinking came when

interviewing "Caleb," a thirty-two-year-old male from Eastern Kentucky who started college,

finished some trade programs, but never finished with a traditional four-year degree. In speaking

about values or practices instilled in him by those in his family who took care of him (father and

grandmother), Caleb said the following:

Researcher:	OK, um, so looking then at your father and your grandmother, um, was there anything they encouraged you to be a part of, to be involved in your life?
Caleb:	Um.
Researcher:	They said, "Do this" or "You ought to keep doing that" or "Ought to think about being this" or...
Caleb:	Uh, never did.
Researcher:	OK, OK, why not?
Caleb:	I really have no idea.
Researcher:	Hm. OK. Was there anything that they said, you know, "We just totally don't think this is right; you should never do this?"
Caleb:	I never had any of that either. I mean, there's been, you know, I thought about going into botany at one time when I was in high school, and they was like, "I don't know." Oh there was, not me but my sister wanted to be an artist and they said that she shouldn't be an artist because they don't make any money.
Researcher:	OK.
Caleb:	I remember that. It wasn't me, but it was one of my sisters.
Researcher:	Well, no it wasn't you, but that's good to know because that tells me that in this area there appears to be yet another emphasis, from what you're saying, that they

valued practicality.

Caleb: Yeah.

Researcher: A job that's going to be able to allow you to support yourself...

Caleb: Yeah.

Researcher: ...um, consistently. Did your sister end up going into art anyway?

Caleb: Hm mm.

Researcher: No, really?

Caleb: No, she's, uh, she works at the construction company with my mom in the office.

Researcher: Oh. *(Laughs.)*

Caleb: *(Laughs.)*

Researcher: That's funny. Um...

Caleb: And, my other sister's a manager at, uh, Subway.

Researcher: The one down here?

Caleb: The one at Wal-Mart.

Researcher: The one up at Wal-Mart, OK, OK.

Although Caleb did not conclude that he was guided into an education for economic reasons only, he noted that not only was his sister directly guided away from art because artists "don't make any money," but more importantly, all three of them—Caleb and both of his sisters—achieved enough education to find jobs where they lived. Any thought of pursuing an education for a career because you "enjoy" the work (i.e., art) apparently can take a back seat to the practical realities of living in a region of the country that struggles economically due to lack of employment and lack of opportunities. This value of preference for the concrete is really more a behavioral manifestation than a value; nonetheless, it does appear to exist within the Appalachian areas of Eastern Kentucky.

Evidence of strong sense of patriotism. According to Loyal Jones (1991), Appalachian Americans have an adopted cultural value that presents as a strong sense of patriotism, placing what one perceives as "patriotic" or "not against the country" as crucial to one's identity and success. In this sense, information which suggests that one might argue against values espoused

traditionally in America is, ironically, not really being "American". When combing the

interviews for presence of this cultural value in either the behavioral choices or statements of the

interviewees, all the researcher noted was that several of the male interviewees commented on

participating in or wanting to participate in some form of the armed services. Female participants

noted a sense of patriotism, but usually in from the point of view of men in the military. For

example, note the following exchange between the interviewer and Caleb:

Researcher: So, are there any behaviors or activities that you think are important or that you
think should not be occurring, um, in life right now?

Caleb: Oh. War. *(Laughs.)*

Researcher: War, what about war?

Caleb: Yeah, ah, but, you know, it's just the war that we've been in the past eleven, ten
or eleven years. Almost eleven years, it's not ending, you know. It's, wow. Even
though I am in the military, it's job security, yeah, but...

Researcher: Not if you die.

Caleb: Yeah.

Researcher: I mean it's scary.

Caleb: Yeah, but it's, you know, it changes a lot. People don't think about it, but it does
change things here at home as well.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Caleb: Even people who aren't in the military see it. They may not see it, but there's still
a lot of changes.

Unfortunately, the interviewer chose to move to another topic, so understanding Caleb's

sense of patriotism was somewhat lost. He did note being in the military for economic reasons

(preference for the concrete), but how he felt about the country was later revealed in the

following exchange:

Researcher: OK. Um, what is your opinion about...like, how patriotic are you...

Caleb: Very.

Researcher: ...in terms of our country. In what way? Describe that for me.

Caleb: Um...

Researcher: I mean, I figured because you're in the military, but...

Caleb: Well, I believe in, you know, everything that our founding fathers brought forth to this country. And, I see a lot of things that happen now that just, even though I am in the military, it sickens me.

Researcher: Like what?

Caleb: Um, well, have you heard the news about the soldiers that were thrown into a landfill recently?

Researcher: Mm mm.

Caleb: Yeah, they discovered that from the dates of 2004 to about a year ago that there were a lot of soldiers remains that were brought home, and when the families didn't specify what they wanted to do with them, they would, they cremated them and took them to a landfill. It's whenever they told them they would be disposed of in a, in a respective manner.

Researcher: Uh huh. Yeah.

Caleb: And, they recently discovered that there were a lot of soldiers...

Researcher: I did know that the...

Caleb: ...that way.

Researcher: ...news had reported that they had mismarked several soldiers' burial spots at the, uh, that national cemetery. I can't think of the name of it right now.

Caleb: Hmm, well that's another problem.

Researcher: Um.

Caleb: Arlington.

Researcher: Yeah. But that had been happening for over decades.

Caleb: At least they're there.

Researcher: So, families had been going to the wrong place.

Caleb: Yeah.

Researcher: You know, for their loved one or whatnot. Um, that's horrific, isn't it?

Caleb: That, that, that doesn't bother me as much....

Researcher: Well, the garbage one. That's what I'm talking about.

Caleb: ...as having somebody thrown into the trash.

Researcher: That's pretty...

Caleb: Yeah.

Researcher: ...pretty bad. So, do you in your view – and I haven't asked anyone else this but given your particular background – um, do you in your view feel like the United States should serve a role as the leader of the world?

Caleb: I don't think we should.

Researcher: Why not?

Caleb: It's not our place.

Researcher: And, why is it not?

Caleb: We, as we put ourselves, our name United Sates of America, we're not the United States of the World.

Researcher: Right, OK.

Caleb: It's not our place to get in, butt in somebody else's business. Just like I was, you know, I don't even know if I said that, "Don't get in anybody's business" my father always taught me because you'll get yourself in trouble that way.

Researcher: So, another thing you were taught?

Caleb: Yeah. And, we are pretty much doing that all the time now. We're trying to be the world police and we're not.

Note that although Caleb identified himself as "very" patriotic, his later discussion of current events related to America's image around the world and practices at home was quite critical of the nation. As such, Caleb showed evidence of being patriotic enough to question what happens in the name of the United States. This example is a clear counterexample to the cultural value espoused in the literature in that it demonstrates a willingness to openly disagree with decisions made by the military, showing a sense of patriotism that does not blindly ignore the actions made by leaders in the United States.

Evidence of family responsibilities over educational values. Finally, and most directly connected to the ultimate focus of this research, the relevant literature on cultural values often espouses the notion that for many Appalachian Americans, educational attainment in the formal sense of the word (e.g., going to college) may not occur if it means forsaking family responsibilities. As depicted in the literature, one's responsibilities for caring for other family members is more important than one's own personal or educational growth (Tang & Russ, 2007). Additionally, although educational attainment is valued within Appalachia, degrees or trainings directly related to practical economic goals is of more value than learning for other laudable but less tangible goals (i.e., learning for learning's sake) (Bradner, 2008). Although this cultural

value was interwoven into the discussion about the practices associated with "a preference for the concrete," a culture-based value that one should place the needs of others in the family (even at times, extended family) before educational attainment necessarily leads to outcomes which restrict or prevent economic growth or opportunities for personal achievement. Several of the interviewees discussed the notion of staying home and taking care of the family as being a priority in Appalachian communities, especially as it relates to opportunities for women to leave and achieve. As mentioned in previous examples, the respondents offered statements of times when they stopped pursuing education, or when they chose not to pursue a passion of theirs as it was not present within their home community or profitable. One of the best examples among the interviewees was the very last interview. The last participant for this study was a thirty-six-year-old Appalachian American mother of two who graduated high school and attended two semesters of college. "Nikki" still lives in an Eastern Kentucky community and is currently working as a school paraprofessional. When interviewing Nikki about the presence of cultural values within Appalachia and the degree to which individuals may be marginalized because mainstream organizations, even those in their communities that operate under mainstream values (i.e., schools), do not endorse behaviors compatible with the cultural values of the area, Nikki's story emerged as a final, best testimony of the marginalization of opportunity due to behaviors stemming from cultural expectations. Although Nikki wanted to attend college, earn a teaching certificate, and pursue a dream of being a public school educator, family matters required her to "put family first" and forsake her career. Her words captured the events of marginalization best:

Researcher: What program did you study at MSU?

Nikki: I was actually just taking general classes.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Nikki: At the time, I thought I wanted to grow up and be a social worker.

Researcher: Oh, OK.

Nikki: But um, things took me in different directions. I got married at an early age. Um, I had my first son at twenty-one, and I, I just kind of lost interest in that. I didn't, I guess I really didn't realize what being a social worker was all about.

Researcher: Uh huh.

Nikki: And, I just don't think that I could have handled certain situations of letting children go back to certain homes.

Researcher: And not being able to do much about it right away.

Nikki: It's hard enough to be a paraprofessional.

Researcher: I bet.

Nikki: 'Cause I want to take 'em home with me.

Researcher: Yeah, I hear ya'. Um, so how'd you do in school in general? Were you a good student?

Nikki: I was a decent student. Um, I had comprehension issues, so I was in special reading classes in elementary school and got better with it. Um, still as an adult, sometimes I have to read an article or a story more than one time to get the full effect. So...

Researcher: Do you talk to your children about that?

Nikki: Mm hmm.

Researcher: And say, you know, "Mama would read like that?"

Nikki: Mm hmm. My youngest son is actually a struggler.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Nikki: And so, you know, it's, I'm kind of glad that I've lived that life because when your child's struggling, you can say, "It's OK. You know, Mommy..."

Researcher: You did that yesterday in the office.

Nikki: Yeah. You know, my...

Researcher: Is that an example of what you're talking about?

Nikki: Yes. You know, "Mommy has a hard time remembering things or figuring out exactly what they're talking about, and I always have." And then, my oldest son, he's a straight-A student. He's one that doesn't have to study.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Nikki: Always gets his work done at school, and then the baby struggles. So, you know, I'm kind of glad that I struggled and I knew how it felt to be embarrassed and pulled out to different classes and, you know, that sort of thing. Because I can relate to how he's feeling, so...

Researcher: Yeah, I bet that helps him.

Nikki: Oh, I'm sure. You know, and...

Researcher: I'm so glad I said what I said yesterday, then.

Nikki: *(Laughs.)*

Researcher: Which I always say, but you know, because...do you feel like that gives him some freedom, some flexibility to feel like, you know, "If I make a mistake, it's OK."

Nikki: It's OK.

Researcher: "As long as I'm trying."

Nikki: And, that's what I will tell my kids: "Do your best." My thing every morning when they're walking out to the bus is, "Make good choices."

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Nikki: And, to me that covers be a great friend, be a good student. You know, and that's what I tell them: "The things you do today affects your tomorrow. You know everything you do today – you may not realize it. It may be next week or next year, but everything you do, the choices you make."

Researcher: Have you thought about going back to school?

Nikki: Actually, I have, but financially, there is just no way I could pull it off. So, um, I have thought about going back to school to become a certified teacher.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Nikki: But, um, there's still time. I mean...

Researcher: There are scholarships, too. There are non-traditional scholarships out there, you know, where you can get them for people who are technically considered than the general population.

Nikki: Mm hmm. It's just, I don't know. I just feel like I'm comfortable where I'm at.

Researcher: Right.

Nikki: Um, I love what I do now, and I don't have the stress of being an actual teacher to take home with me.

Researcher: Right.

Nikki: Um, I can be here and I can teach and love these kids and make an impression and hopefully, you know a good impression. And uh, but when I go home, I don't have to be the school teacher anymore. I get to be a mom.

Researcher: Right.

Nikki: You know?

Researcher: Yeah.

Nikki: And, I'm comfortable with that...

Researcher: Sure.

Nikki: ...'cause I don't know how it would be. You know, right now it's like if my children want to be involved in things, I do my best to make sure that they can be.

Researcher: Uh huh.

Nikki: And, that kind of leaves Mom no time, but I'll get my time soon. They'll all be grown up and I'll be sad.

Researcher: Oh.

Nikki: *(Laughs.)*

Researcher: But you don't have to worry about your profession preventing you from being able to take your kids anywhere because you're an hourly employee.

Nikki: Right. My family has to be priority number one, even if it means I do not get to get that degree, or that job.

A great deal of important information can be extrapolated from Nikki's interview. Not only does it seem that Nikki would have made an excellent teacher (she's certainly empathetic, passionate, and demonstrates a love for children), but also, it is obvious that Nikki feels that the time it would take to obtain the teaching degree would be too much time away from her responsibilities as a mother to her children. Unfortunately, the researcher did not ask Nikki if she felt that this situation was gendered, with more women than men running into this situation. However, it did appear that when the reason for not finishing or pursuing higher educational levels was related to doing what is right for the family or taking care of the family, most of those that responded in kind were women. Men tended to comment on earning money as a means of putting family over educational goals. Gendered or not, this testimony portrays an obviously capable woman within Appalachia who unfortunately feels that she cannot have both a family role where Mom is present and a professional role where Mom is afforded another aspect of her identity. Although there are other instances of behaviors extending from putting family over self values, as written about in some of the literature about Appalachian Americans, this example was perhaps the strongest example gathered in the context of this particular study.

In addition to the cultural values that came from early literature on Appalachian cultural values, the researcher also included three additional codes for the following components of

study: First, the researcher coded for statements that demonstrated evidence of other important statements that are worth considering in study of cultural influences on psycho-educational processes. Second, the researcher looked for statements that were reflective of cultural alignment between home and school, as many examples would be a revealing counterweight to the cultural discontinuity claim. Finally, statements that actually represented "cultural discontinuity" as officially defined (the process where a learner, when moving from home to school, discontinues values-based behaviors (as determined from the cultural values discussed above) with outcomes from that acculturation process negatively influencing the psychology of the learner in such a way as to marginalize or otherwise harm the educational outcomes of the learner (Tyler et al., 2008).

All in all, the evidence in these following categories was quite revealing. Each is discussed below.

Evidence of "other" important statements. After the first review of the statements, the researcher initially could not find any examples of statements that would aptly qualify for evidence to support this category. However, prior to deleting the category from study, a second review did in fact yield statements from one of the participants that are not traditionally affiliated with the cultural discontinuity claim, yet seemed important enough to code in this category. Read the following statements and the additional comments to follow:

Researcher: Do you think that your, you are unique? Maybe not totally unique, but that m... If somebody said, "Most of the women in this area raised when you were raised would be the one to sit and wait for the husband or whoever, and only a few would be like you, willing to go out there and go ahead and haul it." Would you say that's probably right, or would you say no, that's not right?

Kathy: Um...

Researcher: Just an opinion.

Kathy: I just...

Researcher: I'm just curious about your opinion.

Kathy:	Probably. I'd say there's very, most of the, well, I'm just goin' by the wives that I know...
Researcher:	Right.
Kathy:	...my age, you know?
Researcher:	That's exactly right.
Kathy:	I would say most of 'em would wait on the men to help 'em, you know.
Researcher:	OK. OK. At the same time, you know, if somebody said something like, "Men rarely, rarely cook in this area or do those kinds of things. That's usually something that in heterosexual relationships that the women do that kind of stuff." Would that be fair?
Kathy:	Oh, that's very true. It's like, um, Kevin was raised in the generation that men didn't do housework. They didn't cook. They did outside work.
Researcher:	Uh huh.
Kathy:	And, that, he holds true to that today. Now, he helps me, now, with housework, but when the kids were little and he worked out of the home, the most he did was take garbage out, you know.
Researcher:	Uh huh.
Kathy:	The rest... Oh, if somethin' tore up in the house...
Researcher:	He'd fix it.
Kathy:	...you know, he'd fix it, but I mean, as far as the cleanin' and the cookin' and the grocery shoppin' or the shoppin' for whatever we need.
Researcher:	Mm hmm.
Kathy:	He never went in a store until after the kids was grown and gone; then he got to go with me, you know. Uh, but I did all the shopping, and I did all the cooking, all the cleaning. Um, payin' the bills. I mean, he knew. He brought the money, and he knew what I was doin', but I was the one to go and do it. He worked. He wasn't home to do it, you know.

In this exchange, Kathy, an Appalachian American woman in her 60s with an eighth-

grade education really focused on the idea that her upbringing taught her that there were very

rigid gender roles expected of men and women in heterosexual relationships. In her eyes, men

had to work as a first priority and women had to tend to house and family, even before they were

married (help Mom) and definitely after. It did not seem out of the ordinary for women to do all

of the housework and child rearing while the men did nothing of the kind when at home.

Although the researcher did not directly think to extend that portion of the interview to see if it was related to educational choices in any way, Kathy's husband did not finish school because he preferred to use his hands to work and he needed money to marry and raise a family, and Kathy only finished an eighth-grade education because "she didn't like it and didn't see how she'd need much more than what she had for figurin' and readin'." It would seem that, in the context of all of this information, there might be some gendered expectations that ultimately are not endorsed in schools (schools would probably try to reason that you should go to school and finish your education anyway). If there is one set of value-based behaviors (placing family responsibilities over educational progress) depicted here, then there might be evidence that the cultural value-based behaviors that are ceased in schools function differently as a product of gender. In other words, gender might just be a future variation to explore when studying cultural influences on behaviors and educational outcomes with Appalachian American students.

Evidence of cultural alignment between home and school. Although the primary focus of this study was to validate the presence of Appalachian American values, one interview did provide some information that the researcher believed to be supportive of cultural alignment between home and school. When interviewing Kevin, a sixty-three-year-old Appalachian American male from Eastern Kentucky with an eighth-grade education, the following comments were made when he was asked if there was anything that occurred at school that was endorsed at home:

Researcher: Alright, I got one more question sorta' about school. It's about school and home. There's some evidence that suggests, when we studied this, that if schools could do a better job at find...figuring out what kids are learning as important and valuable at home and teaching that same kind of values at school that it might actually help the kids learn all of the stuff, not just the dai...not just the concrete stuff. But, it might make them see why the other stuff's important, uh, might make them better appreciate it, might make them feel like they fit into the school a little bit more. You know, whatever. Was there anything when you were in

school, was there anything that you can think about for those – and I know it's been a while and you only went to eighth grade and it's been a while ago – but anything that you remember the schools ever trying to do to get your family to come visit or participate, actually help them with you or with the school? Or, was it sort of you send the kids to school, they do their thing, and then they come home?

Kevin: It was that way when I went. You went to school and you come home. What I can remember, I mean, I went to school, I come home. You know, if I got in trouble, my mother would...

Researcher: So trouble. Basically, if you were in trouble was...

Kevin: If I got in a fight at school or something, she would go find out. Or, [if] she didn't, my mom was the type she didn't just send me to school, she wanted me to learn or whatever.

Researcher: Right. Right.

Kevin: But it's not like now. I mean, well mostly, when I went to school, if you got in a fight they'd spank you [at school], then my mother would get after me [at home].

Researcher: Right.

Kevin: She'd punish me for something, you know I mean. But I never would, like I said, I never was in that much trouble at school 'cause I was afraid of what would happen at school and home. I was afraid, you know, sort of till the last year, and that was, I don't know, I just can't explain school. I just really...

Researcher: No, you answered my question.

In this example, Kevin highlighted a rather unfortunate set of behaviors exhibited not by the learner, per se, but by the teaching staff at school and his mother at home. This endorsement of physical punishment, seemingly severe, occurred at school and again at home when he demonstrated misbehavior at school. Although the researcher would like to hope that this is an isolated incident, this kind of alignment in expectations and consequences at school and home might be supportive of a need to explore physical punishment as a consideration in cessation of attending school. After all, if a learner no longer attends school, then the learner cannot be punished for bad behavior at school. Again, this may not be an issue with future studies, but it was an alignment worth mentioning as it was the only alignment seen by the researcher.

Evidence of cultural misalignment between home and school. The present study was primarily about determining the salience of values traditionally associated with Appalachian Americans in order to determine the need to consider the cultural discontinuity process as a possible factor related to student underachievement in schools. Although the present study did not focus on trying to locate evidence of cultural discontinuity as a process, if one believes that the aforementioned values and therefore value-laden behaviors are accurate, then there did appear to be one example of cultural misalignment, or cultural discontinuity. Interestingly, the evidence of cultural misalignment came from Kevin, the same individual who provided some evidence of cultural alignment between home and school.

During Kevin's interview, the researcher and Kevin began talking about his working and hating school. Note what Kevin stated in the following exchange:

Kevin: And then, I mean I just, I don't know how to explain it. I hated school. I just, I didn't like school. Then, like I say now, I see back where I should have done a little of both. I mean, or a whole lot of one... But now, when I was growing up, I mean education was good, but you could go, I was just in that time when work was good and you could get jobs in any area. I just hit it just right. It was just luck or hit it just...

Researcher: When the economy was maybe not the way...

Kevin: It would be hard for me now to get out here and get a job. You know, no more education, I could, uh... And, you get jobs knowing people than you do with education like that. I mean, it's fine to talk about, but I mean, like, say for instance I could work for the city over here.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

Kevin: I could go get a job and work for them. I could probably go say, "I want a job" and they'd, I already know everybody.

Researcher: Right.

Kevin: You know, but a lot of people don't know that. I mean I'm not saying they'd put me to work, but there're a lot of people I know would, a lot of people. I believe you get a job from knowin' people and stuff than you do with the education...

Researcher: So, it's more about the relationships than the formal training?

Kevin: Right. If you got, I mean, I couldn't go up there and get a job running computers or whatever, you do have to have that education just for that one that you're

> getting a job. And I've always been lucky, too; I can get a job anywhere, and why, I don't know. I mean, I'm not saying anywhere, but I can get a...

Researcher: Do you think it has anything to do with how, you know, you're a pretty personable person, I think. People have probably told you that over the years or you know that about yourself if you talk to anybody.

Kevin: Well, I, if I wanted a job, I'd ask. You know, just go ask and say, "I can do that" you know or whatever. And, it wouldn't, I mean, it wasn't the best work or anything, but the work I done was hard work.

Researcher: Right.

Kevin: It's just brute, hard work.

Researcher: And, you were willing to do it, and they were willing to pay you to do it.

Kevin: Yeah, and like I said, I hit it just right, and I gone and got in the union, iron workers union, and I stayed with it. Still belong to it.

As you can see from the above exchange, not only did Kevin dislike school, he believed that education was not the means by which people secured jobs when he was of school age, as well as today (although he did acknowledge that there were some jobs that required an education). In fact, Kevin attributed securing work to three factors other than securing an education: hard work, luck, and having connections. In this case, it is clear how Kevin's perspective would not be aligned with the perspective provided by educators in schools. Again, this is not evidence of behaviors that cease when leaving home and coming to school, but the statements provided do seemingly support the idea that there are beliefs held by Appalachian Americans that conflict with values shared in educational arenas. It further demonstrates that rather than accepting the values endorsed by schools, Kevin continued his belief in the idea that a formal education was not the way to gain employment where he grew up and lived. If this is not an example of cultural discontinuity entirely, it is at least indicative of lifestyle choices that, upon further exploration, might in fact be associated with this type of psycho-educational process.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if particular cultural values do exist in Appalachia and, if so, to provide evidence for the presence of these values as well as for the possibility that they are in opposition to those traditionally endorsed in mainstream America (Tyler et al., 2008). Further, it was the goal of the researcher to determine if the presence of these value sets where home-based, or school-based, or if there was any evidence of the separation of these value sets in home from school. Although the primary goal was to determine any presence of the values, the combination of those values among members studied was also important for this line of inquiry.

The cultural values that were gleaned from the literature and used for the direction of the questions given during the oral life-history interviews are as follows: "egalitarianism, independence, individualism, personalism, a religious world view, neighborliness, love of the land, and the avoidance of conflict" (Beaver, 1986; Hicks, 1976; Jones, 1991,1994; Keefe, 1998 as cited in Keefe, 2005, p. 10) as well as a "preference for the concrete, [a sense of] family responsibilities over educational values," (Tang & Russ, 2007, p. 37) and a strong sense of patriotism (Jones, 1991). During the interview, several questions were asked in an effort to ascertain the presence of these values among the residents of Eastern Kentucky today as well as, to the extent possible, to collect evidence of possibly culturally discontinuous events, as such evidence would serve to strengthen the need for further study of Appalachian cultural discontinuity.

Most of the participants endorsed most of the values with an overall range being from seven of nine values endorsed by two participants, to all of the values being endorsed during the interviews by most (see table 2 below). This information demonstrates the powerful combination

of these value traits among individuals within a shared regional space over time—all of which appear to fit the criteria set forth in the literature on Cultural Discontinuity as well as the theoretical foundations of sociohistorical theory (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978).

Interestingly, there did not appear to be any generational differences noted in the expression of any of the cultural themes noted, but future work might include any patterns of generational differences if time and change within space in time differentially influences the presence of the values outlined below (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). The following table illustrates the presence of these values by interviewee, noting large endorsements of the values among each participant and no real pattern by generation in the differences of the expression of value endorsement or value based behavioral endorsements of the values previously mentioned in the literature. To be clear, no real separation was initially discovered in this work, but the discussion of the presence of these values tended to be when the researcher asked about life at home (outside of school). Furthermore, the expression of the values or evidence of value-based behaviors was either endorsed as having been true for the individual respondent, or true in his or her opinion about most people in the Appalachian region.

Table 2

Salience of Value Sets among Participants by Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Male	Female	Ages (M, F in years)	*Values Expressed in Experiences for Males (N = 9)*	*Values Expressed in Experiences for Females (N = 9)*
Less than High School	Kevin	Kathy	63, 62	All values endorsed from interview (9)	All values endorsed from interview, but some roles gendered between men and women (9)
High School Graduate	Steve	Josephina	40, 24	All but independence/individualism (8)	All values endorsed during interview (9)
Some College	Caleb	Nikki	24, 33	All but love of home place (8); difference in how he showed patriotism	All values endorsed during interview (not patriotism in a heightened sense)
Four-Year Degree	David	Cally	22, 34	All values endorsed during interview (9)	All values but independence/individualism and avoidance of conflict (7)
Advanced Degree	Will	Sally	81, 31	All values endorsed during interview (9)	All values but patriotism (in a heightened sense) and preference for the concrete (7)

Taken together, the results of this study support the notion that certain Appalachian American values are in fact held and do influence the behaviors of individuals from Eastern Kentucky, the portion of Appalachia that has the strongest evidence of massive marginalization (ARC, 2009). Investigations of Appalachian cultural discontinuity must be conducted in service of aiding educational systems in developing a more pluralistic and ultimately beneficial approach to education. Such approaches would allow for the expression and understanding of the unique cultural characteristics in service of collective cooperation (Porter, 2001). If educators and educational systems adopt such a view, perhaps other social systems will follow suit. Porter (2001) articulated this point well when she stated that advocating for cultural pluralism is a "truly formidable task and a morally imperative one" (p. 14).

However, due to the limited information that was collected regarding Appalachian Americans' own perceptions of cultural discontinuity between home and school specifically, the otherwise well-documented phenomenon cannot be concluded from this study alone. Further study of Appalachian cultural discontinuity, therefore, should occur not only for the purposes of scholarly discovery but, more importantly, to determine its very existence. Nonetheless, this work did start the important process of establishing the presence and salience of values that can now be said are affiliated with the culture of Appalachian Americans from Eastern Kentucky, particularly as it relates to the presence of these values in the lived experiences of participants. Remembering the evidence of the overwhelming quality of life disparities in income, poverty, and educational outcomes, it would seem prudent to pick up where this study started and move forward to see which parts of Appalachia do endorse the studied values and whether they truly are discontinued at school, resulting in cultural discontinuity. Better questioning techniques from the interviewer in future work will seek to build upon that necessary component of the existence

of cultural discontinuity if said phenomenon exists. From that information, true exploration into the cultural discontinuity hypothesis can take place within Appalachia.

Limitations

Limitations of this study most obviously stemmed from the size of the sample and the method from which the sample was taken from the overall population. Snowball sampling techniques did generate a sufficient sample to interpret the presence of all the mentioned Appalachian American values in the lives of those interviewed and there was some evidence of the marginalization effects that occur among those Appalachian Americans in Eastern Kentucky. The portions of the geographic region known to be associated with the Appalachian mountain range is not the same as the Appalachia defined within the earlier work associated with the culture of the region. That said, cultural Appalachia does not only include Eastern Kentucky, and so this study was limited in reaching the claim that the presence of these stated values was really indicative of the culture of Appalachia as a whole. This is not necessarily a problem for this work, as qualitative methods are not designed for generalization purposes but rather for determining the need for further, quantitative investigations of the presence of the idea being investigated (i.e., Appalachian cultural values and cultural discontinuity claims within the region) (Glesne, 2006). Nonetheless, community biases, lack of random sampling, method of attaining participants, and misinterpretations from the researcher are all inherently problematic when using this method of sampling (Glesne, 2006). Future work as discussed in the method above would be necessary to garner further, more valid, interpretations of cultural phenomenon.

Additionally, although the researcher asserts that a great wealth of information was gathered through the interviewing process, at times, there were connections lost to the researcher as he was not part of the individual context of the respondent. Interviews do allow for

contextualized understanding, however; other research methods like case studies or participant observation might provide researchers with the opportunity for more contextualized data, rooted in the lives of the respondents over time, and corroborated by other data sources, such as pictures, stories, testimonies, or other contextual events.

Along those lines, another concern might exist with respect to the researcher's own biases. For example, the researcher believes education is a vital component of having a good quality of life. Further, the researcher feels educational attainment is a goal that should be more important than many of the examples of choosing "family values over educational attainment" heard during this study. These biases might alter the way in which the researcher views the data, and noting such serves to strengthen the understanding of the interpretation of findings and discussion written in this document. Although researcher biases were noted above, separating those biases is a persistent and problematic task; one which this researcher believes was met most notably through establishing the presence of biases and using the members studied to corroborate interpretation of data (Glesne, 2006). However, future work would benefit from any additional means of bracketing and removing researcher bias held apparent in this work.

Finally, every care was made to ensure that there were individuals from various levels of education and that the sample contained both male and female respondents. Thus, the researcher was able to discover that a great deal of the cultural value-based behaviors contained what appeared to be a gendered component to their salience and to their manifestation among the Appalachian American population in the study. Further investigation of how these gendered values varied among demographic makeup might have improved the accuracy of some of the interpretation associated with the respondents' reports. The researcher did try to consider gender and other variables (such as age) after interpreting the results, but, without initially intending to

compare other demographic variables, the scope of accuracy of interpretation was limited. Future research would benefit greatly from intentional consideration of how these demographic components might influence the presence of values among participants in Appalachia.

Suggestions for Future Study

If these values are truly representative of the cultural values of "Appalachian Americans," then future study should include a much larger sample: not only larger in the number of those involved, but more importantly, from a larger area of the regions known within "Appalachia." Further, when conducting interviews, the researcher is limited in that the context within which the respondents report is not understood or known to the researcher as it might be with some other type of qualitative design. Future researchers might consider changing the design of the method to more of an ethnographic, participant-observation approach. Living in and among various regions of individuals within the Appalachian American community may prove more useful in terms of gleaning data from which one can draw abstractions about the cultural values and value-based behaviors associated with the members of the community (Glesne, 2006). In addition, future work should further explore gendered responses and other differences among demographic lines, as in this initial work, some did appear to emerge from the patterns of the respondents' interviews. Such exploration would provide for a much richer wealth of information that is better situated in the actual experiences of Appalachian Americans. Additionally, future research should be much more intentional about the presence of these values at home or at school, if one wants to see if the values present actually represent evidence of culturally discontinuous events among the residents of Appalachia. Although most of the information was collected from the home experiences of the participants, future work must be

much more careful to separate and speak to where the presence of value based behaviors or

endorsement of values occurs.

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