A Visual Rhetorical Analysis of the Hillbilly Stereotype

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the concept of visual argument as it applies to the archetypal evolution of the hillbilly stereotype. Building on David Birdsell and Leo Groarke's theory of the archetype as a common element of visual argument, this study focuses on the visual archetypal construction of the rural hillbilly in twentieth-century mass media and in twenty first century internet memes, and it makes a case for the argumentative components of the archetype. Beginning with an analysis of early twentieth-century postcards, this study establishes the foundational elements of the hillbilly archetype as a symptom of class-based prejudice and explores how these key elements are visible in online memes, with particular attention to the genre of "Trump Voter" memes that emerged as a response to the 2016 United States presidential campaign. These key archetypal elements compose a visual argument in favor of the idea of a degenerate and inferior rural America and represent a particularly dangerous rhetorical tool that can be mobilized to discount the concerns of rural people.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

This study explores the concept of visual argument as it applies to the archetypal evolution of the hillbilly stereotype. Literature reviewed in this paper includes foundational texts on the concept of visual argument, as well as theories related to visual rhetoric more generally. Beginning with an analysis of early twentieth-century postcards, this study establishes the foundational elements of the hillbilly archetype and explores their re-emergency in twenty-first century online memes, with particular attention to the genre of "Trump Voter" memes that emerged in response to the 2016 United States presidential campaign. This study contributes to a growing field of visual rhetorical studies and highlights the damaging consequences of engaging class-based stereo-types.

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I. Introduction

During the fall of 2016, I attended an artist talk at Virginia Tech in which a prominent public radio podcast producer discussed his upbringing in Tennessee. The podcast producer was an American of Arab descent and his presentation slideshow featured a cartoon animation of himself as a child timidly peering at white, male hillbilly characters standing at both of his sides. The cartoon hillbillies wore oversized baseball caps, wife-beater sleeveless shirts, and overalls; they had doofy, clueless, slack-jawed expressions, tattoos, and cigarettes dangling from their mouths. The radio producer explained that, as an Arab-American in Tennessee, he had frequently been the subject of stereotypes and profiling. I have no doubt that this young man did (and does) struggle to combat stereotypes and profiling; however, in condemning the reality of anti-Arab stereotyping, this man himself engaged a profoundly ingrained class-based stereotypes lurking in the dark substructure of American culture: the white, rural hillbilly as a stupid and backward rube. Unaware of the irony of his cartoon slide, he lamented the cruelty of stereotyping while the audience nodded in ascension.

The America of the roadside Mountain South is not the America omnipresent in mass media and in the national imagination. This America is not composed of endless urban centers and suburbs cloaked in profound postmodern pastiche, connected to one another by industrial systems of trains, highways, and busses. This America is dotted with towns and cities, woven together by long, sometimes winding and pot-holed state roads, and shadowed by mountains that loom above and then below. This roadside is not an architecture of urban sprawl, under-construction shopping centers, and shiny, new hospitals; the roadside of the mountain south is green and brown, steep and short, sometimes new, sometimes old, with grey peaks leveled by mountain top removal mines, memorial crosses and plastic flowers, and a variation of housing types indicative

of an incompatible range of incomes that is disharmonious with our national conception of America as a land of opportunity, equality, and fairness.

Thanks to diverse forms of media, from reconstruction-era literature to silent-films and modern reality television, the complex reality of social class, race, labor, and life in this region has been largely usurped by the monolithic hillbilly archetype that dominates the Southern Mountains in cultural imagination. For example, if you vacationed in this part of the Mountain South during the 1930s or 40s, it was possible to select and mail a number of different postcards emblazoned with depictions of rural hillbillies engaged in various stereotypically buffoonish scenes—thereby ensuring that you and your family back home could remember your brush with the drunk, lazy, illiterate, and purportedly violent native inhabitants of this primitive land and re-affirm your commitment to the deep historical myth of an inferior American white underclass.[1] Today, this tradition endures as, instead of postcards, memes depicting stereotypical rednecks are circulated throughout the internet, simultaneously establishing a boundary of separateness around rural poverty while implementing centuries-old stereotypes that paint the rural, Southern poor as ignorant, uncouth, and, in various ways, degenerate.

In this study, I will explore how the above postcards expose key elements of the hillbilly archetype as it formed in the early 20th century and examine how the elements of this archetype endure in twenty-first century internet memes. Though they are imbued with a sense of superficially harmless caricature-based humor, I will establish these postcards and memes as relics of a profound classist prejudice against the rural poor that dates to the earliest colonization of the United States and analyze how the particular visual elements of the hillbilly archetype reflect this

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[1] For a description of the myth of an American white underclass, see Nancy Isenberg, "Introduction," in *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America* (New York: Penguin, 2016), Kindle edition.

prejudice. Beginning by unpacking the historical foundations and the subsequent underlying malicious elements of the early 20th century hillbilly archetype, I will then establish key visual elements of the archetype through an analysis of a sample of hillbilly postcards, uncovering how these powerful archetypal elements compose a visual argument for rural inferiority with harmful implications. The last portion of this study explores modern visual internet memes that employ the visual archetypal elements of the hillbilly stereotype reimagined for twenty-first century audiences. Finally, I will explore a subset of these internet memes that engage a "Trump Voter" caption as examples of a particularly harmful visual argument that mobilize the hillbilly archetype in order to mock and discount rural political beliefs.[2]

Introductory History of The Hillbilly Stereotype

By the time mid-20th century postcard factories began printing images of lanky, baggy-overall clad Southern white men drinking moonshine and joking about illiteracy, the politics of class representation and the idea of a degenerate white, rural population had already been churning away in American media and political culture for centuries. These larger cultural ideas about the rural poor contribute to the formation of the hillbilly archetype in the early twenty-first century. In order to establish the cultural context of the images of ragged, barefoot hillbillies that adorn the sample of postcards (and later memes) examined in this study, I will begin by providing a brief history of the "hillbilly" image and the cultural, economic, and political situations that contributed to its formation; a more comprehensive history of the particular historical elements that directly contributed to the hillbilly archetype will be provided in Chapter IV.

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[2] The "Trump Voter" memes are a reference to Donald Trump's successful 2016 presidential campaign.

Historian Nancy Isenberg traces the predecessor-politics of the "redneck" or "white trash" stereotype all the way back to the earliest settlement of the Americas by England's poor and destitute people, shipped to colonies as prisoners or indentured servants; according to John White (governor of the failed 1587 Roanoke Island settlement), the colonies were a convenient way to "drayne away the filth" from England."[3] This idea of a class of European-descended "filth" persisted throughout the founding of the nation and into post-Civil War reconstruction, when the white Southern poor were seen as a "diseased segment of the prostrate South" and, according to one Union surgeon, a group that had "degenerated into an idle, ignorant, and physically and mentally degraded people."[4]

It is around this time that the earliest incarnation of the hillbilly stereotype takes root, propagated in mid-nineteenth century frontier writing of the Old South and popular "local color literature."[5] Preceding from a body of humorous writing on the South that extends back as far as 1708, Southern frontier humor is generally considered to have originated with Henry Junius Nott's 1834 *Novelettes of a Traveller* or, alternatively with Augustus Baldwin Longstreet's 1835 *Georgia Scenes*, which followed yeoman protagonists speaking in vernacular dialects as they drank heavily and found themselves in humorous, sometimes violent predicaments.[6] Other of Longstreet's writing was known to follow a formula, presenting "rural Georgians in humorous

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[3] John White quoted in Isenberg, *White Trash,* 17.

[4] Isenberg, *White Trash,* 181-182.

[5] M. Thomas Inge, "Li'l Abner, Snuffy, and Friends" in *Comics and the US South*, ed. Brannon Costello and Qiana J. Whitted (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2012), 7.

[6] Edward J. Piacentino, "Henry Junius Nott and the Roots of Southern Frontier Humor," in *Southern Frontier Humor: New approaches.* Edited by Edward Piacentino. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 19-20.

conflict until violence and cruelty outweigh their better natures."[7] The visual imagery of the hill-billy stereotype can also be attributed to Old South humor writing. Published in 1867, a photograph of G. W. Harris's character Sut Lovingood accompanied *The Sut Lovingood Yarns*, which described Sut's adventures as a foolish alcoholic with a "whiskey-proof gizzard," abnormally long legs, and a proclivity for getting into "more durn'd misfortunit skeery scrapes than eny-body."[8] In the image accompanying this text, Sut Lovingood stands barefoot with loose fitting overalls, a baggy collared shirt, and a slouchy hat.[9]

Travel writing about the Appalachian and Ozark mountains was another important medium through which popular myths extolling the violence, ignorance, and pre-modern lifestyles of these rural people were disseminated. According to historian Ronald Eller, "Between 1870 and 1890, over two hundred travel accounts and short stories were published in which the mountain people emerged as a rude, backward, romantic, and sometimes violent race who had quietly lived for generations in isolation from the mainstream of American life."[10] Eller attributes this rise in "local color" literature to the "newfound affluence and leisure time of the middle class [which] supported a growing literary industry."[11] Although topics for local color literature ranged from romantic depictions of Appalachia as quaint and old fashioned to perilous and remote, the prominence of feuding is one theme that bears mentioning. According to Altina Wal-

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[7] Armistead Lemon, "Summary: Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, 1790-1870," University Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, retrieved October 27, 2016, http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/longstreet/summary.html

[8] Piacentino, "Henry Junius Nott," 19-20.

[9] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 9.

[10] Ronald D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: The Modernization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930*, 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), xvi.

[11] Eller, *Miners*, 42.

ler, "The assumption that Appalachians have a genetic or cultural propensity to family based, extralegal violence has been pervasive in popular culture since the last decade of the nineteenth century when a dozen family feuds in the mountains of Kentucky claimed the attention of the national press."[12] The most notorious of these feuds was between the West Virginia Hatfield and the Kentucky McCoy families (though many other family feuds were recorded in newspapers and embedded in regional fiction). Although Waller's research indicates that there was an unusual surge in violence in the Appalachians in the mid 1880s, she attributes this to economic disputes related to industrialization rather than to the causes provided in popular culture, namely Civil War rivalries or family vengeances.[13]

The humorous cartoon hillbillies pictured on travel postcards in the 1940s would have been familiar to audiences given these profound national myths, but also because they emerged (more or less) concurrently with popular nationally syndicated cartoons such as *Li'l Abner*, *Snuffy Smith,* and *The Mountain Boys*.[14] *Li'l Abner,* the first comic strip devoted entirely to rural Southern characters began in 1934, though Southern characters appeared in other comic strips as early as 1894.[15] Authored by Connecticut native Al Capp, *Li'l Abner* ran for 43 years, with the stories of Li'l Abner's lovable buffoonery eventually appearing in over 900 US newspapers.[16]

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[12] Altina L. Waller, "Feuding in Appalachia: Evolution of a Cultural Stereotype," in *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina Laura Waller (Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 1995), 347-376.

[13] Waller, "Feuding in Appalachia," 367.

[14] Anthony Harkins, "Luke, Snuffy, and Abner," in *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[15] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 3.

[16] Ibid.

Snuffy Smith, another Appalachian hillbilly, began as a recurrent character in the already popular *Barney Google* comic and became the focus of the strip 1942.[17] Critics charged both *Li'l Abner* and *Snuffy Smith* with "contributing to the stereotyping of Southern mountaineers as backwards, dumb, lazy, and unable to cope with the modern world."[18] The chronological location of the postcards I will analyze in this study is congruent with the emergence and of these popular cartoon characters.

In addition to cartoon depictions of hillbillies, other popular media sources in the 1930s and 40s employed similar hillbilly stereotypes.[19] Hillbilly violence was a popular subject for early silent films and, to a lesser extent, for sound films made after 1927. Musicals such as the 1937 *Mountain Music* or 1938 *Arkansas Traveler*, and string bands and gospel music (popularized in the first decades of the 20th century through radio stations) also contributed to the growing national idea of a Southern mountain hillbilly.[20] Decades later, three of the most popular 1960s television shows were *The Andy Griffith Show, Gomer Pyle, USMC,* and *The Beverly Hillbillies,* all three of which "revived the homespun, albeit unassimilable, traits of good old [Sut Lovingood]."[21] These films and media sources present an interesting dichotomy. Although it's true that they sometimes portray hillbilly characters positively as romantic, independent, or self-sufficient, this media still contributes to a national conception of the rural, mountain poor as deeply "other." This national conception can then be mobilized for damaging and stereotypical portrayals; like all stereotypes, it can be leveraged for dangerous reasons.

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[17] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 24.
[18] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 25.
[19] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 14.
[20] Inge, "Li'l Abner," 14-15; Harkins, *HillBilly*
[21] Isenberg, *White Trash*, 233.

Today popular television shows continue this legacy in a system of what David Whisnant calls "cultural imperialism."[22] Television shows such as *Honey Boo Boo, Duck Dynasty,* and *Buckwild* depict rural people as deeply unassimilable, suggesting the deviance of their eating, recreation, and lifestyle customs. A 2002 attempt by CBS to produce a reality show version of *The Beverly Hillbillies* (called *The Real Beverly Hillbillies*) failed after Appalachian organizations mounted a national media campaign illustrating not only the functional illogic of this program, but its implementation of a negative and damaging hyperbolic stereotype.[23] For at least some people in this region, the cultural imperialism of the monolithic hillbilly trope exploited by external Hollywood media executives has outstayed its welcome.[24] When leveraged by outsiders in order to voyeuristically exploit the rural poor and to contribute to a national fascination with the purportedly primitive or backwards rural South, media such as these modern television shows—or the postcards and memes analyzed in this study—take on a more insidious stereotyping function, presenting a visual argument for the personal and cultural inferiority of the rural, Southern poor.

As shown above, the hillbilly stereotype, linked to the founding class conflicts of our nation, persists today. It is visible in popular television media and also on the internet, where viral

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[22] David E. Whisnant, "Ethnicity and the Recovery of Regional Identity in Appalachia: Thoughts Upon Entering the Zone of Occult Instability," *Soundings* (1973): 124-138.

[23] Angela Cooke-Jackson and Elizabeth K. Hansen, "Appalachian Culture and Reality TV: The Ethical Dilemma of Stereotyping Others," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 23, no. 3 (2008): 183-200.

[24] Though the hillbilly stereotype is outright condemned by some, other residents of the region certainly use the trope as a symbol of heritage and pride. This analysis focuses on the underlying messages of cultural inferiority that such depictions adopt when they are appropriated by external media producers and elites or adopted by an external public.

memes such as the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck"," "Redneck Randal," and "HoneyBoo-Boo Child" circulate with user-generated humorous captions—an echo of the cartoon hillbilly postcards from the 1940s—and the latest incarnation of cultural imperialism meant to paint the rural Southern white poor as monolithically degenerate.[25] According to Isenberg, each "era had its own means of distancing its version of white trash from the mainstream ideal."[26] In the 1930s and 40s, this "othering" can be seen in comic cartoon postcards that represent the coalescing hillbilly archetype.[27] Today, this archetype is so embedded in the cultural imagination that it surfaces in citizen-created internet memes, engaged with the same visual arguments of nearly-century old postcards.

Rationale For Study

Since the advent of mass media, scholars have been focused on critical examinations of the ever-increasing role media—especially visual images—play in our lives. Although there are numerous and diverse theories that deal with verbal rhetoric, comparably few theories deal specifically with artifacts of visual rhetoric. Given that "technological and cultural developments are increasingly enhancing visual communication," it is especially important to attend to such artifacts and to uncover the complex messages that objects of visual rhetoric can send as they play

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[25] For meme source: "Redneck," KnowYourMeme.com, accessed April 3, 2017, http://knowyourmeme.com/search?context=entries&sort=relevance&q=redneck

[26] Isenberg, "White Trash," 2.

[27] The concept of the "other" emerged in Georg Wilhelm Fredric Hegel's understanding of the self as it relates to the "other." In critical theory, the concept of "othering" has been used to describe various social constructions, including the way women are portrayed as "other" from men and the colonized are portrayed as "other" from the colonizers. The definition of "othering" is "to perceive or treat (a group or member of a group) as different, foreign, strange, etc." See: "Other," Dictionary.com, accessed April 3, 2016, http://www.dictionary.com/browse/other

an ever-more important role in modern life.[28] According to David Birdsell and Leo Groarke, "A better understanding of [the visual components of argument and persuasion] is especially important if we want to understand the role of advertising, film, television, video, multimedia, and the World Wide Web in our lives."[29]

In addition to contributing to a growing body of research on visual rhetoric, this study also contributes to the scholarly disciplines of Appalachian and Southern studies. Although Appalachian studies scholars have long written on the prevalence of the hillbilly stereotype, few studies have specifically chronicled the particular elements of the stereotype or specifically linked these elements to portrayals of the stereotype in contemporary media.[30] Southern studies scholars have recently begun to problematize popular portraits of the Southern literary and cultural landscape.[31] Moving beyond consensuses on William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor, contemporary Southern literary studies creep toward a widening field of inquiry that "emphasizes the complex, multiple nature of Southern culture(s)" and focuses on works that are about the South, rather than those simply created by Southern authors.[32] Given this turn towards understanding larger conceptions of the South and attention to non-traditional artifacts, studies of Southern cartons fill an important, emerging academic niche. In addition, since most work in

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[28] Anthony J. Blair, "The Possibility and Actuality of Visual Arguments," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 33, no. 1 (1996): 23-39.

[29] David S. Birdsell and Leo Groarke, "Toward a Theory of Visual Argument." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 33, no. 1 (1996): 1-10.

[30] For a description of the hillbilly stereotype see: Anthony Harkins, "Introduction" in *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)*; for a criticism of the state of Appalachian studies literature regarding anti-stereotyping research see Barbara Ellen Smith, "De-Gradations of Whiteness: Appalachia and the Complexities of Race." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 10, nos. 1-2 (2004): 38-57.

[31] Brannon Costello and Qiana J. Whitted "Introduction," in *Comics and the US South*," ed. Brannon Costello and Qiana J. Whitted, vii-xvi. (Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2012).

[32] Costello and Whitted, "Introduction," xi.

these areas derives from anthropological or cultural studies research methods and involves studies of the hillbilly stereotype in culture, this study offers the possibility of more specific analytic contributions from a careful rhetorical analysis. In this way, the results of this study have implications not only for the concept of visual rhetoric, but also for the expanding fields of Appalachian and Southern studies.

Finally, this study contributes to a timely and growing renewed national attention to the "white working class," inspired by Donald Trump's 2016 presidential election. While much non-scholarly attention has been paid to the so-called "white working class" in an effort to explain the purportedly-monolithic political leanings of rural white people in the Mountain South, this study contributes a careful and evidence based analysis of preexisting stereotypes about this region. According to Barbra Ellen Smith, Appalachian studies scholarship on the concept of the hillbilly is so voluminous as to compose a veritable sub-field of scholarship[33]; however, I have found relatively little research deriving from media studies or rhetorical analysis. This study offers an in-depth analysis of the particular visual rhetorical elements that compose the hillbilly archetype that may prove to be helpful to scholars investigating the effects and implementation of the archetype through anthropological or critical lenses.

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[33] "De-Gradations of Whiteness," 47.

II. Literature Review

Definition of Traditional Argument

In this section, I will begin establishing the foundational theoretical basis for my study by first exploring the broad concept of "argument." I will then analyze how this debate about the definition of "argument" informs the debate about whether or not "visual argument" is possible. Towards establishing that visual argument is possible, I will explore a variety of definitions of argument that allow for the possibility of visual argument and then review a variety of studies that outline the theory of visual argument. Then I will provide examples of studies that have effectively implemented the theory of visual argument and review their contributions to my study of twentieth century postcards. Finally, I will review alternative approaches to visual rhetoric towards establishing that visual argument is the most appropriate approach for this study, and I will review research on modern internet memes that will inform my analysis of hillbilly memes in Chapter V.

In order to understand the concept of visual argument and the contested terrain it inhabits, it is important to first review briefly traditional definitions of argument. In their introductory argumentation textbook, Karen C. Rybacki and Donald J. Rybacki characterize argument as "a form of instrumental communication relying on reasoning and proof to influence belief or behavior through the use of spoken or written messages."[34] Another similar textbook defines argument as "a set of statements in which a claim is made, support is offered for it, and there is an attempt

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[34] Karyn C. Rybacki and Donald J. Rybacki, *Advocacy and Opposition: An Introduction to Argumentation,* (Boston, MA: Alyn & Bacon, 2013): 3.

to influence someone in a context of disagreement."[35] These definitions articulate common components of arguments—a claim, support, the intention of influencing others—which are significant because they play a key role in criticisms of visual argument.

Daniel J. O'Keefe also explores the parameters of arguments and argumentation, defining arguments as having "a linguistically explicable claim and one or more linguistically explicable reasons."[36] In "Two Concepts of Argument," O'Keefe makes an important distinction between two different kinds of arguments. According to O'Keefe, the first type of argument refers to individuals presenting an argument as a "communicative act," while the second type refers to an interaction in which two or more people quarrel.[37] This distinction is important for this study (of the first type of argument) because recognizing this difference is not only "a starting-point for analysis," it also complicates the criteria necessary for something to qualify as an argument of any kind.[38] O'Keefe also makes an important point in claiming that "a bad argument is still an argument."[39] An argument may try to make claims, offer support, and persuade an audience and fail or do so poorly—that does not disqualify it as an argument.

Some definitions of argument also explicitly state the necessity of language. Frans H. Van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst and T. Kruiger write, "Argumentation requires the use of language. A person engaged in argumentation makes an assertion or statement, assumes or doubts something, denies something, and so on. For the performance of all these activities he must utter

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[35] Barbara Inch and Edward S. Inch, *Critical Thinking and Communication: The Use of Reason in Argument*, (Macmillan College, 1994).
[36] Daniel. J. O'Keefe, "The Concepts of Argument and Arguing," In *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research,* ed. J.R. Cox and C. A. Willard, (Carbon-dale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1982).
[37] Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Readings in Argumentation* 11 (1992): 79.
[38] O'Keefe "Two Concepts," 88.
[39] O'Keefe "Two Concepts," 81.

words and sentences (whether spoken or written)."[40] Although Van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger observe that "the most solid beliefs are those which are not only admitted without proof, but very often not even made explicit" and acknowledge rhetorical uses of images exist, C.H. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyeca nonetheless limit their study of argument to "only the discursive means of obtaining the adherence of minds."[41] In "Concepts of Argument and Arguing," O'Keefe, expands on this necessity of language, stating that "paradigm cases of argument, involve a linguistically explicable claim and one or more linguistically explicable reasons."[42] To be considered an argument according to O'Keefe's definition, an argument must be able to be articulated verbally whether or not words are its original form; in order to be an argument, we must "be able to express linguistically both the claim and the reasons."[43]

Critiques of Visual Argument

These kinds of narrow, linguistically and logically informed definitions of argument have been used to preclude the possibility of visual argument. David Fleming discourages the possibility of visual argument, writing, "An argument is an intentional human act in which support is offered on behalf of a debatable belief. It is characterized first and foremost by reasonableness… it involves a two-part relation, one part (evidence, data, proof, support, reason, etc.) supporting the other."[44] According to Fleming, a picture cannot satisfy this necessary criteria. A picture cannot

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[40] F. H. Van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, & T. Kruiger, *The Study of Argumentation,* (New York: Irvington, 1984), 3.

[41] C.H. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyeca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation,* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

[42] O'Keefe, "The Concepts," 17.

[43] Ibid.

[44] David Fleming "Can Pictures be Arguments?" *Argumentation and Advocacy* 33, no. 1 (1996): 13.

tell you which elements serve as claims and which elements serve as justification, and additionally, a picture cannot make any claim "which can be contested, doubted, or otherwise improved upon by others."[45] Fleming asserts that the potential for contestation is fundamental to the possibility of argument, and, since pictures "partake so powerfully of material reality," they cannot be rejected according to the same logical criteria used to accept or reject verbal arguments, and therefore pictures cannot qualify as arguments.[46]

Anthony Blair also explores the possibility of visual argument, though his conclusion does not preclude the possibility of visual argument. Blair uses O'Keefe's definition of argument as "a linguistically explicable claim and one or more linguistically explicable reasons."[47] Like Fleming, Blair concludes that two fundamental components of arguments are a clear claim and clear support, as well as the possibility of accepting or rejecting the argument.[48] Though Blair concludes that these requirements are not met by visual images in most situations, he acknowledges that some political cartoons (and other types of media) can be said to make arguments. In order to qualify, though, "enough information has to be provided visually to permit an unambiguous verbal reconstruction of the propositions expressed, so that, combined that with the contextual information, it is possible to reconstruct a plausible premise and conclusion combination intended by the cartoonist."[49] Blair concludes that although visual arguments are possible, "they seem not to be widespread."[50] Moreover, when visual arguments occur they are not significantly different from verbal ones.[51]

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[45] Fleming, "Can Pictures," 14.
[46] Fleming, "Can Pictures," 19.
[47] Blair, "The Possibility," 25.
[48] Blair, "The Possibility," 26
[49] Blair, "The Possibility," 37.
[50] Blair, "The Possibility," 37-38.
[51] Blair, "The Possibility," 36.

Different Definitions of Argument

Ray Lynn Anderson and David C. Mortensen complicate this understanding of argument by pointing out the significance of "public logics" and the difficulty of applying formal logical frameworks to rhetoric intended for a lay public. According to Anderson and Mortensen, "Given the full powers of language, much rhetorical argument may simply be beyond logic."[52] Rhetorical arguments, made by and for the general public, are nuanced and highly context based, and it is therefore difficult to dissect them according to a formal logical framework—for example, the logical and chronological separation of claim from support, which Fleming uses as a basis of all argument may appear in visual artifacts, albeit in a clouded, nuanced, and unstable form. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyeca also believe that "reason is entirely incompetent in those areas which elude calculation."[53] This assertion also fits with O'Keefe's claim that "bad arguments are still arguments," and it is important for this study because it allows for a more interpretive approach to argument, rather than an approach demanding a formal, logically-derived example of premise and support.[54] In addition to making the case against narrow systems of logical evaluation applied to rhetoric, Anderson and Mortensen also underscore the importance of context for understanding nuanced rhetorical artifacts and argue for a "contextual analysis of the language with and surrounding argumentative measures."[55] The significance of context, nuance, and periphery argumentative measures is echoed by David Birdsell and Leo Groarke as an instrumental element of visual arguments.[56]

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[52] Ray Lynn Anderson and David C. Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *Quarterly Journal Of Speech 53*, no. 2 (April 1967): 143.

[53] C.H. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyeca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation,* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

[54] O'Keefe, "Two Concepts," 81.

[55] Anderson and Mortensen, "Logic," 150.

[56] Birdsell and Groarke, "Toward," 4.

Like Anderson and Mortensen, Wayne Brockreide also challenges rigid definitions of argument. Wayne Brockreide's writing on argument is important for establishing a more fluid understanding on the term and examining the place at which conceptual, modern definitions of argument begin to depart from more rigid, traditional understandings of argument. Writing in 1974 on rhetorical criticism as argument, Brockreide defined argument as "the process whereby a person reasons his way from one idea to the choice of another idea."[57] Brockreide goes on to define five general characteristics of argument:

> *"(1) an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of a new belief or the reinforcement of an old one; (2) a perceived rationale to justify that leap; (3) a choice among two or more competing claims; (4) a regulation of uncertainty in relation to the selected claim-since someone has made an inferential leap, certainty can be neither zero nor total; and (5) a willingness to risk a confrontation of that claim with one's peers."*[58]

In a 1992 book Chapter titled "Where is Argument," Brockreide clarifies these original five characteristics, emphasizing that argument is an idea, an "open concept," and a "way of seeing" that can be applied to diverse and (almost) limitless products of human creation should someone choose to use it as a perspective. He also adds a sixth characteristic, stating that an argument is a "frame of reference shared optimally."[59] Brockreide responds to those who criticize this kind of conceptual definition of argument saying, "'argument' has not been stretched out of shape… it constitutes a frame of reference that can be related potentially to any kind of human endeavor";

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[57] Wayne Brockreide, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," *Quarterly Journal Of Speech 60,* no. 2 (April 1974): 165.
[58] Brockreide, "Rhetorical Criticism."
[59] Wayne Brockreide, "Where is Argument?" in *Readings in Argumentation*, ed. William L. Benoit and Dale Hample, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992), 77.

however, Brockreide is careful to limit his definition of argument by saying that though it is an "elastic" definition, it is not always the most productive concept to apply to an artifact.[60]

In exploring the application of semiotic theory to visual arguments, Paul Van den Hoven comes to a conclusion similar to Brockreide's "open concept" idea of argument. Van den Hoven questions the idea that an explicitly stated premise is necessary for an argument, visual or verbal. Using semiotic theory, Van den Hoven distinguishes between "arguments" and texts, saying "texts are 'merely' sign vehicles and that therefore it is metonymical to denote text structures that prototypically convey argumentation as being *argumentative texts* or *argumentative discourse* or just *argumentation*."[61] An argument is formed when a text is processed by an individual, therefore allowing for divergent interpretation from individual to individual depending on context and foreknowledge. According to Van den Hoven, verbal arguments also allow for this subjectivity of interpretation; even in verbal arguments, one person may be guided to a particular conclusion based on context or foreknowledge, while another is not.[62] Therefore, context and existing knowledge of representational elements is key for understanding any argument, though it is particularly significant for visual arguments which (according to Van den Hoven) may not explicitly state premises or support. The various ways representational (mimetic) elements of an image or verbal text interact with conclusions implied by the text and constructed by the viewer suggest a complex system of "premises" and "support" that transcends explicit, logical statement.[63] In other words, an argument—visual or verbal—may communicate a premise without the

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[60] "I do not with to argue that all communication is usefully called an argument." Brockreide, "Where is Argument?" 74.

[61] Van den Hoven "Cognitive Semiotics in Argumentation: A Theoretical Exploration" 158; Emphasis from the original text

[62] Paul Van Den Hoven, "Cognitive semiotics in argumentation: A theoretical exploration," *Argumentation* 29, no. 2 (2015): 157-176.

[63] Van Den Hoven, "Cognitive Semiotics," 172-173.

text explicitly stating it, and this premise might be highly dependent on context and fore-knowledge. Based on Van den Hoven's analysis, it is therefore possible to understand these complex visual arguments, transcendent of logical statement, by attending to the minutia of context and foreknowledge likely audiences use to interpret artifacts.

In an essay responding to Brockreide's "Where is Argument?," O'Keefe expands on Brockreide's characteristics of argument, emphasizing the difference between argument as a "communicative act" and argument as a quarrel among two or more people.[64] O'Keefe describes a shift from prescriptions creating rigid parameters of argument (as described in the traditional approaches to argument above) to descriptions of argument that accommodate a wider variety of argumentative types (as with Brockreide's characteristics). O'Keefe cites Stephen Toulmin's useful recommendation for approaching arguments: "This will mean seeing and describing the arguments in each field as they are, recognizing how they work; not setting oneself up to explain why, or to demonstrate that they necessarily must work. What is required, in a phrase, is not epistemological theory but epistemological analysis."[65] Toulmin, like Brockreide and O'Keefe, advocate for a less rigid approach to identifying and dissecting arguments, here acknowledging the significance of genre in argument by exploring how arguments work in particular contexts. This broad epistemological approach results in "arguments" diverse and contextual, rather than rigid and formulaic.

Though Toulmin is a logician and not a rhetorician, Brockreide and Douglas Ehninger find his description of the "Pattern of an Argument" helpful for establishing a set of propositions

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[64] O'Keefe, "Two Concepts," 79-90.
[65] Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 238.

for identifying arguments, and his work useful for expanding the concept of argument in general.[66] Toulmin's pattern of an argument begins with a claim (C), which is followed by data (D) that answers the question "What have you got to go on?" and may be either fact or opinion.[67] If data does not make a sufficient case, an argument can benefit from the addition of a warrant (W), which answers the question "How do you get there?" and may be based on a set of established rules, principles, etc.[68] This understanding of argument diverges from more rigid formal definitions reviewed above, which necessitates a clear claim and support. Though Toulmin provides a host of situational examples and complicates these basic units a great deal, what is important for the present study is simply that an argument involves a claim based on either fact or opinion (data) and then a warrant (drawn from established rules and principles) that leads the audience to draw a conclusion from the data. This characterization of the stages of argument fits usefully with specific methodology for analyzing visual arguments.

These more conceptual, fluid understanding of argument support the concept of visual argument by allowing for a wider variety of argumentative types. Anderson and Mortensen point out the folly of uniformly applying rigid, logically derived formulas for argument to rhetorical artifacts that are "beyond logic." Brockreide and Van den Hoven offer a new set of characteristics for identifying arguments and articulate the usefulness of the concept of "argument" as a "way of seeing" that is highly context based. Taken together, these writers depict argument as a useful lens for which to examine diverse products of human creation (which would not have

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[66] Wayne Brockreide and Douglas Ehninger, "Toulmin on argument: An interpretation and application." *Quarterly journal of speech* 46, no. 1 (1960): 44-53.
[67] Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 90.
[68] Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, 91.

been suited to traditional, rigid definitions of argument) that can be seen to be conveying or advocating for any kind of point.

Visual Argument

Although there is some dissent regarding the possibility of visual arguments, many scholars agree that visual arguments are theoretically possible and that the most productive domain for debate involves discussions of how visual arguments might be identified or how they might function. These discussions are based on the idea of visual argument originally laid out by Birdesll and Groake in their 1996 paper "Toward a Theory of Visual Argument."[69] This paper appeared in a special double issue of *Argumentation and Advocacy,* which according to Jens Kjeldsen, initiated a discussion of visual argument that extends into today.[70]

According to Birdsell and Groarke's 2007 "Outlines of a Theory of Visual Argument," visual arguments are "arguments (in the traditional premise and conclusion sense) which are conveyed in images."[71] Birdsell and Groarke argue against traditional verbal-centric interpretations of "argument" and assert that a theory of visual argument principally requires that: "we accept the possibility of visual meaning, we make more of an effort to consider images in context, and we recognize the argumentative aspects of representation and resemblance."[72] Towards establishing this foundation and in response to critics who assert visual meaning is "arbitrary or indeterminate," Birdsell and Groarke consider cases in which visual meaning is straightforward.[73] They provide the examples of an anti-smoking advertisement with a vague caption that would be

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[69] Birdsell and Groake, "Toward a Theory."
[70] Jens E. Kjeldsen, "The Study of Visual and Multimodal Argumentation," *Argumentation* (2015): 115.
[71] "Outlines," 103.
[72] Birdsell and Groarke, "Toward," 8.
[73] Ibid., 3.

contextless and indecipherable without its accompanying image and an anti-soviet political cartoon that incorporates text minimally (as labels for visual elements) but nonetheless communicates a clear point. These examples prove the possibility of visual meaning, leaving "little room for the presumption that visual meaning is necessarily arbitrary or indeterminate."[74]

In addition to highlighting the possibility of deliberate and discrete meaning in visual arguments, Birdsell and Groarke also emphasize the significance of context for visual meaning. According to Birdsell and Groarke, inattention to context "drives a good deal of the thinking that presupposes significant, inherent, and universal differences separating the verbal and the visual."[75] Just as words (the elements of verbal rhetoric) are not considered in isolation from the situational and cultural context that makes them "truncated references to more complete propositions," individual elements of a visual argument cannot be considered in isolation.[76] Birdsell and Groarke identify three kinds of context: "immediate visual context, immediate verbal context, and visual culture."[77] For this study, the possibility of immediate verbal context and the possibility of visual culture are especially important. According to Birdsell and Groarke, when verbal text accompanies an image (as in the case of the captioned postcards), visual elements should not be treated as unimportant or secondary: "Words can establish a context of meaning into which images can enter with a high degree of specificity while achieving a meaning different from the words alone."[78] In addition, the larger context of "visual culture" must be considered when evaluating visual arguments.

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[74] Ibid., 4.
[75] Ibid., 5.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 6.

This idea of concurrence of visual and verbal elements in visual arguments, as well as the significance of visual meaning is emphasized by and Birdsell and Groarke in their later works, as well as by other scholars. Anthony J. Blair, for instance, characterized these hybrid arguments as "multimodal" and points out that "arguments are not themselves verbal or visual."[79] Rather, when people want to express an idea as an argument, they use an appropriate communicative tool such as language or image to best convey their premise and justification. Paul van den Hoven echoes this sentiment, calling argumentation a "cognitive category" that requires no prototypical format.[80] Groarke uses the idea of a multimodal argument that incorporates visual imagery to explore modes of arguing inspired by social semiotic theory.[81] Jens E. Kjeldsen also draws on social semiotic theory to distinguish between the types of meaning conveyed in visual vs. verbal artifacts, claiming that "because of their potential for plenitude, pictures have the capacity to impart certain communicative values and virtues to argumentation."[82] An argument may use a variety of "modes" of arguing—including visual images and verbal elements—and these multimodal arguments may potentially be more complex and salient than other arguments, though they require the kind of additional attention and decryption offered by theories of visual argument.

In their 2007 paper "Outlines of a Theory of Visual Argument" (published in the 2007 edition of Argumentation and Advocacy, also devoted to visual argument) Birdsell and Groarke

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[79] Anthony J. Blair "Probative Norms for Visual Argument," *Argumentation* 29, no. 2 (2015): 232. Other scholars who have discussed multimodality include: Michael Gilbert, "Multi-modal argumentation," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 24, no. 2 (1994): 159-177.; Rick Iedema, "Multimodality, Resemiotization: Extending the analysis of discourse as multi-semiotic practice," *Visual communication* 2, no. 1 (2003): 29-57.
[80] Van den Hoven, "Cognitive Semiotics."
[81] Leo Groarke, "Going multimodal: What is a mode of arguing and why does it matter?," *Argumentation* 29, no. 2 (2015): 133-155.
[82] Jens E. Kjeldsen, "The Rhetoric of Thick Representation: How pictures render the importance and strength of an argument salient," *Argumentation* 29, no. 2 (2015): 197-215.

identify five ways in which visual images are used: "as flags, demonstrations, metaphors, symbols, and archetypes.[83] One way that an image can be used as a component of visual argument is as a visual flag, which captures an audience's attention. An image might also function as a visual demonstration, which is used to convey information (e.g. a map or diagram), a visual metaphor, which conveys some claim figuratively (e.g. a slow runner depicted as a snail), or as a visual symbol, which stands for something else because of a preexisting strong association (e.g. country flags are symbolic of the countries they represent).[84] Finally, images may act as visual archetypes when their meaning derives from a popular cultural narrative (e.g. a lying politician depicted with a long nose in reference to Pinocchio, for example).[85] Images may communicate using some combination of these elements to present complex and coherent messages. From these five genres of image use, it is possible to categorize and understand much of the phenomena that constitutes any particular visual argument.

The concept of archetypes as one of five tools to common to visual arguments is particularly important for this study. According to James Chesebro, Dale Bertelsen, and Thomas Gencarelli, archetypes are symbols that are ''commonly understood and possess similar meanings across diverse situations, in extremely distinct cultural and societal systems, and even in extremely unique historical eras.''[86] To this notion Rebecca Gill adds, "Archetypes both recur and reduce, meaning that these constructed ideas are patterned in discourse and rhetoric and reduce

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[83] "Outlines," 104.
[84] Birdsell and Grarke, "Outlines," 104-106.
[85] Birdsell and Groarke, "Outlines," 105.
[86] J.W. Chesebro, Thomas Gencarelli, and D.A. Bertelsen, "Archetypal Criticism," *Communication Education 39,* no. 4 (October 1990): 258.

complex or diverse qualities into one archetype or set of archetypes. Archetypes are also analogous in that they transcend unique sites and situations, rendering the archetype similarly across occurrences."[87] Archetypes are therefore symbols (including visual symbols) that recur throughout time with similar meaning. Archetypes loaded with this historical meaning can be used to evoke embedded cultural messages and to visually present

David Godden expands on Birdsell and Groarke's original definition of visual argument, refuting critics of the theory by clarifying the types of content present in visual arguments. According to Godden, "Whatever standards of meaningfulness we require in order that something rightly be interpreted as an argument, those conditions can be met by images when they are supplied with an appropriate context of use."[88] Godden acknowledges that there may be "fewer visual arguments than the enthusiasts would have us admit" and reiterates the necessary criteria of "claims and reasons" as two components of arguments.[89] Godden distinguishes between literature which interprets the standards of visual arguments as commensurate with the standards of verbal arguments (which he calls "normative non-revisionism,") and literature which claims that visual arguments require different evaluative standards than verbal arguments.[90] Godden argues in favor of the "non-revisionist" tendency which applies criteria for traditional argument to visual argument and thus presents four useful standards for evaluating whether or not something is a visual argument:

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[87] Gill, Rebecca, "The Evolution of Organizational Archetypes: From the American to the Entrepreneurial Dream," *Communication Monographs 80*, no. 3 (September 2013): 334.
[88] David Godden, "On the Norms of Visual Argument: A Case for Normative Non-Revisionism," *Argumentation: An International Journal on Reasoning* (2016): 33.
[89] Godden, "On the Norms," 2.
[90] Godden, "On the Norms," 7.

"(1) Whether a visual argument's premises are acceptable; (2) whether a visual argument's conclusion follows, deductively or inductively from its premises; (3) Whether a visual argument is appropriate or effective in the context of a particular audience or a particular kind of dialogue; (4) Whether a visual argument contains a fallacy or conforms to some standard pattern of reasoning."[91]

It is into this non-revisionist category that much writing on visual argument (including that of Birdsell and Groarke) falls, and these criteria are therefore useful for evaluating visual arguments.

Examples

In addition to the expansive debate on the implementation and possibility of visual argument, the concept of visual argument, as articulated by Birdsell, Groarke, and others, has also been effectively implemented in various studies. Examples of the theory visual argument in action include studies of particular media, such as Catherine H. Palczewski's analysis of suffragette postcards, while other examples simply delve deeper into the concept of visual argument, offering additional nuance to the theory, such as Eveline Feteris, Leo Groarke, and Jose Plug's "Strategic Maneuvering with Visual Arguments in Political Cartoon," or Leo Groarke, Catherine H. Palczewski, and David Godden's "Navigating the Visual Turn in Argument."

Palczewski explores how suffragette postcards both present and respond to larger cultural conversations about woman suffrage.[92] Palczewski notes the importance of visual media for understanding the "intersecting and countervailing pressures" that influenced depictions of women

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[91] Godden, "On the Norms," 8.

[92] Catherine H. Palczewski, "The Male Madonna and the Feminine Uncle Sam: Visual argument, icons, and ideographs in 1909 anti-woman suffrage postcards," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 91, no. 4 (2005): 365-394.

and men at the turn of the century, and notes particularly the importance of postcards.[93] Using a sample of anti-woman suffrage postcards from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Palczewski establishes how the visual images in these postcards reinforce two key verbal anti-woman suffrage arguments: "(1) women lacked the physical power necessary to enforce their vote, and (2) the public realm was unsuited to proper women."[94] In order to parse the particular messages communicated by these postcards, which show things like a male Madonna figure feeding a baby and a woman dressed as Uncle Sam, Palczewski uses the concept of visual argument in conjunction with an ideographic analysis, identifying how these postcards contribute to the concept of <woman> and <man>.[95]

Feteris, Groarke, and Plug consider how visual arguments function in political cartoons, saying "we consider political cartoons as a form of indirect argumentation which is advanced as support for a standpoint in the context of a critical discussion aimed at the resolution of a dispute."[96] Feteris et al. demonstrate the application pragma-dialectical analysis to visual arguments (exploring pragma-dialectical stages including confrontation, opening, argumentation, and concluding in political cartoons), and they also investigate how cartoonists make use of topoi based on a common cultural heritage as the "source" domain of the visual metaphor that is adopted in the cartoon.[97] These studies provide useful examples of how visual argument can successfully be used to analyze both postcards and cartoons.

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[93] Ibid., 373.
[94] Ibid., 375.
[95] Ibid., 376-388.
[96] Eveline Feteris, Leo Groarke, and Jose Plug, "Strategic Maneuvering with Visual Arguments in Political Cartoon," *Keeping in touch with Pragma-Dialectics* (2011): 59-74.
[97] Feteris et al., "Strategic Maneuvering," 61-62, 72.

Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden address visual argument in the spring 2016 edition of *Argumentation and Advocacy*, which was again devoted entirely to the concept of visual argument. In this piece, Groarke et al. discuss decades of debate in the field, concluding that despite some criticism, most attention to the field agrees that visual, or multimodal, arguments are indeed possible. Groarke et al. clarify the distinction between pictures-as-arguments (noting that not all pictures are arguments) and visual arguments that incorporate visual and verbal (or other non-visual) elements (as in the case of political cartoons), emphasizing that a comprehensive theory of visual arguments accounts for the potential interplay of visual and verbal, as well as the significance of context.[98] Groarke et al. also argue for an analysis of both argument's discursive assertions and presentational components, echoing other writing (Blair, Van den Hausen, Groarke) emphasizing attention to multimodality and context in the study of visual argument.[99] According to Groarke et al., the distinction between the verbal and the visual is not rigid and the two cannot be easily separated.[100]

These examples, in combination with the literature reviewed above, support a broader and more interpretive definition of argument than some of the traditional premise-conclusion definitions of argument presented earlier. For example, Birdsell and Groarke, as well as most other scholars, emphasize the multimodality of visual arguments, saying they may include visual as well as verbal elements (though these scholars are careful to note that not all pictures are arguments). In addition to attending to a visual argument's verbal elements, this literature also sug-

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[98] Leo Groarke, Catherine H. Palczewski, and David Godden, "Navigating the Visual Turn in Argument," *Argumentation & Advocacy 52*, no. 4 (Spring 2016):218

[99] Groarke et al., "Navigating," 229.

[100] Groarke et al., "Navigating," 218.

gests attention to context is crucial for understanding the minutiae of meaning conveyed in a visual image. Van den Hoven presents an interpretation of visual arguments in which a premise need not be explicitly stated but is instead available only through audience interpretation of a text. Godden provides useful criteria for evaluating an argument, though Palczewski and Feteris et al. provide examples of how visual argument can be applied in real studies. From this literature we see first, a set of criteria for identifying and evaluating arguments that is more complex than simply looking for premises and conclusions, as well as a methodology for analyzing how visual images are utilized and for attending to a visual argument's multi-modality. From this criteria, it is possible to successfully identify a visual argument, attend to its context, and unpack the visual, verbal, and/or presentational elements that compose it in order to finally evaluate the implications and meaning of that argument.

Approaches to the Analysis of Visual Arguments

In addition to the theory of visual argument discussed above, there exists a robust and growing body of visual rhetorical theories of other kinds. In this section, I will briefly review Sonja K. Foss's "Theory of Visual Rhetoric" and Erwin Panofsky's theory of iconology—two alternative methods for analyzing visual rhetoric. I have included this additional exploration of visual rhetoric through lenses other than visual argument in order to provide a more comprehensive overview of the state of visual rhetorical scholarship and to show how visual argument is the most appropriate visual rhetorical technique for my study of hillbilly postcards and memes.

Sonja K. Foss's "Theory of Visual Rhetoric" and "Visual Communication in the Basic Course" articulate an interpretation of visual rhetoric that allows for the application of rhetorical techniques to visual objects. Foss traces interest in visual artifacts to Kenneth Burke, writing that

he advocated for analysis of diverse forms of "human symbols," which opened the door for studies of visual artifacts.[101] Foss presents compelling justification for the inclusion of visual images as eligible artifacts for rhetorical analysis, but she does not provide a specific methodology for doing so. According to Foss,

"Visual rhetoric as a perspective is not a theory with constructs and axioms that describe specific rhetorical components of visual imagery; it is not composed of certain kinds of content or knowledge about visual imagery. In fact, the content that emerges from the application of the perspective is virtually limitless, bound only by the perspective's focus on how visual artifacts function communicatively."[102]

The methodology she suggests for analyzing visual images involves three states of analysis: a) identifying the nature and function of the image, b) evaluating the image according to context, and c) "devis[ing] an assertion, message, or thesis for the image based on the categories or organizational schema developed for the suggested elements in the previous step."[103] According to Foss, this methodology enables viewers to deduce the "discursive properties" of an image in the same way that careful reading enables rhetorical critics to uncover elements of written artifacts.[104]

Certainly Foss's advocacy for viewing visual images as worthy and meaningful rhetorical artifacts and the techniques she suggests for uncovering the "discursive properties" of an image is relevant to this study as justification of its importance; however, Foss's methodology does not

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[101] Sonja K. Foss, "Theory of visual rhetoric," *Handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (2005): 141
[102] Foss, "Theory," 145
[103] Sonja K. Foss and Marla R. Kanengieter, "Visual communication in the basic course," *Communication Education 41*, no. 3 (July 1992): 316.
[104] "Theory," 148.

provide a clear or consistent framework for analyzing the postcards involved in this study. While Foss's theory of visual rhetoric attends to the ways visual images can be analyzed, she does not incorporate the concept of multimodality directly into her theory. Visual argument is more appropriate for this study because multimodality is built into the theory from it's earliest iterations—which emphasize the ways that visual images like political cartoons can incorporate text labels and captions in order to clarify meaning and make specific persuasive points. In addition, Foss's theory of visual rhetoric is potentially applicable to a wide array of visual artifacts, while the theory of visual argument applies to a more specific subset of visual media. Visual arguments a particular and discrete category of visual rhetoric; they must adhere to the criteria of making discrete claims and offering support for those claims. Therefore, visual argument allows for a more direct and narrow analysis of the postcards and memes in this study than Foss's general theory of visual rhetoric.

Erwin Panofsky's theory of iconology bears review here as a developed methodology for analyzing visual artifacts. Panofsky's theory suggests that certain images can be interpreted according to the "symbolic values" contained therein.[105] This method is too limited for this study chiefly because a compelling case cannot be made to justify the "hillbilly" image as symbolically loaded "iconography," given its relative newness at the time of publication. Panofsky's method hinges on this historical significance and shared understanding of what a symbol means. Although a case might be made that certain elements of the postcards analyzed in this study are symbolically loaded in a way that would be accessible to all viewers, this is not the most effective method of decoding these artifacts. Like Foss's theory of visual rhetoric, Panofsky's theory

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[105] Erwin Panofsky, "Studies in iconology. Humanistic themes in the art of the Renaissance," (1939), 31.

of iconology also does not include the concept of multimodality, which is important for this study of postcards and memes—both of which also incorporate text captions.

Valerie J. Smith's application of Aristotle's enthymeme to visual artifacts provides useful insights in that it can be implemented in conjunction with visual argumentation studies. Smith defines enthymemes according to Aristotle's conception as employing "probable premises and conclusions," depending "on agreement between speaker and audience," thus composing "syllogisms based on probabilities or signs."[106] Smith uses this understanding of enthymeme to argue in favor of the possibility of visual argument, saying that, like enthymemes, visual arguments "contain premises and conclusion that are merely probable," "appeal emotionally and ethically as well as logically," and that their "effectiveness depends on agreement between messenger and audience."[107] Smith makes an effective case that visual arguments have much in common with Aristotle's conception of enthymeme. Because visual artifacts contain premises that are not explicitly stated, and they therefore depend on agreement between audiences and messenger (as informed by shared cultural knowledge), visual arguments adhere to Aristotle's conception of an enthymeme and can thus be effectively analyzed as enthymematic communications. Although an enthymematic approach could be used in this study, this technique focuses on specific instances of enthymematic communication and therefore does not allow for the kind of holistic analysis of the postcard's accompanying text, context, and imagery, that visual argument does. Smith's argument in favor of the possibility of visual argument can be separated from the necessity of employing a purely enthymematic approach.

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[106] Valerie J. Smith, "Aristotle's Classical Enthymeme and the Visual Argumentation of the Twenty First Century," *Argumentation & Advocacy 43*, no. 3/4 (Winter/Spring 2007): 117.
[107] Smith, "Aristotle," 122.

While these approaches to visual rhetoric could likely be applied to this study of post-cards and memes, I believe the theory of visual argument is the most flexible and appropriate for this study. First, the concept of visual argument allows for a multimodal approach that considers both the visual and text-caption elements of the postcards and memes. Second, the concept of visual argument allows for a particular focus on visual archetypes as they function to help present arguments.

Memes

In his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*, ethnologist and evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins coined the term "meme" in order to describe what he calls "units of cultural transmission."[108] Analogous to the way DNA drives biological replication, memes drive cultural replication through imitation. According to Dawkins, memes might include things such as songs, ideas, or fashions which enter into a cultural pool (which Dawkins calls the "meme pool") and are replicated and recycled by others, propagating themselves.[109]

Since 1976, the term "meme" has been the subject of much academic attention and has since entered the vernacular as a way of describing certain kinds of viral internet and cultural content.[110] Susan Blackmore uses the concept of "meme" as a unit of cultural transmission to explore the spread of urban legends, new technologies, and even the evolution of language—anything spread through learned behavior.[111] According to Laurie E. Gries, the term meme has become a common means of describing how a variety of things replicate via imitation."[112]

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[108] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 192.
[109] Dawkins "Memes: the new replicators" in The Selfish Gene. 192
[110] Limor Shifman, *Memes in Digital Culture*, (Cambridge, MA: Mit Press, 2013), 2.
[111] Susan Blackmore, *The Meme Machine*, Vol. 25, (Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 2000).
[112] Laurie E. Gries, *Still Life with Rhetoric: A New Materialist Approach for Visual Rhetorics*, (University Press of Colorado, 2015), 220.

The concept of a "meme" is especially useful for analyzing the spread of ideas on the internet. According to Limor Shifman, Internet memes can be content such as jokes, rumors, videos, etc. which are spread from person to person online, but which reflect general social mindsets.[113] Shifman also describes Internet memes as fundamentally intertextual, relating "to each other in complex, creative, and surprising ways."[114] Gries describes memes as a kind of "media virus."[115] Using the now iconic 2008 Obama Hope poster (depicting a blue and red graphic of presidential candidate Barack Obama's face and the word "hope") as a case study, Gries discusses the numerous parody versions of this poster and their spread around the internet as they were reproduced in various public artworks, media markets, and through blogs and social media.[116] On the internet, a meme is a unit of cultural transmission recycled and parodied as it circulates, expressing iterations of culturally salient concepts and ideas and "grounding collective life."[117] Christian Buckhage describes internet memes as a variety of Dawkin's original definition, saying "The term Internet meme refers to the phenomenon of content or concepts that spread rapidly among Internet users."[118]

Ryan Milner, a meme and internet scholar, says memes "are a form of 'vernacular creativity', which balance the familiar and the foreign, the collective and the individual … at once universal and particular."[119] Milner also describes the polyvocality of memes, or the participatory

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[113] Shifman, *Memes*, 2, 5.
[114] Shifman, *Memes*, 2.
[115] Gries, *Still Life,* 221.
[116] Gries, *Still Life,* 228, 239.
[117] Gries, *Still Life,* 239.
[118] Christian Bauckhage, "Insights into Internet Memes," (*ICWSM*, 2011), 42.
[119] Milner, Ryan M. "Media lingua franca: fixity, novelty, and vernacular creativity in Internet memes." Selected Papers of Internet Research 3 (2013): 1-5. 1

public voices that together create messages both individual and universal.[120] In addition, Milner believes memes include "fixed references" and are "reappropriated by countless participants in networks of mediated cultural participation."[121] For example, in order to be culturally resonant, memes must contain "fixed references" to cultural phenomena that can be understood by and circulated among a wide audience of internet users (whether those references are to current events or to culturally-embedded historical stereotypes). According to Milner, memes also "employ multiple modes of communication—and multiple intertextual references—to make their argument."[122] Memes contain visual imagery, as well as verbal text; like their postcard corollaries, memes are multimodal. Finally, Milner also points out the "negative corollary" to polyvocality, pointing out the potential for "echo chambers" particularly on the internet where, for example, memes might be circulated among self-selected homogeneous groups that already share the same opinions.

Using the idea of a meme as a unit of cultural transmission, I will focus on photographic internet memes (rather than other types of viral media, such as videos) in this study. In particular, I will focus on images of archetypal "hillbillies" or "white trash" circulated with captions that make stereotypical assertions. These memes fulfill Bauckhage's definition of internet memes as "content that spreads rapidly among Internet users."[123]

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[120] Ryan M. Milner, "Pop Polyvocality: Internet memes, public participation, and the Occupy Wall Street movement," *International Journal of Communication 7* (2013): 34. 2357-2390
[121] Milner, "Pop polyvocality," 34.
[122] Milner, "Pop polyvocality," 2364.
[123] Bauckhage, "Insights," 42.

III. Method

This study is a comparative analysis of hillbilly postcards published during the 1930s and 1940s and a selection of contemporary hillbilly memes that traffic in stereotypical representations of rural people as rednecks or white trash—with particular attention to the genre of "Trump Voter" political memes. These artifacts were chosen since they are both interesting multimodal examples of the hillbilly archetype that can be circulated form person to person. The selection of postcards chosen for this study come from the time period at which the particular visual elements of the hillbilly as portrayed thorough silent film, "hillbilly" music, cartoons, and literature began to coalesce into a pre-archetype. The contemporary memes were chosen as an interesting modern allegory to these postcards, representing the embeddedness of the hillbilly archetype in modern culture and illustrating the ways key archetypal elements have simply been re-accessorized for the twenty-first century.

Memes and postcards also form a cohesive sample for this study because they are both independent units of cultural transmission that can be circulated from person to person. Early 20th century postcards could be purchased on vacation and mailed home, carrying culturally embedded messages with little additional context. According to C. H. Palczewski, "Postcard historian Frank W. Staff remarks, 'The detail and unusual items of domestic and social history which [postcards] show are of inestimable value to the historian' and, I would add, to those who study the rhetoric of historical movements."[124] Palczewski also notes that because postcards were cheap to buy and simple to use, they served as important message carriers for the "urban prole-

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[124] Frank W. Staff quoted in Palczewski, "The Male Madonna," 366.

tariat" of the early 20th century. Similarly, internet memes today serve as units of cultural transmission that are easy and cheap to use and circulate, and which can serve as important message carriers for a new generation of citizen internet users.

The hillbilly postcards used for this study were chosen because they represent a discrete and limited set of visual media (unlike other potential artifacts like syndicated newspaper cartoons, of which there are thousands of examples) and because they come from the time period of American history when mass media visual images of hillbilly characters were being circulated and distributed for the first time. The selection of postcards used in this study represents all postcards of the hillbilly genre identified by the author. Additionally, it seems likely that this sample includes the only such postcards from the 1930s and 40s ever printed. Each of the three publishing companies represented (MWM, Curt Teich, and the Asheville Postcard Company) printed postcards in series, for example, producing a discrete set of ten or fifteen similarly themed postcards around a particular topic. The samples of hillbilly postcards used in this study are consistent with being printed as a complete series. In addition, while the idea of rural hillbillies in literature and newspaper reports predate the early twentieth century, these postcards come from a time when visual images of the hillbilly character could, for the first time, be distributed through film and cheap, mass-produced visual media. Therefore they are a timely sample representing the coalescing of the visual components of the hillbilly pre-archetype.

The selection of memes used for this study do not represent an exhaustive sample of all hillbilly memes in existence. Due to the fluid, publicly-created nature of memes, it would be impossible to review and analyze all hillbilly memes in existence. Memes selected for this study

were identified through searches on the popular meme website "Know Your Meme," which employs an authentication feature that confirms wide use of particular memes and "confirms" them as viral content.

Through analysis of these postcard and meme artifacts, I will identify key elements of the hillbilly archetype and explore how these elements compose a visual argument for rural inferiority and a monolithic construction of the Mountain South. Based on Birdsell and Groarke's idea of the archetype as an element of visual argument, I will focus on establishing how the hillbilly characters present in my postcard samples represent a coalescing of decades of class-based prejudice for the rural, white poor into a pre-archetype. I will identify the key elements of this pre-archetypal characterization, then examine how these key elements endure in modern form through my analysis of contemporary "hillbilly" memes. Finally, I will examine a selection of these memes that employ a "Trump Voter" caption along with an archetypal hillbilly character in order to explore how these memes mobilize the hillbilly archetype in order to present an additional visual argument for discounting the political concerns of Appalachian voters.

IV. Analysis of Postcards

The selection of postcards examined in this study are an interesting and appropriate arti-fact for an exploration of the formation of the hillbilly archetype as a visual argument. As I will discuss below, these postcards date from the early twentieth century when hillbilly characters were popular in many forms of media. In addition, these cartoon postcards serve as a rich text for exposing the hillbilly archetype's roots in class-based prejudice by implementing particularly hy-perbolic and unsympathetic images of the rural hillbilly. In this chapter, I will begin by exploring the historical roots that inform the images in these postcards then move on to identify three key elements of the hillbilly archetype and two supporting elements of the archetype.

The selection of postcards examined in this study were produced by three different pub-lishing companies: The Midwest Map Company, or MWM (1930-1980), located in Aurora, Mis-souri, The AshevillePostcard Company (1921-1982) located in Asheville, North Carolina, and the Cuirt Teich Company (1877-1974) based in Chicago, Illinois.[125] Both the Curt Teich Com-pany and MWM Postcard Company printed various kinds of comic, cartoon postcards that cari-catured at what we would now consider vulnerable populations (including women and African Americans), though The AshevillePostcard Company printed mostly location-based postcards highlighting locations and scenery near Asheville, North Carolina. Although postdates on two postcards obtained for this study place them in 1943 and 1946, it seems likely that all of these linen postcards were printed between 1930 and 1944, though providing exact dates of publication

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[125] Postcard publisher information available at: "Postcard Publishers, Printers, and Distributors of Note," MetroPostcard, accessed April 3, 2017, http://www.metropostcard.com/metropcpublish-ers.html

is difficult.[126] In total, this study involved analysis of six Asheville Postcard Company postcards (in possession of the author), ten MWM postcards (in possession of the author), and three Curt Teich Postcards (in possession of the author) plus digital images of six more Curt Teich Postcards, (which were not in possession author).[127]

This sample of vintage postcards—which serve as a conduit for prevailing 1930s-era rural stereotypes—reveals five key visual elements that work to paint rural, white people as variously "other" from urban dwellers and compose a compelling visual argument for rural inferiority and the incubating hillbilly archetype. These postcards, rooted in an historical legacy of stereotyping of the white poor that extends back to the colonial era, represent the coalescing of the modern hillbilly archetype at the period of its inception and magnification by mass media during the early 20th century. Building on a deep historical prejudice for the lowest social class of poor white people, these postcards both maliciously implement key visual archetypal elements (illustrating that this is not a harmless stereotype), which include the ragged way the hillbilly characters are dressed, the dilapidated houses and barren landscape they inhabit, their deviant alcoholism, their tendency towards violence, and their ignorance personified as illiteracy.

Focusing on Birdsell and Groarke's idea of an archetype as a tool of visual argument, this portion of my study uses a sample of 1930s and 1940s postcards to explore key pre-archetypal elements of the hillbilly stereotype. In keeping with Blair's assertion that visual arguments are multimodal—they combine visual imagery as well as supplementary text—I will consider both the visual depictions of characters as well as the text-captions printed on the postcards. In this

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[126] "How Old is My Postcard," PostcardValues.com, accessed April 3, 2017, http://postcardvalues.com/postcardage.html.
[127] To the best of my knowledge, all existing hillbilly postcards published by these three companies were included in this sample and analyzed for this study.

chapter, I will first link the pre-archetypal hillbilly character of the 1930s and 1940s back to even older cultural conceptions of the white, Southern poor, then it will go on to identify three key elements of the coalescing hillbilly archetype, which, in Chapter V., will be shown to endure today.

Historical Roots

According to James Chesebro, Dale Bertelsen, and Thomas Gencarelli, "Archetypes link apparently discrete symbolic acts, separated by time and place, into a coherent history or heritage."[128] The hillbilly characters depicted in this sample of 1930s postcards are linked to a century of stereotypical ideas about the Southern poor, and before that, the stereotypes and outright abuse imposed on the lowest class of early white Americans (again, especially the landless poor of the Southern colonies).[129] They represent the coalescing of these historical prejudices into a specific symbolic hillbilly. As described in the "Background" section above, historian Nancy Isenberg traces the origins of the "white trash" and "hillbilly" stereotype all the way back to the class-based prejudices of the American Colonies. Although most historians agree that popular 19th century literary character Sut Lovingood (a character from G. W. Harris's 1867 novel *The Sut Lovingood Yarns* set in the North Georgia mountains) serves as the visual impetus of the ragged, overall-ed, floppy-hat-wearing archetypal hillbilly character with which most modern Americans are familiar,[130] it's important also to link this stereotypical style of characterization to a broader

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[128] Chesebro and Bertelsen, "Archetypal Criticism," 258.

[129] For a description of the various abuses of the early American poor, especially those in the Southern colonies (and particularly in North Carolina), see Isenberg, *White Trash*; Harkins, *Hillbilly.*

[130] For a description of Sut Lovinggood as the origin of the hillbill character see: Inge, "Li'l Abner." For a connection between Sut Lovinggood and Snuffy Smith, see: M. Thomas Inge, "The Appalachian Backgrounds of Billy De Beck's Snuffy Smith," *Appalachian Journal* 4, no. 2 (1977): 120-132.

and even deeper cultural resentment for the poor and stereotype of white, (often rural) poverty even older than the founding of our nation.[131]

Early poor or rural settlers in the American colonies, most particularly those in the Southern colonies, were a source of significant political thought and concern, even in the 18th century, and as such, records of their habits, behavior, and appearance inform our knowledge of early perceptions of the poor by our country's founding elite. According to historian Matt Wray, classes of white early-American poor garnered disdain for their "slothful," habits. Admonitions of the lazy poor abounded; in 1728, wealthy Virginian William Byrd II described North Carolina as "nearer to the description of Luberland than any other, by the great felicity of the climate, the easiness of raising provisions, and the slothfulness of the people" (see SI 1 for an image of "lubberland").[132] Nancy Isenberg also recounts William Byrd, who, in the same 1728 tour of North Carolina described setters' reaction to his arrival "as if we had been Morocco ambassadors" and their behavior as akin to "Solomon's sluggards," frequently waking up in the morning and doing nothing but smoking their pipes. Byrd described his trip as revealing "the wretchedest scenes of poverty" and chronicled his party's efforts to "sprinkle holy water on the heathen Carolinians."[133] Byrd targeted one poor family in particular, writing of a man named Cornelius Keith who, according to Isenberg's characterization, "had a wife and six children yet lived in a home

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[131] Barbara Ellen Smith discusses the "oppressed minority argument" as an outgrowth of the internal colony model for understanding Appalachia. The idea that the roots of the hillbilly stereotype predate the formation of modern Appalachia presents a way to analyze the stereotype as a national symptom of class with a focus on Appalachia, rather than as a strictly regional stereotype.

[132] Matt Wray, *Not quite white: White Trash and the Boundaries of Whiteness*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

[133] Isenberg, *White Trash,* 53.

without a roof. The Keiths' dwelling was closer to a cattle pen, he said, than to any human habitation [...] and [they] lived worse than the 'bogtrotting' Irish."[134] According to Delma E. Pressley, later "In the ante-bellum period, 'Cracker' was a general designation for non-slaveholding whites of Georgia who were encountered by travelers from the northern states. In North Carolina these same visitors wrote about 'tar heels'; in Tennessee 'hill billys'; in the gulf states 'red necks and wool hats'; in Indiana, the 'hoosier'; and in Kansas, the 'jayhawker'- all partial equivalents of Georgia's poor whites, 'Crackers.' In 1838 Frances Anne Kemble referred to some of them as 'pine-landers'- 'the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo-Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the Earth.'"[135]

These negative character traits—laziness, uncleanliness, and uncouth ignorance—were associated with a particular personal aesthetic, not dissimilar to the hillbilly trope of the 1930s. According to Isenberg, these American poor of the 18th century "walked around with open sores visible on their bodies; they had ghastly complexions as a result of poor diets; many were missing limbs, noses, palates, and teeth. As a traveler named Smyth recorded, the ignorant wretches he encountered wore 'cotton rags' and were 'enveloped in dirt and nastiness.'"[136] In addition, Wray writes that "the lower sorts were considered characterized as dirty, smelly, and unclean."[137] Anthony Harkins also notes an 1847 article titled "The Carolina Sand-Hillers" which describes rural inhabitants of South Carolina as "'peculiar in dress and looks,' wearing always the 'plainest homespun . . .often without shoes . . . with slouched hats of cheapest texture . . . as distinct a race

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[134] Ibid.
[135] Delma E. Presley, "The crackers of Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (1976): 106.
[136] *White Trash*, 55.
[137] Wray, *Not Quite White,* 23.

as the Indian.' [...] the author stressed that 'the ruling idea uppermost in their minds seemed to be hatred of labor.'"[138] To visitors and journalists, the early Southern rural, white poor were deformed, sallow-complexioned, and ugly; they willfully lived in dilapidated conditions, dressed in rags, were "enveloped in dirt and nastiness," and frequently did nothing but sit and smoke pipes. It is true that these descriptions are likely based in the reality of colonial poverty; however, as with the 20th century postcard and twenty-first century memes, these descriptions of the rural poor are disdainful, malicious and mean rather than compassionate pictures of structural poverty. These descriptions blame poor people for the conditions of their poverty by painting them as lazy and negligent.

This contempt for the rural, white poor continued past the colonial era and took particularly virulent form during the tumultuous years of the Civil War and Reconstruction, during which time it became politically and then economically prudent, respectively, for outside interests to perpetrate the idea of rural Southerners as backwards, violent, and degenerate.[139] Although these stereotypes of poor, rural white people existed (and continue to exist) broadly throughout the South, the hillbilly archetype emerged in the 20th century with a specific geographic connection to the Appalachian Mountains.[140] The Appalachian Mountains' status as a region rich in timber, coal, and minerals, as well as its relative isolation from the South's major cities made Appalachia a popular setting for such stereotypical vilification; for example, Anita Waller links popular and enduring narratives about regional feuding to reconstruction-era economic disputes rather than arbitrary family hatred and additionally notes that often-hyperbolic

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[138] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 16.
[139] See Waller, "Feuding"; Isenberg "Introduction" in *White Trash.*
[140] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 47-48.

accounts of feuding were likely motivated by industrialist desires to publicize the mountain re-

gion as backwards and violent.[141] Popular travel writing and fiction (such as G. W. Harris's 1867

The Sut Lovingood Yarns) also contributed to a growing national idea of the Appalachians as the

center of Southern degeneracy and helped located hillbilly stereotype specifically in the Southern

Mountains.

The particular aesthetic of dirtiness and deformity associated with "slothfulness" during

the colonial era is also visible in later stereotypical depictions of the rural poor. For example,

Matt Wray's explores the Hookworm disease epidemic in the late 19th-early 20th century. One

notorious newspaper headline described the identification of Hookworm disease (a soil-dwelling

parasite that can enter the body through bare feet) in this region by saying, "Germ of Laziness

Found? Disease of the 'Cracker' and of Some Nations Identified"; the story elaborated, explain-

ing the worm as "the parasite to which the shiftliness and laziness of a certain class of very poor

whites in the Middle South known locally as 'Crackers,' 'Sandhillers,' or 'Pinelanders' is at-

tributed."[142] This example highlights the persistence of a malicious and stereotypical characteri-

zation of the rural poor as lazy and degenerate and links colonial-era stereotypes to the 20th cen-

tury, situating the postcards analyzed for this study within the lineage of centuries-old ideas

about the rural, white Southern poor as culturally inferior. Characters in these postcards wear

overalls over one shoulder and torn shirts, the same as Lil' Abner and Sut Lovingood before him,

but these characters are also linked to the visual elements that characterized this earliest class of

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[141] Waller, "Feuding," 367.

[142] Wray, *Not Quite White*, 105; For a short summary of the Hookworm disease epidemic and a description of it's impact see: Rachel Nuwer, "How a Worm Gave the South a Bad Name," Nova Next, accessed April 3, 2017, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/nature/how-a-worm-gave-the-south-a-bad-name/.

white poor (and also Indians, Africans, and other races perceived as "inferior"): laziness, uncleanliness, and physical grossness. Characterized as ragged, dirty, and lazy, the cartoon hillbillies of the early 20th century inherited these traits, not simply from Sut Lovinggood—the first incarnation of the modern hillbilly—but also from the centuries of vilified poor dating all the way back to the colonial era and to the poor human "filthe" of England.

This perception of a degenerate white poor specific to the Appalachians escalated in mid 19th century frontier writing of the Old South and "local color literature," which popularized such characters as Sut Lovinggood, a barefoot, buffoonish, and violence-prone alcoholic draped in ragged and ill-fitting clothing—a native of North Georgia. Through travel writing such as Will Wallace Harney's 1873 magazine article "A Strange Land and Peculiar People" (set in the Cumberland region of East Kentucky) and through imagined accounts of the region such as John Fox Jr.'s now famous *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* (which takes place around the Virginia/Kentucky border), readers came to know the Mountain South as a land separate in both geography and culture from the rest of the nation, imagined both as a living archeology of our nation's earliest rugged settlers and as a violent and primitive frontier. The remnants of this literary genre can be traced through the 20th century, appearing in comic strips such as Snuffy Smith and Lil' Abner, in popular literature, and in pre-WWI silent films.[143] Anthony Harkins describes the particular evolution of the hillbilly character and it's 20th century homogenization into archetype:

> The twentieth-century hillbilly image had its origins in three related but separate literary and illustrative traditions that reach back at least as far as the colonial era: portrayals of the rural rube; conceptions of poor whites of the Southern backcountry; and images of the inhabitants of the Southern mountain regions. Initially distinct, these three strands

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[143] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 47.

slowly coalesced through the nineteenth century into a new icon of complex and ambig-

uous geographic, racial, and cultural significance. Primarily situated by the end of the

century in the newly labeled region 'Appalachia,' this new national 'type' combined cul-

tural elements from New England, Arkansas, and the south-eastern mountains, all medi-

ated through the self-interested preconceptions of northeastern journalists and illustra-

tors."[144]

As these postcards were being printed, purchased, and mailed, the cartoon hillbilly was undergo-

ing an important solidification as popular caricature in literature, mass media, and the public im-

agination—the formation of an archetype that endures in the present day. They represent a par-

ticularly hyperbolic surfacing of an enduring prejudice and serve as an example of the coalescing

of historical classism, real persistent poverty, and modern stereotype into what would become

the hillbilly archetype we have inherited today.

Pre-Archetypal Elements: Characters

The first pre-archetypal element of these postcards involves the characterization of the

hillbilly cartoon people depicted in these postcards. These cartoon characters, dressed in ragged

and dirty clothing, harken back to contemporaneous hillbilly characters, such as Lil Abner, and

also to even earlier classist stereotypes (described in the section above). Like the cartoon charac-

ters Lil' Abner and Snuffy Smith, characters in these postcards are uniformly ragged, often with

torn, patched pants or overalls slung over only one shoulder. Through exploring the consistent

aesthetic characteristics of these characters as well as the multimodal comedic text captions

which provide additional context and character description, we can see how particular elements

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[144] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 13.

of the hillbilly stereotype began to coalesce into a pre-archetypal hillbilly figure during the 1930s and 1940s.

One male character recurs throughout the series of postcards manufactured by the Asheville Postcard Company. This character is gangly, with long bony limbs and unkempt hair. He has white hair that sticks out, indicative of being uncombed, and a scruffy white beard. He wears a yellow or red plaid shirt (with the top few buttons undone) underneath a pair of overalls with one or both knees patched. His overalls are only buckled over one shoulder and are rolled up to his knees, revealing bare feet with pronounced, red toes. Of the six postcards in this series, only one features a female character. Like her male counterpart, this female character has bare feet and unkempt hair. Instead of being thin and bony, however, this female character is squat and obese. She perches on a chair wearing a knee-length green dress as she knits a sock (see A4). Of the six cards in the Asheville Postcard company series, two also depict a scraggly brown dog. In one instance, this dog sits scratching his long floppy ears; in another, he stands eagerly under a mailbox as his owner professes his illiteracy. All characters in this series smoke corncob pipes (save one who instead holds a moonshine bottle marked "xxx").

Like the Asheville Postcard Company characters, characters in the postcards published by MWM are stereotypically unkempt, barefoot, and ragged. The male character that recurs throughout this ten postcard series also wears overalls buckled over one shoulder, one knee patched, and rolled up past his ankles. He has uncombed hair and a short, scraggly beard that covers his jawline and chin, though not his cheeks—indicative of thin, unkempt facial hair. Like his predecessor Sut Lovingood (see Supplemental Image 2), this character wears a plaid shirt with sleeves ripped off and keeps a corncob pipe pinched between his flat lips, and, interestingly, he is always drawn with squinting, closed eyes—likely as indication of his laziness and apathy. Like

the AshevillePostcard character, this man is also thin, gangly, and barefooted. In addition to two different young women who appear in only one postcard each, this series also features a recurring obese female character, presented as the wife ("ma!") of the thin, overall-ed man. Along with her male counterpart, this female character appears in all ten MWM postcards. She wears a red and yellow patterned dress, a white apron tied around her waist (sometimes depicted with a pink "xxx" mark printed on it), and a messy hair bun. Although her male companion is depicted as so thin as to have protruding, knobby joints, this female character is extremely fat, so that her body—and particularly her face—is framed in a series of comical (bordering on grotesque) rolls of flesh. She is always barefoot and always smoking a corncob pipe.

Characters in the series of Curt Teich hillbilly postcards occur with more variation than those in either the MWM or Asheville Postcard Co. postcards. In one Curt Teich Postcard, a barefoot male character wears a large floppy hat, patched red pants with ragged cuffs, and a baggy blue shirt. In another postcard, a male character wears patched blue jeans held up with suspenders, a patched plaid shirt, and only one shoe as his floppy hat is—literally—shot off his head by a neighbor. In a third postcard, a male character wears a wrinkled plaid shirt and patched pants, a floppy green hat, and boots; he supports himself on a cane and rests one hand on his back, perhaps indicating chronic back pain. Of the 11 male characters depicted in these postcards, eight smoke corncob pipes while three are depicted without them. Female characters in the Curt Teich postcards are similarly inconsistent, appearing with either a baggy shirt, skirt, and apron, or a patched dress. Only one (out of a total five) female character smokes.

In addition to these consistent characteristics of ragged clothing and pipe-smoking, a few postcards also provide additional context that implies personal uncleanliness. In one MWM postcard, the skinny, smoking man character sits in a wooden bathtub as his wife pours water over

his head, exclaiming, "Paw-yer gittin' so dirty the hawgs won't hardly come in the house no more!" (see M10) Two pigs stand in the open doorway to this dwelling, bare mountains rolling into the distance behind them. Two additional postcards (one published by Curt Teich and two from MWM) show livestock indoors. In another MWM postcard, the snoozing male figure rests his feet on a wood stove as squiggly lines rise up, presumably to indicate smelly, unclean feet. Along with physical abnormality, such as gangliness (in reality, likely the result of malnutrition), and ragged clothing, uncleanliness is one of the most salient and enduring characteristics of this pre-archetypal hillbilly—and before him the demonized class of colonial and early American white poor, especially concentrated in the south.

These characters exhibit consistent visual characteristics. They wear ragged clothing and almost all of the men wear overalls buckled over only one shoulder. During the 1930s overalls were symbolic of railroaders and farmers—working people who needed durable, comfortable clothing.[145] Therefore, the presence of overalls locates these men as engaged in some kind of labor—creating an additional juxtaposition to the many scenes that highlight these characters' laziness. Overalls tell us that this man should be a farmer, though his overalls' sloppy appearance (ripped and only buckled over one shoulder) clarify that he is a careless and inadequate farmer. In this selection of postcards, both male and female characters also wear clothing that is patched or ripped. Clothing carelessly torn and haphazardly patched is an additional communication of these characters' poverty and their deviance from norms of fashionable, acceptable dress.

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[145] Lori Rotenberk, "Bib Overalls: From Farmwear to Fashion Icon," Modern Farmer, last modified October 23, 2013, http://modernfarmer.com/2013/10/bib-overalls/.

Importantly, all of the characters depicted in these postcards are white. Acknowledging the racial component of the hillbilly stereotype is important not only because this whiteness obfuscates the presence of non-white residents of the Southern Mountains in popular culture, but also because it offers a more nuanced understanding of the position of the hillbilly stereotype in relation to race and class-based stereotyping. Derogatory depictions of white hillbillies are not a kind of "anti-white" racism (as has been wrongly suggested by scholars highlighted by Barbara Ellen Smith), but is a form of class-based stereotyping.[146]

The way these characters are dressed would have been culturally salient and accessible to the generation of 1930s and 1940s tourists purchasing these postcards. All of the 25 postcards from three different manufactures analyzed for this study presented similar depictions of white, ragged hillbillies similar in appearance to Sut Lovinggood as introduced in George Washington Harris' 1867 humor book *Sut Lovingood's Yarns* (see Supplemental Image 2). Like Sut Lovinggood, characters in these postcards often wear floppy hats, baggy overalls, and bare feet (see SI 2), and they are also reminiscent of the contemporarily popular cartoon characters Lil Abner (depicted with characteristic one-shouldered overalls and a torn shirt) and Snuffy Smith (who wears an oversized floppy hat and patched overalls). The consistency of these elements—ragged clothing (particularly overalls), poor grooming, and bare feet—shows the formation of an archetype according to Chesebro, Bertelsen, and Gencarelli's definition of archetypes as cultural constructions ''commonly understood and possess similar meanings across diverse situations, in extremely distinct cultural and societal systems, and even in extremely unique historical eras.''[147] As we will see in Chapter V., these foundational characteristics endure into the modern era.

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[146] "De-Gredations," 46.
[147] Chesebro, et al., "Archetypal," 258.

Pre-Archetypal Elements: Housing and Landscape

In addition to the ragged way these characters are dressed, the ramshackle houses and desolate landscapes these characters are depicted in also furnish and form the second major element of the coalescing hillbilly archetype. Just as the rural, Southern poor of earlier eras were vilified for their uncleanly living conditions, visual and multimodal textual elements of these postcards highlight the inferiority of hillbilly housing and landscape. Notably, one important immediate consideration related to the setting created in these postcards is the universal inclusion of distinct rolling hills in the background—a clear signal that these scenes take place in a mountainous region and further illustration of the narrowing pre-archetypal focus on the Southern mountains as the primary hillbilly habitat.

Of the 25 postcards analyzed in this study, only eight cards depict indoor scenes.[148] Despite coming from different publishers, all of these indoor scenes suggest that the interior dwellings they depict are in some way substandard or atypical. In one postcard, a leaking roof drips rainwater into a bedroom littered with buckets and water puddles. In another, cartoon characters also shield themselves from a leaking roof. Three more of these postcards joke about livestock living indoors among people. All of these postcards show interiors with blank, beige walls (some decorated sparingly with portraits) and plain wooden floorboards, which are often warped or patched, and always with visible nail heads keeping them in place.

In what is the most extreme example of negatively portrayed rural housing conditions, one CurtTeich postcard depicts a ragged and hunched man calling to his neighbor, seen he lean-

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[148] Two of these were produced by the Asheville Postcard company, two by CurtTeich, and four by MWM

ing out of a crooked ramshackle house that is propped up on one side with long sticks and appears to be on the verge of utter collapse (C3). Instead of being perpendicular to the ground, the door to this dwelling is shown as extremely crooked, and the wood stove chimney is bent ninety degrees. The entire house is constructed on a foundation of four rocks, one propping up each corner. The construction of this house is utterly absurd and impossible according to both the laws of physics and even the most basic construction practices. Outside the house, a few sparse pine trees poke up among brown hills and rocks in the background while a skinny, ragged dog scratches himself in a brown yard. The man leaning out of his crooked doorway clutches a long shotgun and exclaims that "mebee" he'll move since "Maw don't keer fer this place no more" (or "maw doesn't care for this place anymore").

In the context of comparatively affluent 1930s postcard consumers, this imagery of dilapidated wooden housing would have resonated as abnormal and symbolic of poverty. In 1920, the growth rate of suburbs exceeded that of cities for the first time, while only one out of every two Americans remained living in a rural area; the demographics of the nation were changing.[149] In another scene a hillbilly man stands in front of a row of outhouses, indicative of a lack of indoor plumbing (a fact reinforced by cards that depict old fashioned stone wells). In urban areas, proper waste-water sanitation represented a significant public health concern (being responsible for epidemics and disease), and municipal water-supply systems were present in most major U.S. cities by the "early to mid-nineteenth" century, with these municipal systems expanding as more

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[149] Howard P. Chudacoff, Judith Smith, and Peter Baldwin, *The Evolution of American Urban Society*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); "United States Summary: 2010 Population and Housing Unit Counts 2010 Census of Population and Housing," (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2012), 13, https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/cph-2-1.pdf.

and more people moved into suburbs.[150] To Americans living in planned suburbs and driving

cars on paved roads, the Appalachia depicted in both hyperbolic fiction and near-to-truth ac-

counts of the region's persistent poverty represented a real juxtaposition in material wealth and a

way of life both immediately unfamiliar and reminiscent of a not-to-far distant past; according to

the (now infamous) 1898 academic George Vincent, Appalachia's supposedly anachronistic

housing and people represented a "retarded frontier"—a blight in a nation otherwise quickly

modernizing.[151]

Fifteen of the postcards analyzed in this study depict outdoor scenes with sparse, mostly

tree-less mountains.[152] Of these postcards, commonalities include distant backgrounds composed

of rolling hills that look desolate, dotted with only a few straggly trees. For example, in the Curt

Teich postcard depicting the decrepit cabin described above, the foreground landscape is mottled

brown and green (certainly not a manicured green lawn), while the distant background shows

rugged and steep brown hills interspersed with large, grey boulders, populated by only two

sparse pine trees (C3). Meanwhile the MWM postcards that depict outdoor scenes show distant

landscapes of green-to-blue rolling hills that are almost completely naked save a few scraggly

brown trees. These postcards do not show the most beautiful or breathtaking elements of the Ap-

palachian landscape—the abnormally diverse ecology or temperate rainforests of Southern Ap-

palachia—rather, they show a landscape bleak, barren, and unappealing.

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[150] Steven J. Burian, Stephan J. Nix, Robert E. Pitt, and S. Rocky Durrans, "Urban wastewater management in the United States: past, present, and future," *Journal of Urban Technology* 7, no. 3 (2000): 33-62.

[151] George Vincent, "A Retarded Frontier," *American Journal of Sociology* 4, no. 1 (1898): 1-20.

[152] Two of these come from the Asheville Postcard company, six come from MWM and seven come from Curt Teich.

These images of desolate, treeless landscapes and dilapidated substandard housing engage a symbolic vocabulary of value attached to land and housing in America. Though Thomas Jefferson modified his famous quote to read "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," John Locke originally conceived of the state as being a tool for "mutual preservation of their lives, liberties, and estates."[153] In this founding philosophy, the supreme importance of land ownership and preservation is listed next to one's right to life and to liberty. This heightened emphasis on land is also significant as, according to Nancy Isenberg, "Explores, amateur scientists, and early ethnologists like William Byrd all assumed—and unabashedly professed—that inferior or mismanaged lands bred inferior, ungovernable people."[154] Simply, a desolate and unkempt landscape is symbolic of a desolate and unkempt people. Later, Thomas Jefferson praised "cultivators of the Earth" as the "chosen people of God" and emphasized their role as productive citizens.[155] Therefore, the desolate, (mostly) uncultivated and sparsely-treed landscapes presented in these postcards represent the failure of poor, white hillbillies to successfully undertake land-management efforts and serves as a metaphor for their status as inferior people bred of an inferior landscape.

This geographic situation in the midst of a powerful, often dangerous and ecologically devastated landscape contributes to the brooding development of the archetypal hillbilly at the time these postcards were published. Beginning with the complex truth that the scraggly trees

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[153] John Locke and Thomas Peter Ruffell Laslett, *Two Treatises of Government*, (London: Churchill, 1713), 143.
[154] *White Trash,* 55.
[155] Thomas Jefferson, qtd. in Isenberg, *White Trash*, 86.

and naked rolling hills in these postcards conceal, consider the scars that absentee land owner-

ship and extractive industry have wrought on Appalachia. Historian Ronald Eller succinctly de-

scribes the extent of industrial land ownership in the region:

> Beginning in the 1870s, northern speculators and outside businessmen carved out huge
>
> domains in the rich timberlands and mineral regions of Appalachia. By 1910, outlanders
>
> controlled not only the best stands of hardwood timber and the thickest seams of coal
>
> but a large percentage of the surface land in the region as well. For example, in that por-
>
> tion of western North Carolina which later became the Great Smoky Mountains National
>
> Park, over 75 percent of the land came under the control of thirteen corporations, and
>
> one timber company alone owned a third of the total acreage. The situation was even
>
> worse in the coal fields. According to the West Virginia State Board of Agriculture in
>
> 1900, outside capitalists owned 90 percent of the coal in Mingo County, 90 percent of
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> the coal in Wayne County, and 60 percent of that in Boone and McDowell counties.[156]

In the coalfields, the particularly insidious techniques these companies used to obtain mining and

timber rights are well documented and well known. Representatives of industry would approach

private landowners and offer them cash for simply signing over the rights to underground miner-

als or timber. According to Wendy Davis, these "'broad form deeds' authorized the buyer to ex-

cavate the minerals in any way seen fit and often contained a release of any liability for damage

to surface land." [157] Many of these regional landowners could not read and therefore did not

know what they were signing (it was in industry's own interest not to explain), and, weeks or

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[156] Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*, xxi-xxii
[157] Davis, Wendy B. "Out of the Black Hole: Reclaiming the Crown of King Coal." *Am. UL Rev.*
51 (2001): 909.

years later, often found themselves forced to move out of homes about to be blasted to bits in order to access underground minerals.[158] Therefore, the treeless, brown backgrounds in these postcards are rooted in an ironic reality; they represent the likely result of industrial logging or mining by Northern-owned industry, a monument to a powerful injustice foisted on rural people throughout the region—and the world—who fall victim to extractive industry.[159]

While these desolate, treeless backgrounds might be based in this sad reality, they are depicted in isolation from the truth of their creation and instead are folded into images meant to mock and degrade the lives of the rural poor. The inclusion of bare, treeless mountains in these postcards represents an artistic choice rather than an attempt to depict a factual reality. Artistic license is taken will many elements of these postcards—from characterization to setting—and the representation of a desolate and barren landscape is a method of argumentative evidence meant to link degenerate people to a degenerate landscape.

The rolling hills, sparse and scraggly trees, and dilapidated houses in these postcards serve to both contextualize the hillbilly characters they portray and to communicate their inferiority through a symbolically desolate land. The hillbilly is lazy and stupid, and his unkempt lawn and ramshackle house serve as an indictment of his character. But the the scenes depicted in these postcards are also significant for the history they leave out. A barren, treeless mountainside

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[158] And this account leaves out instances where companies allegedly forged land owners' signatures in order to claim access to valuable mineral deposits. For a full account of the predatory practices of mineral rights acquisition see: Davis, Wendy B. "Out of the Black Hole: Reclaiming the Crown of King Coal." *Am. UL Rev.* 51 (2001): 909; and Eller, *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*, "A Magnificent Field for Capitalists," 39-82

[159] For evidence of northern ownership see: Ronald Eller, "A Magnificent Field for Capitalists," in *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 39-82.

might serve as a symbol of the degenerate, barren hillbilly, but it also reflects the sad truth of industrial exploitation and extractive industry in Appalachia. The archetypal hillbilly's setting in a landscape of desolation and dilapidation is intentional. It is rooted in a reality of rural poverty and a reality of scarred ecology, but it is mobilized in these postcards—and in the archetype they helped precipitate—as a reflection of the deviance and difference of the rural, white poor.

The dilapidated housing and desolate landscape depicted in these postcards forms a second key element of the pre-archetypal hillbilly being formed during the 1930s and 1940s. Just as decades of earlier poor were vilified for their housing conditions, the characters in these postcards are maliciously mocked for the material reality of their lifestyle. The substandard housing and desolate landscape presented in these postcards, as well as their universal inclusion of rolling hills indicative of the Appalachian region, form and enduring setting for the hillbilly character, even as it exists today.

Pre-Archetypal Elements: Alcoholism

After these characters' ragged clothing and dilapidated landscapes, the visual and multi-modal textual commentary on deviant alcohol abuse present in these postcards form the third key element of the emerging hillbilly pre-archetype. Like many of the hillbillies in these postcards, predecessor Sut Lovingood was also a moonshine-drinking alcoholic, a factor that contributed to his frequent misadventures, and cartoon characters Snuffy Smith and Lil Abner were also frequently seen consuming various kinds of illegal moonshine. Just as with personal uncleanliness and inferior housing, alcoholism also represents an important narrative thread of lawlessness and behavioral deviance that was common in representations of the hillbilly stereotype even before the 20th century. These postcards provide an example of how the concept of deviant alcoholism

contributed to the forming pre-archetypal notion that hillbillies were inferior, boorish, ne'er-do-wells.

Of the 25 postcards analyzed, five blatantly joke about rural alcoholism or moonshining and five more depict characters engaged in other activities with moonshine jugs characteristically marked "xxx." In what is perhaps the most insidious of these examples (published by the Asheville Postcard Company), a red-nosed man lounges inside a wooden (perhaps whiskey) barrel, hiccuping, while his hand rests on a caption bubble that reads, "Gramp and Pa and Unk and Me / Have been on a two weeks drinkin spree / And when we sober up a mite / We promise one of us will write" (card A3). Next to this man, what are presumably his grandfather, father, and uncle lay sprawled on the ground; only the bottoms of their bare feet are visible underneath the caption bubble. In another Asheville Postcard company card (A2), a single man dressed in patched overalls and an unbuttoned plaid shirt lies against a wooden barrel smoking a corncob pipe. Next to the man, a moonshine still is suspended above a wood fire by stacks of bricks. The still appears to steam as the man holds a tin mug underneath its spot, where white moonshine drips out. In his other hand, the man pulls a string attached to a railroad whistle mounted to the top of the still. A text bubble hovers above the man's head reading, "We put a whistle on the still / And now it sounds like a lumbermill / So if I don't find the time to write / I'll give you a toot on some clear nite."

The recurring male character in the MWM series of postcards is depicted in every scene as a lazy drunkard, complete with a characteristic red nose and a cartoonish denotation of hiccuping. In one card (card M1), an overweight female figure chastises this male character for drinking all the antifreeze from the family car. In another, she chastises him for being too lazy to walk to the still and suggests that he can "jest go thirsty" (M2). What these cards reinforce is the idea

that the archetypal hillbilly suffers from chronic, debilitating alcoholism—the kind of alcoholism that leads someone to *drink antifreeze from their car*—as a matter of course. According to these postcards, moonshine is a prominent fact of daily life, consumed exclusively by men who also happen to be exceptionally violent, lazy, and stupid.

As with the factors of material poverty conveyed through archetypally ragged clothing and ramshackle housing, this connection to hillbilly moonshining and alcohol consumption is rooted in reality; according to Anthony Harkins, "The new ideological construction of the mountains as a land of lawlessness, cursed by the twin "evils" of "moonshining" and "feuding," was not entirely without foundation."[160] Scholars trace the origins of Appalachian moonshine to Scots-Irish Ulsterman settlers who brought the whiskey making—and tax avoidance—tradition with them when they left Europe.[161] Before the Civil War, whiskey production formed an important part of the Appalachian economy, with legal alcohol exported to cities such as New Orleans.[162] Conflict over legal Appalachian moonshine began even before the Eighteenth Amendment (and the Volstead Act that enforced it), with Appalachians resisting taxation efforts created by the reinstatement of the whiskey tax in 1862.[163] Appalachian moonshine, synonymous with the jug-toting, still-building hillbilly, is a relic of a tenuous and complex economic situation in the region and decades of real conflict over the legality of moonshine.

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[160] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 34.

[161] Emelie K. Peine and Kai A. Schafft, "Moonshine, mountaineers, and modernity: Distilling cultural history in the Southern Appalachian mountains," *Journal of Appalachian studies* (2012): 93-112.; see also Joseph Earl Dabney, *Mountain Spirits: A Chronicle of Corn Whiskey from King James' Ulster Plantation to America's Appalachians and the Moonshine Life*, (New York: Scribner, 1974).

[162] Wilma A. Dunaway, *The First American Frontier: Transition to capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700-1860*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Bruce E. Stewart, "Attacking 'Red-legged Grasshoppers': Moonshiners, violence, and the politics of federal liquor taxation in Western North Carolina, 1865-1876." *Appalachian Journal* 32, no. 1 (2004): 26-48.

[163] Peine and Schafft, "Moonshine," 7.

The moonshine jugs and stills that feature in these cartoon postcards are references to this complex economic history, though as elements of the emerging hillbilly archetype, they mostly serve as symbols of lawlessness, laziness, and addiction. In one postcard mentioned above, a lounging, barefoot man rests on a wooden well, moonshine jug overturned at his feet. His wife stands next to him washing clothes and admonishes "Paw, if yer too lazy to walk down to the still ye can jest go thirsty" (M2). This scene indicts Appalachian men as lazy alcoholics who are content to allow their wives to do most of the work. Indeed, the basic premise of this joke (drunk husband too lazy to work) appears in six of the ten MWM postcards. In another scene, the man empties antifreeze from his car while his pipe-puffing wife waits for him in the passenger seat; in another she bathes him, admonishing him for being dirty while his moonshine jug sits nearby; in another she complains that he has not fixed their leaking roof as he sleeps with a moonshine jug next to his bed; in another he leans on a plow holding his jug while his wife complains that he has to "stop and rest every minute!" to rest; in the last example he reclines on the porch with an upside down book, jug at his feet. By creating comic situations that highlight the male hillbilly's laziness, then strategically depicting him with a moonshine jug and squinty, closed eyes, these cards communicate the connection between the man's alcoholism and his laziness, presenting an indictment of his deviance and his inadequacy.

The hillbilly as a lazy alcoholic is a common element of other contemporary rural characters, like Snuffy Smith, and forms an enduring element of the hillbilly archetype that coalesced at this time, though it is also symbolic of a much deeper perception of the rural, white poor as culturally inferior. Linked to centuries of class-based prejudice, this notion of the buffoonish, lazy rural poor existed even before it was integrated into the specific hillbilly pre-archetype visible in these postcards—and it endures today.

Supporting Pre-Archetypal Elements: Illiteracy

In addition to the three key pre-archetypal elements of characterization, landscape, and behavioral deviance (as demonstrated by alcoholism), two more supporting elements contribute to the hillbilly pre-archetype: the emphasis on illiteracy and the depiction of extreme violence. Following this abundance of jokes about rural alcoholism, two postcards analyzed in this study depict scenes in which characters are portrayed as illiterate. As with the aforementioned pre-archetypal elements, illiteracy (which serves a personification of ignorance) is also linked to historical stereotypes of the rural poor. Harkins describes how perceptions of the white poor as lazy and stupid factored into the civil-war era debate on the role of poor whites in society:

> For slave-holders, particularly those at the apex of Southern society, the idleness of rural working-class whites justified the 'peculiar institution' and made clear the need for a planter-led economic and social hierarchy. Planter D. R. Hundley wrote, for example, that 'poor whites' were 'the laziest two-legged animals that walk erect on the face of the earth . . . [and exhibited] a natural stupidity or dullness of intellect that almost surpasses belief.' To abolitionists and proslavery ideologues alike, therefore, Southern poor whites utterly lacked industry, intelligence, social propriety, and honor, the essential ingredients for political and social equality and thus should not be trusted with political decision-making.[164]

This early stereotype carried into early 20th century depictions of the hillbilly, with characters like Snuffy Smith (and his family) often portrayed as buffoonish and stupid.

In one postcard from this series, a barefoot man reclines on his front porch, smoking a corncob pipe, with a moonshine jug at his feet as he holds an upside down book (M7). The house

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[164] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 15-16.

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behind him is poorly patched with wooden slats and supported at the corners by round rocks; the distant landscape populated by a total of four spindly trees. Next to the man on his porch, a portly and barefoot wife figure says to another female character, "Naw he kaint read he's jest puttin' on airs." His wife explains that he is pretending to read in order to "put on airs" or seem more sophisticated than he really is, a social faux pas to compound his established illiteracy. The female friend pictured with the wife figure holds both a baby and a sack of flour, serving as a continuation of the juxtaposition of male alcoholism and laziness versus the female work ethic. The smug caption printed on the bottom of the card in neat sans-serif type reads "Write me soon - I can read." Therefore, this postcard implies not only the prevalence of rural illiteracy but also emphasizes the superior capabilities of whatever tourist was meant to send this postcard in comparison to his/her rural hosts.

Kim Donehower, a scholar of Appalachian literacy, traces the particular stereotype of Appalachian illiteracy back to Will Wallace Harney's 1873 Lippincott's Magazine article titled "A Strange Land and Peculiar People"—which is, in fact, considered a seminal incendiary instance of Appalachian stereotyping that led to an increased popular interest in the region's oddities and "otherness" and which ignited the wave of early 20th century local color literature and travel writing mentioned above.[165] Though it's true that literacy rates in Appalachia have traditionally lagged behind other parts of the country, this trend is due to a variety of factors. Ronald Eller describes the failure of regional educational systems during the reconstruction era due to neglect and discrimination by state governments.[166] Rural children also faced obstacles to education posed by regional poverty and the draw of industry. For example, in the early 20th century a

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[165] Kim Donehower, "Literacy Choices in an Appalachian Community," *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 9, no. 2 (2003): 341-62.
[166] *Miners,* 29.

booming rural Southern textile industry lured many rural families into regional cities such as Hendersonville, Asheville, Kingsport, Chattanooga, or Bristol—where approximately 80 percent of mill workers were women and children.[167] Appalachian illiteracy is not a cultural flaw or an index of intelligence (as implied in these postcards). Rather literacy is a complex cultural system, complicated at various points in history by both government and industrial interference.

Additionally, as Donehower points out, although illiteracy is deeply stigmatized in the larger United States, it carries complex cultural meaning in Appalachia.[168] In presenting Appalachian illiteracy as a joke or as an indictment of Appalachian inferiority, these postcards neglect the particular cultural context of reading in a region historically exploited for manual labor by the very suburbanites who, in the 1930s drove down newly paved highways and into the Appalachian mountains for the first time. It's true that literacy and graduation rates in Appalachia have traditionally lagged behind the national average—as they have in economically disadvantaged communities elsewhere across the nation; however, literacy is not an index of intelligence of potential.[169] Even in the infancy of the Appalachian stereotype—the earliest stories of Sut Lovingood and various non-fiction accounts of the region—the idea of Appalachian illiteracy serves

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[167] Eller, *Miners*, 125-126; Eller also notes textile labor cost in the South was 40% lower than in New England with an average workday that was also 24% longer.

[168] Donehower, "Literary Choices."

[169] Richard J. Murnane identifies five factors that cause economically disadvantaged students to struggle with high school graduation: 1. "Those most affected by increased graduation requirements enter school with weak cognitive and socioemotional skills, which tend to trail them throughout their school careers." 2. "Economically disadvantaged students tend to be concentrated in a subset of the nation's schools where peer group influences hinder a positive learning environment. 3. "difficulty in attracting skilled teachers to work in schools serving high percentages of economically disadvantaged students" 4. "Conventional comprehensive high schools do not engage the interest and effort of many teenagers, especially those who enter with weak skills" 5. "the use of the GED option by a significant number of students, particularly black and Hispanic students, in some cases with encouragement from high school staff." Richard J. Murnane, "US high school graduation rates: Patterns and explanations," *Journal of Economic Literature* 51, no. 2 (2013): 416-417.

as an important tool, easily manipulated to communicate Appalachian inferiority to audiences of literate outside elites.

Adding to the illiteracy as symbolic of the hillbilly's ignorance that is presented in these scenes, these postcards all also implement a stigmatized regional vernacular in their character's speech bubbles—an almost defining feature of depictions of the hillbilly elsewhere. This inclusion of regional vernacular further separates the hillbilly character from mainstream, urban life and contributes to the hierarchy of American dialectical superiority.

Supporting Pre-Archetypal Elements: Violence

In addition to supporting pre-archetypal element of illiteracy, the multimodal depiction of violence in these postcards also contributes to the formation of the hillbilly archetype. Anthony Harkins highlights the importance of violence in the development of the early hillbilly trope, describing silent films in which standard plots involved "feuding families, battles between moonshiners and revenuers, and love triangles that pitted urbanites against mountaineers, ensured that nearly every film featured one or more killings. The death toll in some was even higher. In *The Last of Their Race* (1914), the killing is so wanton that by the film's end only two adversaries of once large rival clans remain standing."[170] Though this element of the hillbilly pre-archetype is not as universal as the characterization, inferior landscape, or behavioral deviance exemplified by these postcards, the concept of rural violence forms a supporting pre-archetypal element that can still be seen today.

The most insidious depiction of violence in the postcards in this series features a man who sits in his yard, perched atop a bucket, while his floppy hat blows off his head as it is shot through by a pipe-smoking man in the background. In another one of these cards (M6) a man

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[170] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 58.

loads a shotgun next to his daughter who holds a small baby while the mother figure exclaims, "Time we was gettin' a son-in-law pa." The implication of this card is that the father figure will go out, roundup his grandson's absentee father, and threaten him at gunpoint to marry his daughter—a literal shotgun wedding. In all of these scenes characters show recklessly violent behavior and wield weapons more appropriate to the revolutionary war than to 1930. In the shotgun wedding postcard, for example, the father figure is seen tamping down a *muzzle loaded* rifle.

This indictment of Appalachian violence is, again, related to the early predecessors of the hillbilly stereotype. According to Delma E. Pressley, "In December of 1771, Governor Wright wrote that the Lords should not grant tracts of land to settlers of the 'Back Parts of the Province of Georgia,' because he feared the backwoods might become a 'Kind of Asylum for Offenders who will fly from justice . . . and that in process of time (and Perhaps no great Distance) they will become formidable Enough, to Oppose His Majesty's Authority . . . and throw everything into Confusion.'"[171] Early American officials also feared settlers in this part of the country posed a threat to genteel planters farther towards the coast, with one official comparing them to the "Tartars of Asia" (or Genghis Khan).[172] Violence and inferior white people were related even in colonial times, through post-civil war documentation of Appalachian feuds (both real and fictional) helped popularize the specific association between hillbillies and violence. These postcards reinforce this connection.

The muzzle-loaded rifle pictured in these postcards is likely a reference to the well known idea of Appalachian feuding popularized by press coverage of the West Virginia Hatfield

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[171] Presley, "The Crackers of Georgia."
[172] Presley, "The Crackers of Georgia."

vs. Kentucky McCoy family feud, and many others, often attributed to longstanding familial hatred. Reports on Appalachian feuding abounded, famously appearing in popular fiction such as John Fox Jr.'s *Trail of the Lonesome Pine* as well as national newspapers. Scholars such as David Fisher Hackett have attributed Appalachian feuding to the population of the region by immigrants from notoriously violent areas of Great Britain, suggesting a deep cultural disposition for fighting (and again, placing the impetus for rural degeneracy on inbred cultural factors).[173] However, Anita Waller rejects this connection. Waller cites an abundance of post-civil war newspaper reporting on regional "feuds" related to the "racial and political problems of reconstruction," and notes that these types of conflicts were not limited to the South.[174] Furthermore, she examines a particular abundance of feuds reported by both Democratic and Republican Kentucky newspapers (who both supported economic modernization and a "New South"), which, prior to 1885, reported on feuds attributed to racial and political problems. According to Waller, after 1885 the idea of industrializing the resource-rich mountains began to gain popular appeal, and simultaneously reports of Kentucky feuds began to be attributed specifically to "barbaric" mountain communities and a proliferation of senseless violence and culture, rather than to economic conflict.[175] Waller even traces the Hatfield-McCoy feud to economic interests rather than "irrational family loyalty," describing the McCoy family as allied with outside industrialist and the Hatfields as interested in retaining control of local railroad and timber lands.[176]

Through an immediate visual context created by employing an archetypal hillbilly char-

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[173] Fischer, David Hackett, *Albion's seed: Four British folkways in America,* (Oxford University Press, 1991).
[174] Waller, "Feuding."
[175] Ibid. 353-355
[176] Ibid. 364

acter linked to centuries of stereotyping and a desolate, dilapidated setting both archetypally relevant and symbolic of personal inadequacy, then providing evidence that further implicates these characters as personally flawed, these postcards both form a visual argument for rural inferiority, while also adhering to Brockriede's criteria of argument. Brockriede identifies five original elements of an argument:

> "(1) an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of a new belief or the reinforcement of an old one; (2) a perceived rationale to justify that leap; (3) a choice among two or more competing claims; (4) a regulation of uncertainty in relation to the selected claim-since someone has made an inferential leap, certainty can be neither zero nor total; and (5) a willingness to risk a confrontation of that claim with one's peers."[177]

Later clarifying these original five elements as an "open concept," and a "way of seeing" that can be applied to diverse and (almost) limitless products of human creation should someone choose to use it as a perspective, he also added a sixth characteristic, stating that an argument is a "frame of reference shared optimally."[178]

In addition to the three major pre-archetypal elements of characterization, inferior landscape, and deviant behavior, the concept of rural violence and illiteracy presented in these postcards contribute to the formation of the hillbilly archetype as it endures in the present day.

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[177] Brockreide, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument."
[178] Brockreide, "Where is Argument."

V. Analysis of Memes

The key elements of the hillbilly pre-archetype identified above are visible today as composing a fully formed hillbilly archetype circulated among internet users via memes. Similar to the twentieth century comic postcards, internet memes are circulated from user to user and are meant to be concise, humorous messages. In this chapter, I will briefly explore media depictions of the hillbilly archetype during the years after the publication of the postcards analyzed above, linking these depictions to modern memes. I will then analyze a selection of memes that employ the same key archetypal elements identified in my study of postcards and explore how these elements have simply been re-accessorized for the twenty-first century. Finally, I will explore a particular subset of memes that engage the "Trump Voter" caption.

Today, the postcard images of the barefoot, log cabin-dwelling hillbillies inhabit an interesting and complex space as this particular iteration of rural poverty is no longer based in the aesthetic reality of rural poverty. With the creation of the The Tennessee Valley Authority in 1933 and the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935, people throughout Appalachia (and in rural areas around the nation) could begin to access the same electric amenities long available to urban dwellers. As the 20th century wore on, the stone wells, washboards, and horse-drawn ploughs that populated everyday life in earlier eras gradually faded into cultural memory.[179] The decades of the mid-to-late 20th century saw these postcards' connection to the material reality of Appalachian poverty erode; however, even as this particular iteration of the hillbilly stereotype has lost the biting edge of reality, another manifestation emerges. In the twenty-first century, the

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[179] Robert T. Beall, *Rural electrification*, US Department of Agriculture, 1940; Of course, for a variety of different reasons, there are still people scattered throughout the region who use old fashioned wells, washboards, and horse drawn ploughs, including Appalachian Amish communities.

buffoonish, rural hillbilly archetype has adopted a new set of props tethered to the contemporary visual reality of Appalachian poverty. Rather than being a barefoot, overall-ed bumpkin without a refrigerator, the twenty-first century iteration of this stereotyping legacy is "trailer trash." The rural poor today are mocked for their uncouth clothing, their living situations, and their stupidity—recalling the same key archetypal elements of the postcards described in Chapter IV. Instead of distributing postcards of comic cartoon hillbillies, twenty-first century audiences swap comic, mocking memes of "Redneck Randal," the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck," and "Honey Boo Boo"—and perhaps most notably, memes that feature a "Trump Voter" trope.

The linen postcards analyzed above represent an important coalescing of the hillbilly archetype at a time when it was prevalent in popular cartoons, silent film (along with post-1927 sound films), and literature. These postcards were created and distributed by postcard companies capitalizing on this emerging archetype and the mass media popularity of the buffoonish, rural trope; however, twenty-first century memes present an important example of the deep penetration of the archetype into popular culture. Rather than being organized and distributed by a central authority referencing popular media trends, the memes included in this study emerge organically in internet culture, captioned and circulated by independent users who recognize the cultural salience of the characters these memes depict. Though memes like "Redneck Randal," the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck", and "Honey Boo Boo" do not immediately appear visually similar to Sut Lovingood, Snuffy Smith, and the postcard cartoons, these hillbilly forbearers present the defining archetypal elements identified above: characterization as sloppy and abnormal, housing and landscape as substandard, and alcoholism as conduit for deviant behavior, with the supporting archetypal elements of violence and illiteracy as stupidity. In memes, these enduring archetypal elements are simply re-accessorized to parody the rural poor of today.

In this chapter, I will examine a selection of popular hillbilly memes that exemplify the three key archetypal elements identified in Chapter IV above: hillbilly characterization as unclean and deformed, housing and landscape as substandard, and behavior as deviant and ignorant. I will begin with a brief description of the hillbilly archetype as it evolved in the 20th century, then focus on unpacking a selection of hillbilly memes. After exploring how these memes employ the three key archetypal elements repackaged for twenty-first century audiences, I will explore a selection of memes that fit into a "Trump Voter" genre and show that these memes employ the hillbilly archetype as an argument for discounting and mocking the rural, Appalachian electorate.[180]

Meme Origins

This study highlights three particular versions of popular hillbilly memes: "Redneck Randal," the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck", and "Honey Boo Boo", with reference to other hillbilly memes, particularly those that engage a "Trump Voter" trope.[181] In the time between the publication of the linen postcards described above and the proliferation of these internet memes in the early 2010s, many other media sources engaged the hillbilly archetype and provide a road map of its evolution.

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[180] A reference to Donlad Trump's successful 2016 presidential campaign

[181] "Redneck Randal", the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck", and "Honey Boo Boo" were chosen to focus on because KnowYourMeme.com lists them as verified—meaning their popularity and circulation was confirmed by the website. Other memes are included in this study as examples of particular hillbilly meme phenomena. There are many, many different hillbilly memes and, due to the user-generated nature of memes, it would be impossible to analyze every existing example as they are continuously proliferating.

Anthony Harkins cites the rise of "Hillbilly Music," later known as Country Music, during the first half of the 20th century as a factor that made Southern white string bands and musicians visible nationally.[182] Silent films during this era also popularized the hillbilly character, with 138 hillbilly films produced between 1915 and 1919, followed by the notably popular 1921 film *Tol'able David*, which chronicled a young West Virginia man as he protected his home and sweetheart from "three mountain savages" on the run from the law.[183] According to Harkins, "An early script for [another hillbilly film] *Sun-Up* (1925) described the mountain characters as 'scattered untamed Americans called white trash.' The final title list six months later, however, labeled them 'Hill Billies living in defiant seclusion in their sullen hills of the South' [...] Such references clearly indicate the term's growing popularity as a label that struck a balance between the offensiveness of 'white trash' and the romanticism of 'mountaineers.'"[184]

These hillbilly characters traveled through the 20th century appearing in programs such as *The Beverly Hillbillies, Hee Haw,* and even as the Darlin family of *Andy Griffith Show* fame (whose appearance further emphasizes that class divisions that delineate hillbillies even within the broader geographic South). According to Harkins: "The year following the demise of T*he Beverly Hillbillies*, 1972, brought two of the most influential mountaineer characterizations of the postwar era: the television drama *The Waltons* (based on Earl Hamner, Jr.'s loosely auto-biographical account of his upbringing in Schuyler, Virginia) and the film *Deliverance* (adapted from James Dickey's best-selling 1970 novel and directed by John Boorman)."[185] Most recently,

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[182] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 72; Harkins also notes that though "hillbilly music" was perceived as a product of white folk culture, it was in fact an "amalgam of African-American and Euro-American traditions and the product of modern industrial capitalism and cutting-edge technology."
[183] Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 142-143.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Ibid., 205.

the hillbilly archetype has emerged as part of a reality TV trend towards the voyeuristic exhibitions of rural poverty that Nancy Isenberg calls "slumming." According to Isenberg, "After 2008, a new crop of TV shows came about that played off the white trash trope. *Swamp People, Here Comes Honey Boo Boo, Hillbilly Handfishin', Redneck Island, Duck Dynasty, Moonshiners,* and *Appalachian Outlaws* were all part of a booming industry."[186] Though the visual props used to accessorize these characters have evolved since the 1930s, the underlying messages and meaning of these props have not. Though the old-fashioned hillbilly has come to represent a romantic back-in-time vision of Appalachia and has been adopted as both a marketing tool and a symbol of heritage and regional pride, the more insidious undertones of the original stereotype live on in voyeuristic and mocking depictions of the white rural poor, an archetype of inferiority and deserving poverty, prominent both on television and in internet memes.

As described in the Chapter II, memes are "units of cultural transmission." These units of cultural transmission proliferate on the internet, for example Christian Bauckhage says, "The term Internet meme refers to the phenomenon of content or concepts that spread rapidly among Internet users."[187] In this instance, the "Redneck Randal" (ca. 2011), "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" (ca. 2012), "Honey Boo Boo" (ca. 2012) memes, and "Trump Voter" memes engage the hillbilly archetype formed in the early 20th century and reinforced by later popular media, including the boom in "slumming" reality television identified above.[188] Unlike the 1930s postcards printed by commercial postcard companies, these memes arose organically on the internet

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[186] Isenberg, *White Trash*, 307; See also SuSan B. KaiSer, and Sara Tatyana Bernstein, "Rural Representations in Fashion and Television: Co-optation and Cancellation," *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture* 1, no. 1 (2013): 97-117.

[187] Bauckhage, "Insights," 42; Blackmore, "The Meme Machine"

[188] For meme origin dates and information, see: http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/redneck-randal; http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/almost-politically-correct-redneck; http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/people/honey-boo-boo-child

and therefore demonstrate the cultural embeddedness of the idea of an archetypal poorly-dressed, ignorant and uncouth, white, rural hillbilly.

Archetypal Elements: Characters

The pre-archetypal characters that populated 1930s hillbilly postcards were characteristically dirty, poorly dressed, and physically abnormal. This collection of attributes solidified as an archetype as they were reproduced throughout the 20th century in media such as silent films, cartoons, and later television. In accordance with the foundational archetypal elements of sloppy, dirty characterization, substandard housing, and "redneck" characters of twenty-first century internet memes exhibit similarly deviant clothing styles and characterization.

In the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" meme (see VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Almost Politically Correct Redneck"), a young, thin white man stands in front of a red pickup truck. This character's hair is cut in a mullet, short on top and long in back. This character is shirtless, and as a result, his protruding ribs and chest hair are visible. This character rests his right hand over his pickup truck's side view mirror, displaying silver rings worn on his middle finger and ring finger. The character's face is set in a kind of confused scowl; his mouth is slightly agape with a long piece of straw dangles tucked between his teeth. The "Redneck Randal" meme presents a similarly uncouth young, white man committing a different set of fashion faux pas (see VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Redneck Randal"). In "Redneck Randal," a portly young man stands on a porch wearing a pair of cut-off jean shorts, a red t-shirt with sleeves removed, and a baseball cap. This character has a thin mustache and looks to be in conversation with someone else, looking past the camera with a relatively neutral expression. "Redneck Randal"'s tee shirt is emblazoned with the word "America" superimposed over an eagle-shaped silhouette of the American flag. In his left hand he holds both a cigarette and a bottle of beer zipped into a koozy.

Both of these memes illustrate a connection to the pre-archetypal hillbilly postcards and to the classic elements of the hillbilly stereotype. Instead of smoking a corncob pipe, the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" holds a piece of straw between his teeth—a reference to his agrarian, rural setting in the same vein as a homemade pipe fashioned from corncobs—while "Redneck Randal" holds the modern version of a pipe: a commercially manufactured cigarette. Instead of the moonshine jug, "Redneck Randal" holds a beer. Instead of patched, one-buckle overalls, these characters exhibit deviant styles of dress remade for the twenty-first century. The "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" does not wear any shirt at all and "Redneck Randal" wears commercial clothing that is unfashionably patriotic and altered in an unfashionable way.

In addition to these two meme images, the popular television show *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* (2012-2014) has inspired a whole host of viral meme content focused mostly on the unattractiveness of child star Alana (otherwise known as Honey Boo Boo) and her mother June. Many memes of June, known as "Mama June" on the television show, mock her weight and physical appearance. For example, one meme incredulously highlights that Mama June is married despite her physical grotesqueness (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Honey Boo Boo" 2), another suggests she has diabetes (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Honey Boo Boo" 3), and a third suggests that she might eat the family pet pig since "she eats everything else" (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Honey Boo Boo" 4). Though she was only six and seven years old during the time the *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo* aired, memes also mock Alana's weight; one meme highlights an episode (after her niece was born with an extra finger) in which Alana proclaimed she wished "she had an extra finger to grab cheese balls with" (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Honey Boo Boo" 5) and another compares her to Baby Sinclair, the overweight muppet baby from television series *Dinosaurs* (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Honey Boo Boo" 6). In the same way that female

postcard hillbillies from the 1930s were depicted as comically physically grotesque and over-weight, Mama June and Alana are mocked for their appearance, weight, and eating habits. Though the clothing and circumstances that decorate these character's personae have changed, the underlying archetype of the grotesque, poor, white woman remains.

Just as in the 1930s and 1940s, this characterization of rural hillbillies as physically gro-tesque and unfashionably dressed serves to reinforce a perceived divide between residents of the Mountain South and the rest of the nation. Portraying these characters as physically deformed, dirty, or poorly groomed (for example, with scraggly, poorly maintained facial hair) communi-cates a visual argument that these people constitute a degenerate other, incapable of adhering to social conventions for dress and grooming disseminated by mass media fashion trends and are therefore inferior and ignorant. Portraying rural hillbillies as "other" in both dress and appear-ance is the first step on the path to portraying them as intellectually inferior as well.

This process is particularly damaging—and painfully ironic—considering the dispropor-tionate challenges residents of the Mountain South face. Environmental destruction, from the coal fields to the strip mines, power plants, and factories that dot the region, touches the lives of the population mocked in these memes in ways likely unimaginable to the meme-creators. Resi-dents of the Mountain South, and of rural areas around the nation, face reduced access to hospi-tals, doctors, and dentists; they watch as local schools consolidate or as factories close, and, in many communities, they struggle to find increasingly rare jobs. These memes mock a people who are disproportionate victims of an economic system that concentrates wealth elsewhere, leaving persistent poverty and environmental destruction for a population conveniently stigma-tized and mocked as variously inferior through media like these memes.

Archetypal Elements: Housing

Just as the postcard cartoon hillbilly was seen inside simple and dilapidated wooden structures or against a desolate, tree-less landscape, hillbilly meme characters of the twenty-first century involve characters in dwellings considered unfashionable and undesirable according to modern affluent or urban standards.

For example, The "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" stands in front of a visibly old pickup truck. The paint on the truck is not shiny and indicative of a new vehicle, but rather a worn matt red. The truck's sideview mirror indicates the vehicle's age, being constructed of old fashioned metal supports rather than plastic. "Redneck Randal" also stands in a setting considered undesirably unfashionable—"trashy"—by affluent urban standards. "Redneck Randal" stands on a concrete porch with textured siding on the house behind him. He appears to have just stood up out of a red, portable folding chair and to his side sits another folding stool.

In other hillbilly memes, characters are seen standing in front of cars on blocks (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 1), getting married in the back of a monster truck on top of a dirt pile (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 2), and inside a gas station described as "one of those fancy rich people restaurants" (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 3), as well as in various other kids of settings considered uncultured or crass by a media and public more interested in urban luxury, abundance, and wealth. The material characteristics of the hillbilly's substandard housing and landscape have changed, but the underlying implication that these people are bred of an inferior land has not.

This mocking attitude towards the landscape of the Appalachian South belies a deep classism and an unwillingness to acknowledge the reality of disproportionate economic privilege that divides our nation. Rather than being a symptom of cultural or personal inferiority (as implied in these memes), the old pickup trucks, cars on blocks, or dilapidated housing mocked in

these memes are instead are a symptom of persistent poverty. By engaging these tropes about the unclean or substandard nature of rural life in the Mountain South, these memes locate themselves in the direct lineage of centuries of classist ideas about the rural poor. In reinforcing these classist ideas and attributing the housing and landscape conditions mocked herein, these memes perpetuate a willful misunderstanding of rural poverty and disengage with important conversations about national economic privilege.

Archetypal Elements: Alcoholism and Behavioral Deviance

In the sample of 1930s and 1940s postcards described in Chapter IV, the theme of rural alcoholism served as a prominent and distinct index of rural behavioral deviance. The moonshine-jug-toting characters in these postcards were often depicted as sleeping while their wives worked, as lazy and slow, and as generally suffering from a level of alcoholism that was completely debilitating. In contemporary hillbilly memes, this notion of rural behavioral deviance can be seen through themes that imply incest and sexual promiscuity, as well as through themes suggesting ignorance and a tendency towards violence.

Memes suggesting incestuous relationships as well as sexual promiscuity are particularly common. One "Redneck Randal" example features text that says "Take your daughter to work day / Working from my bed today," implying that Randall has an incestuous relationship with his daughter (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" 2). One "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" meme says "I supported my sisters decision to get an abortion / Still would have been cool to be a dad," implying that the man pictured was the father to his sister's baby (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" 4). Other memes suggest a kind of crass, tasteless sexual promiscuity, frequently personified by female meme characters shown with protruding pregnant bellies. For example, one meme features a pregnant

character with her pregnant stomach exposed by a crop-top as she tells her two children to be-have because they're "in one of those fancy rich people restaurants"; they're inside a gas station standing next to a hotdog warmer. The implication here is that this mother is a kind of uncultured rube who thinks a hot-dog warmer is "fancy" and does not decently disguise her pregnant stom-ach (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 3). Another meme, featuring a pregnant woman as she pours a bucket of water over her head while two men look on, carries the simple caption "Hillbilly Whore," supposedly implying that this woman continues to seek sexual atten-tion from men despite the fact that she's pregnant (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 4). In each of these cases, meme characters are depicted as somehow sexually deviant (whether by engaging in incest or by displaying their pregnant stomachs inappropriately); this is linked to the archetypal elements of the hillbilly stereotype that establishes the rural, white poor as fundamentally behaviorally deviant.

In addition to implying the hillbilly's sexual deviance, contemporary memes also seize on the supporting archetypal elements of ignorance (personified as illiteracy) and violence described in Chapter IV. Although many memes mock hillbillies as illiterate or uneducated (see VII. Arti-facts, Memes, "Redneck Randal" 1 and 3 and "Trump Voter" 4), many more mock hillbillies for being politically incorrect—hence the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" meme genre. For example, in one meme the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" character says he thinks "it's great when women succeed at work / especially considering their disadvantage," implying that this character is not only unable to understand women's rights, but he is also a profound sexist (see VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" 1). In another example, the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" character says he's "not against gay marriage / unless the couple is colored," the implication being that this man is so stupid as to not even be aware of his

prejudice (see VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" 2, also see "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" 3). Perhaps the most insidious incarnation of this type of meme mocking hillbillies for political incorrectness are those that frame them as homogeneously racist. In one particularly vapid example, a character with a severe under bite is pictured with the caption "High school dropout. On welfare. Refuses to get a job. Grows pot in his backyard. Has 4 tattoos, 3 baby mommas, and 2 DUIs. / Still a racist" (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Additional Meme" 5). This image is problematic because it seems to imply that this character is *undeservingly* racist—as though racism is something understandable for people who adhere to social norms—and this character has simply not earned his right to be racist.

Like the mocking depictions of rural people and landscape described above, the implication of behavioral deviance in these memes contributes to an idea of the rural poor as variously inferior and deeply other. Just as alcoholism and laziness were seen by cultural elites as markers of profound degeneracy in past centuries, behaviors like incest or ignorance decried in these memes. Rather than approaching the rich and varied landscape of cultural phenomena in the Mountain South with nuance or understanding of the profound economic and environmental injustice that haunts us, these memes seek to discount and discredit rural people by painting them as unilaterally inferior.

Trump Voter Memes

The chapters above illustrate the three key elements of the hillbilly archetype that endure in contemporary memes. Even though many of these examples serve as visual arguments in favor of rural cultural inferiority, perhaps the most insidious and dangerous incarnation of the modern hillbilly meme exists with the "Trump Voter" genre. Donald Trump emerged as a valid contender for the presidency in 2016, whole host of memes depicting various types of archetypal

hillbilly characters and emblazoned with text that mocks them as "Trump voters."[189] These memes tend to focus on hillbilly characters as stupid with the implication that their ignorance and lack of intelligence allows them to support Donald Trump, and simultaneously that the archetypal hillbilly—characteristically crass, stupid, and degenerate—is the "average" Trump voter.[190] These memes capitalize on the archetypal elements of ignorance and degeneracy folded into the hillbilly stereotype, mocking "Average Trump Voters" as ignorant and uncultured rubes and simultaneously dismissing the valid political opinions of a group, that has been caricatured, ridiculed, and marginalized by the media for decades, all the while facing some of the most interminable persistent poverty, labor abuse, and environmental devastation in our nation.

One such meme features an image of a ventriloquist dummy called "Bubba J." used by Texas-native comedian Jeff Dunham and the simple caption "Average Trump Voter" (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Trump Voter" 1). Dunham's Bubba J. was known as a devout NASCAR fan, an alcoholic, and a kind of general rube who was slow to pick up on Dunham's jokes and who met his wife "at the family reunion, at the state fair" where she was "leaning against the ferris wheel making it tilt, a corn dog in one hand, a Budweiser in the other."[191] Bubba J. ticks all the boxes for common, cruel caricatures of hillbillies: he's goofy-looking, potbellied, and shrouded in a "U.S.A" tee shirt and ball cap; he's an incestuous, alcoholic degenerate whose slow to understand jokes. According to this meme, he represents the "Average Trump Voter."

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[189] Of course this is a reference to Donald Trump's successful 2016 presidential campaign
[190] This sentiment was evident elsewhere in the 2016 presidential campaign, including notably when candidate Hillary Clinton described Trump supporters as composing a "basket of deplorable" during a fundraising event. See: Angie Drobnic Holan, "In Context: Hillary Clinton and the 'basket of deplorables,'" *PolitiFact,* 11 September 2016, http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2016/sep/11/context-hillary-clinton-basket-deplorables/
[191] "The Real Bubba J" | Arguing with Myself | Jeff Dunham," YouTube, last modified February 2, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-e6QeKvcKs.

In another "Trump Voter" meme, an image of a man with a severe underbite wearing a Confederate flag-motif hat and holding a stack of Budweiser cans is emblazoned with the same "Average Trump Voter" caption (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Trump Voter" 2). A third meme of this variety features two toothless and dirty male characters grinning (one character with his eyes closed) and the same "Average Trump Voter" caption (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Trump Voter" 3). A final example of this variety (very ironically) depicts two hillbilly characters from the 2010 Canadian-American film *Tucker & Dale Vs. Evil*, in which the two hillbillies pictured are stereotypically mistaken for dangerous murderers by a group of college students who accidentally kill themselves as they try to foil the perceived hillbilly hostility (See VII. Artifacts, Memes, "Trump Voter" 4).[192] This meme features the caption "I'm voting for Trump / Cause that Barney Sanders is giving away free edumacations."

In contemporary memes, the elements of ignorance and violence are folded into a larger archetypal construct of the white rural poor as deeply degenerate and unassimilable. Trump voter memes represent a particularly dangerous incarnation of the hillbilly archetype in that they use the ignorance and degeneracy associated with the hillbilly stereotype as an explanation for Trump's election—rather than attending to the legitimate political concerns of the rural poor. By classifying "Average Trump Voters" as uneducated rubes, I am inclined to believe that these memes imply that the Appalachian voters who supported Trump did so because of their cultural inferiority, thereby discounting the legitimate political concerns of the region's electorate.

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[192] http://www.magnetreleasing.com/tuckeranddalevsevil/; The irony of this meme is so extreme—a group of college students so paranoid about the hillbilly "freaks" they encounter while camping that they precipitate their own demise—that I almost wonder if it was intentionally created in order to mock the entire genre of "Trump Voter" memes.

VI. Conclusion

In this study, I have explored the role of archetypes as a key element of visual argument in twentieth century postcards and in modern internet memes. Beginning with a brief history of the geographic and class-based prejudices that influenced the formation of the hillbilly archetype, I identified three key archetypal elements (characterization as dirty or deformed, housing as inferior, and behavior as deviant) and two supporting archetypal elements (illiteracy and violence) that are present in both early 20th century postcards and in modern memes. Through this analysis, I linked historical stereotypes about the white, rural poor to the pre-archetypal hillbilly images in my postcard sample. I found these same key elements of this hillbilly archetype in modern memes, illustrating the persistence of this archetypal form. Finally, I explored a subset of hillbilly memes that engage a "Trump Voter" caption with particularly dangerous consequences. In this chapter, I will link my analysis and findings back to the theoretical foundation of my study and describe how I have extended these theories. In addition, I will explore the implications of my analysis, describing the pernicious elements of the hillbilly archetype and the negative social implications of this archetype.

In this study, I first identified the meaning and context of the ideas "constructed" into this complex archetype though an exploration of the hillbilly archetype's origins. As described in Chapter IV, the hillbilly archetype is informed by historical roots that stretch all the way back to the colonial era and to class-based prejudices prominent in England during the colonization of North America. Currents of this enduring class-based prejudice are visible in early colonial travel writing about the South, in Reconstruction-era literature, and in the early 20th century mass media depictions of rural hillbillies (including those in silent and sound films, radio, and cartoons) that firmly cemented the archetypal elements of the Appalachian hillbilly.

My analysis of a selection of 1930s-1940s cartoon postcards revealed three key pre-archetypal elements: characterization as dirty or deformed, housing as substandard, and behavior as deviant. These postcards are particularly malicious relics of the era when the hillbilly stereotype coalesced into a highly recognizable and culturally constructed archetype. Contemporaneous to cartoon strips such as *Lil' Abner* and *Snuff Smith*, these postcards implement elements common to other "hillbilly" media. This sample of postcards consistently portrays hillbilly characters as dirty and deformed, with ragged clothing, overalls buckled over only one shoulder, and as grotesquely overweight (for female characters) or as gangly and thin (for men). These postcards also consistently portray the housing and distant landscape around these characters as dilapidated, desolate, and barren. Finally, these postcards also consistently portray their hillbilly characters as behaviorally deviant—primarily as brazen alcoholics. In addition to these three key pre-archetypal elements, these postcards also revealed the two supporting pre-archetypal elements of illiteracy and violence, portraying characters as illiterate or as engaged in senseless violence with relative frequency.

These pre-archetypal elements are visible in contemporary internet memes that engage the idea of "white trash" or "rednecks"—a modern iteration of the of the hillbilly stereotype. In these memes, the pre-archetypal elements identified in earlier postcards are visible as they have fully formed into profound cultural archetypes that are resonant with modern internet meme-creators. These memes revealed implementation of the same three key archetypal elements; the "redneck" characters were depicted as sloppily or unfashionably dressed, their housing was depicted as substandard, and their behavior was depicted as variously deviant (most often as sexually deviant, violent, or as ignorant and misinformed). Today, these archetypal elements are implemented in internet memes, transmitted among internet users in order to reinforce the idea of

the rural, white, Appalachian poor as culturally inferior and, as in the case of the particularly dangerous "Trump voter" memes, to discount their legitimate political concerns.

Just as the hillbilly postcards of the early twentieth-century worked to sharpen the divide between urban postcard-consumers and the rural people caricatured, modern internet memes work to reinforce the perceived differences between residents of the Mountain South and the rest of the nation. In a particularly devastating perversion of what should be a democratic and poly-vocal media, these memes mock people for how they look, dress, and behave in order to present arguments in favor of rural cultural inferiority—thereby silencing voices of many people living in a region that faces environmental degradation and levels of persistent poverty (with conse-quences ranging from inferior access to healthcare to massive out-migration) that are unimagina-ble in most other parts of the nation.

This study has both important theoretical and social implications. First, this study applies the concept of visual argument to internet memes, which may prove to offer a fruitful source of modern visual argumentative material. Though the concept of an internet "meme" may refer to many kinds of viral internet content created "polyvocally"—by the many voices of a collaborat-ing public—the particular kinds of image-based memes with short text captions used in this study present an especially interesting avenue for visual-argument analysis. Similar to traditional political cartoons, many of these image-based memes combine both visual images and text in or-der to present multimodal arguments about their content. While there exist many studies of vis-

ual argument in specific political cartoons, I can only find one study that analyzes memes as visual argument.[193] Implications of this study for future research involve analyzing memes as multimodal arguments—and as a democratic and easily accessible insight into "polyvocal" interpretive material.

The idea of using memes as material for studies of visual argument extends Birdsell and Groarke's original idea of visual argument by emphasizing the importance of archetypes for visual argument. While Birdsell and Groarke identify archetypes as one of five common elements of visual argument, this study presents a case study focused entirely on the argumentative power of archetypes.[194] The kind of argument presented by reinforcing or extending the parameters of an archetype is quite subtle, though it does fulfill the definition of an argument as having a clear premise and support. For example, the archetypal visual argument employed in many of the "Almost Politically Correct Redneck" memes involves presenting a superficial claim—such as this character is anti-feminist or "politically incorrect"—and then invoking the traditional construction of the hillbilly archetype as a form of support that asks the audience to recall the cultural information they know about this archetype in order to evaluate and accept or reject this new element of the archetype.

The postcards analyzed here present a visual argument for hillbilly inferiority more in line with Brockriede's clarification that the concept of argument is an "open concept" rather than a rigid structure [195]; however, the postcards do offer a clear premise (in the form of reinforcing an

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[193] Leslie Hahner, "The Riot Kiss: Framing Memes as Visual Argument," *Argumentation and Advocacy 49,* no. 3 (2013): 151–166.
[194] "Outlines," 104.
[195] Wayne Brockreide, "Where is Argument?," 77.

existing believe) and support. First, they reinforce an existing belief about the behavior and status of the white, rural poor. Second, they provide "rationale" in the form of verbal and visual cues that present the white, rural poor as personally flawed due to traits such as stupidity and behavioral deviance in the forms of alcoholism, sexual deviancy, and violence. This "rationale" follows inductively, given the audience's likely familiarity with other media depictions of the hillbilly archetype and the "standard pattern of reasoning" that paints hillbillies as variously "other"—therefore conforming to Godden's criteria for visual argument.[196] The argument here is that, due to the archetypal elements of their culturally informed character traits, their substandard material lifestyles, and their behavioral deviance, "hillbillies" (or white trash) are inferior; through this archetype, hillbillies are justified as victims of national derision. In the most insidious political examples of hillbilly memes, this archetype is employed to discount the real political concerns of people who voted for Donald Trump by characterizing the "Average Trump Voter" as culturally inferior, ignorant, buffoonish hillbillies.

Both the early 20th century postcards and modern memes present arguments for rural inferiority by implementing and extending archetypal elements. These postcards and memes are multimodal—combining text captions with visual images—in order to solidify argumentative premises that the rural, white poor are dirty, desolate, and variously degenerate into culturally salient archetypes. The particular genre of internet memes that employ an "Average Trump Voter" caption along with an archetypal hillbilly figure present a particularly dangerous argument. In these memes, the hillbilly character's archetypal deficiency is used to argue that Trump

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[196] "(1) Whether a visual argument's premises are acceptable; (2) whether a visual argument's conclusion follows, deductively or inductively from its premises; (3) Whether a visual argument is appropriate or effective in the context of a particular audience or a particular kind of dialogue; (4) Whether a visual argument contains a fallacy or conforms to some standard pattern of reasoning." Godden, "On the Norms," 8.

voters' beliefs are born of personal and cultural inferiority and therefore can be discounted—chalked up to the culturally ingrained archetype of the hillbilly as stupid and degenerate.

This process is perhaps most transparent, and most dangerous, in the "Trump Voter" genre of hillbilly memes. In these memes, the audience is presented with an image of an archetypal hillbilly, for example, characters obviously displaying key elements of the hillbilly archetypal characterization (such as toothlessness or physical deformity). These memes both invoke the hillbilly archetype as an argument for discounting these characters' political beliefs and simultaneously stigmatize people who voted for Donald Trump by suggesting that this outrageously stereotypical archetype represents the "Average Trump Voter." These memes present a clear visual argument: the average Trump voter is the degenerate, ignorant, squalid hillbilly figure familiar in American culture and therefore this person's political beliefs are illegitimate—motivated by personal and cultural inferiority rather than reasoned, informed thought.

These "Trump Voter" memes represent the an extremely dangerous implementation of the hillbilly archetype. This meme is meant to discount the legitimate political beliefs of a group of people who, for centuries, have faced numerous injustices, including suffering at the hands of coal mining that leaves communities and mountain tops razed in order to fuel development elsewhere. The rural residents of the Southern mountains often associated with the hillbilly archetype inhabit a region defined, in part, by persistent poverty.[197] Furthermore, this archetype supports and affirms deep class-based prejudice that can be traced back as far as the earliest colonization of America by English settlers. By engaging this prejudicial archetype in order to serve political

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[197] "Mapping Poverty in the Appalachian Region," Community Commons, last modified August 9, 2017, https://www.communitycommons.org/2016/08/mapping-poverty-in-the-appalachian-region/.

goals, modern internet users who traffic in "Trump Voter" reinforce classist ideas about the rural poor as inferior and excuse themselves from the democratic necessity of debate and compromise.

In this study, I have presented a case for key foundational visual elements of the hillbilly archetype, identifying both the roots of these elements and their modern visual incarnations. Through an exploration of early 20th century postcards and modern memes, I have revealed key elements of the hillbilly stereotype and offered an instance in which the archetype presents a particularly dangerous argument, while also extending Birdsell and Groarke's idea of archetypes as an element of visual arguments. This study has important implications for not only the study of archetypes as visual argument, but also given a renewed national attention to the so-called "white working class." The hillbilly archetype—as it derives from persistent and historical class-based prejudice—represents an obstacle to fairly addressing the concerns of the rural poor by painting them as monolithically degenerate and inferior. In order to cultivate a more inclusive dialogue that spans social class and addresses profound regional problems of race, economy, and environment, we must make visible the cultural embeddedness of the hillbilly archetype and endeavor to deconstruct the key elements of personal and cultural inferiority that compose it.

VII. Artifacts

Postcards

| Asheville Postcard Company	
A1, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
A2, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	

|	
A3, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
A4, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	

A5, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
A6, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
	Curt Teich

|	
C1, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
C2, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
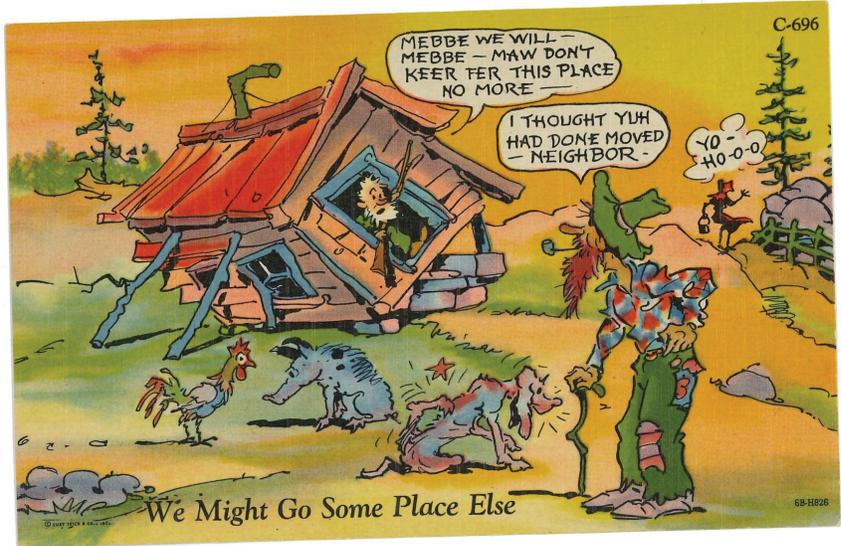
| C3, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
Midwest Map Company	
M1, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
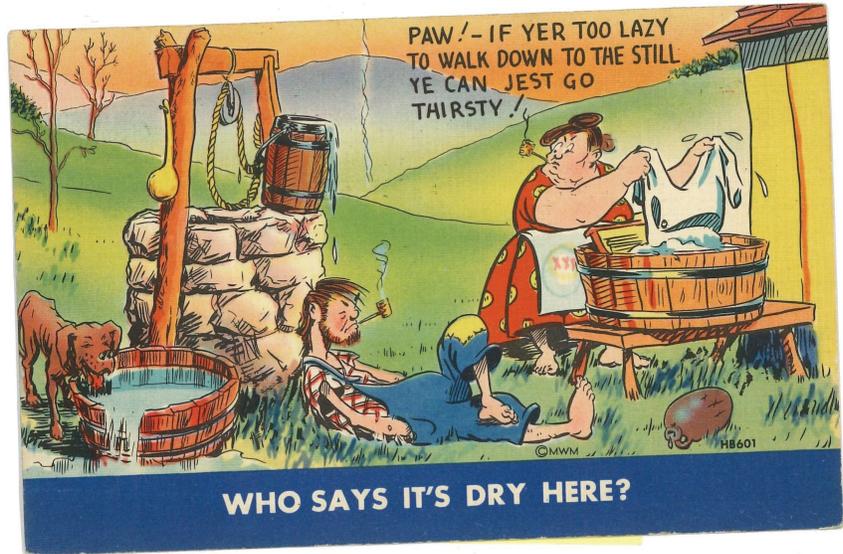
M2, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
M3, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
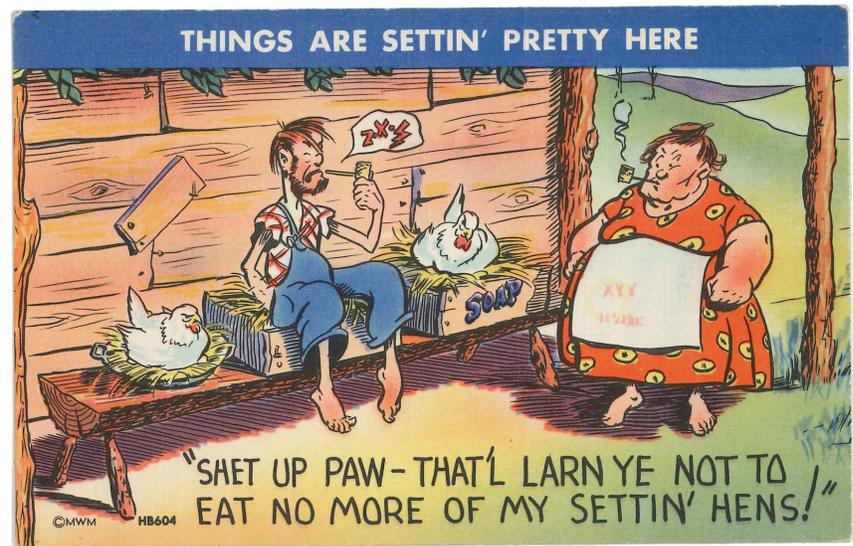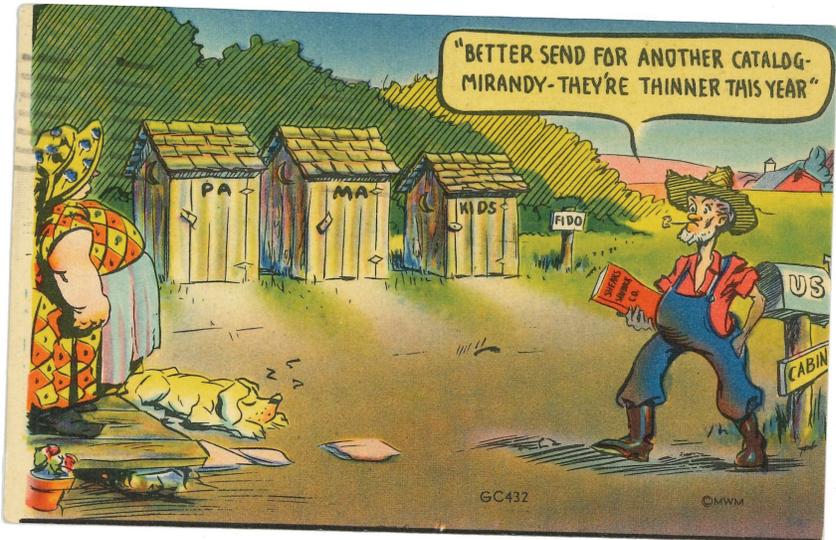
M4, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
M5, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
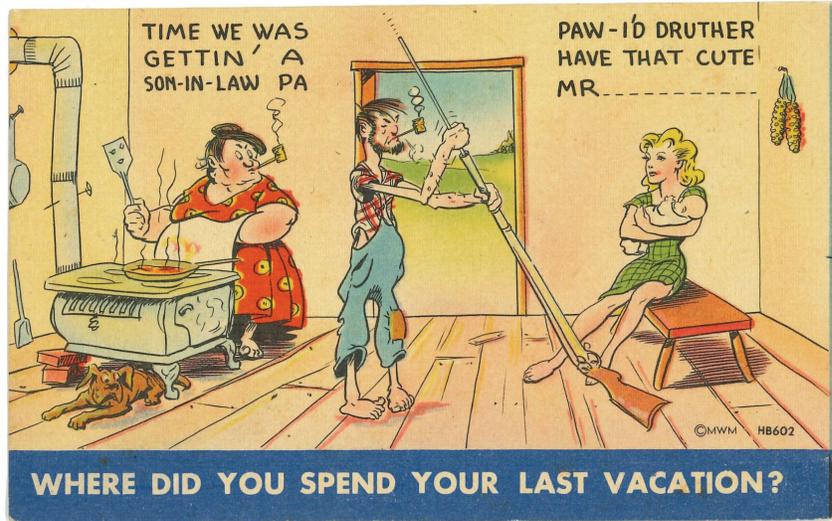
M6, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
M7, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	

M8, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
M9, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	
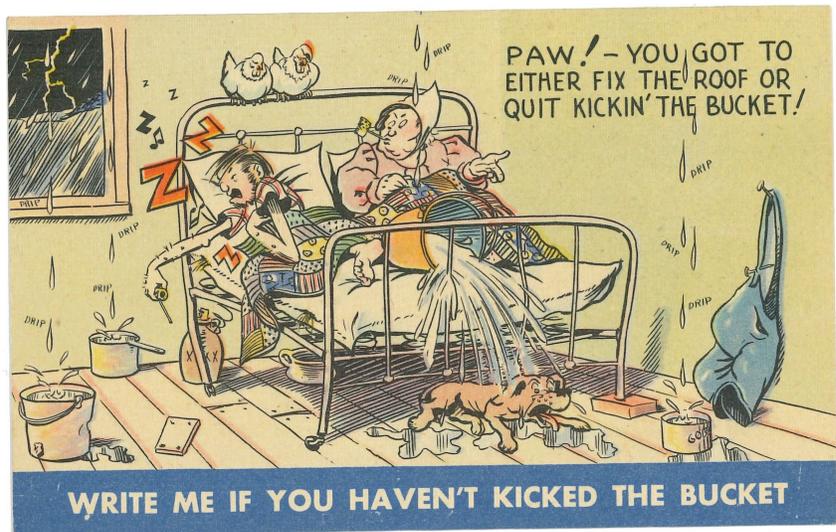
M10, Postcard from collection of author, image scanned by author.	

Memes

Almost Politically Correct Redneck. "Almost Politically Correct Redneck. Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/almost-politically-correct-redneck.	

Almost Politically Correct Redneck 1. "Almost Politically Correct Redneck. Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/almost-politically-correct-redneck.	
Almost Politically Correct Redneck 2. "Almost Politically Correct Redneck. Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/almost-politically-correct-redneck.	

Almost Politically Correct Redneck 3. "Almost Politically Correct Redneck. Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/almost-politically-correct-redneck.	
Honey Boo Boo 1. "Honey Boo Boo Child." Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/peo-ple/honey-boo-boo-child	

Redneck Randal. "Redneck Randal." Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/redneck-randal.	
Redneck Randal 1. "Red-neck Randal." Know Your Meme. http://knowyour-meme.com/memes/redneck-randal.	

Redneck Randal 2. "Redneck Randal." Know Your Meme. http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/redneck-randal.	TAKE YOUR DAUGHTER TO WORK DAY WORKING FROM MY BED TODAY
Redneck Randal 3. "Redneck Randal." Know Your Meme. http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/redneck-randal.	SO I STOOD UP AND TOLD THAT TEACHIN' LADY THE ONLY 3 LETTERS I NEED TO KNOW ARE U, S, AND A
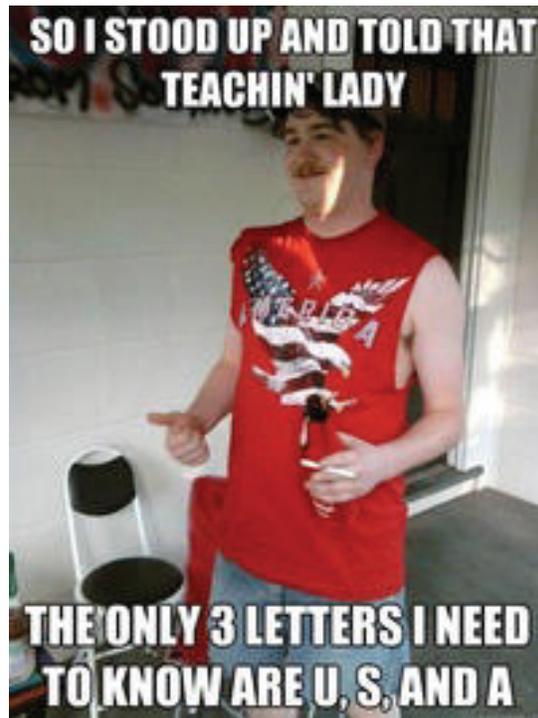
Trump Voter 1. Twitter. https://twitter.com/Granny_of_5/status/833413353158635520.	
Trump Voter 2. "Average Trump Voter." Memes.com. http://memes.com/img/968053.	
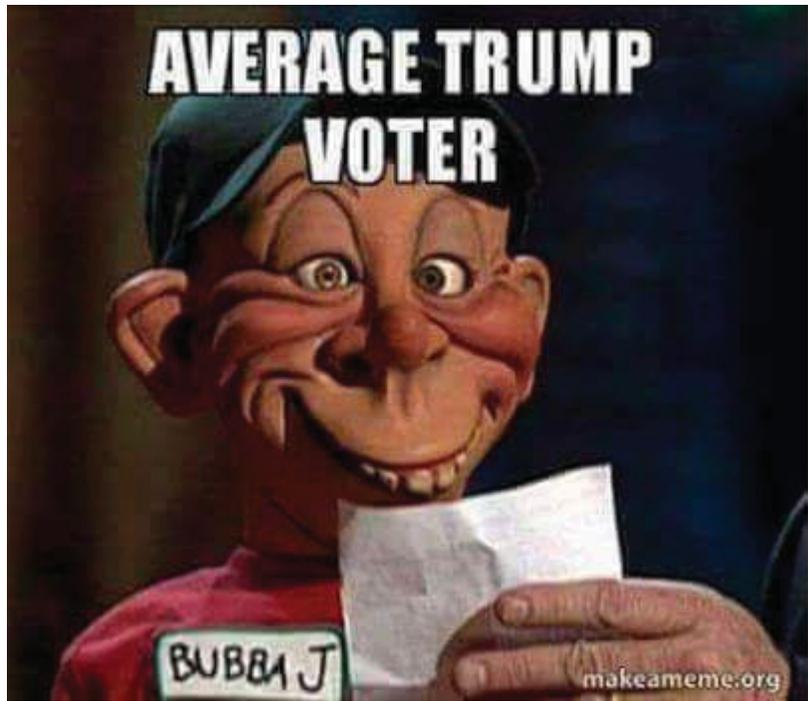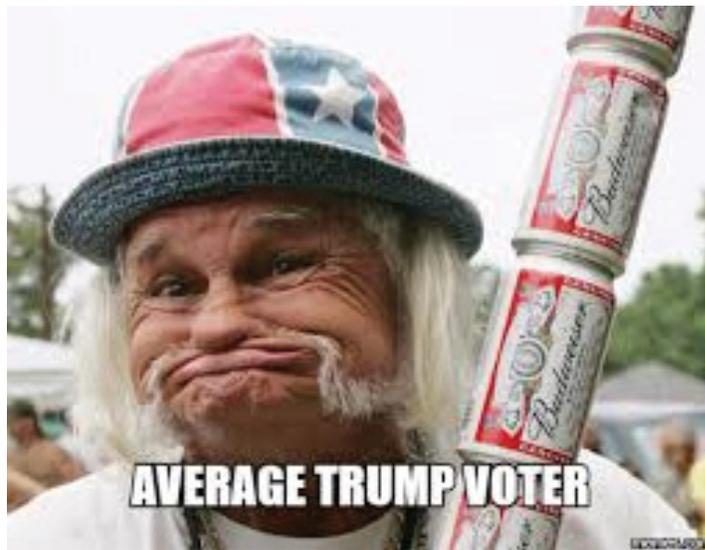
|	
Trump Voter 3. "Average Tump Voter." Memes.com. http://memes.com/img/9680 28.	 AVERAGE TRUMP VOTER
Trump Voter 4. "Most Fun-niest Redneck Meme Images of All Time." AskIdeas. https://www.askideas.com/2 3-most-funniest-redneck-meme-images-of-all-the-time/	 I'M VOTIN FOR TRUMP CAUSE THAT BARNEY SANDERS IS GIVIN AWAY FREE EDUMACATIONS
Additional Meme 1. Imgflip. https://imgflip.com/i/brum3.	 DAMN YANKEES ALWAYS IN OUR BIDNESS
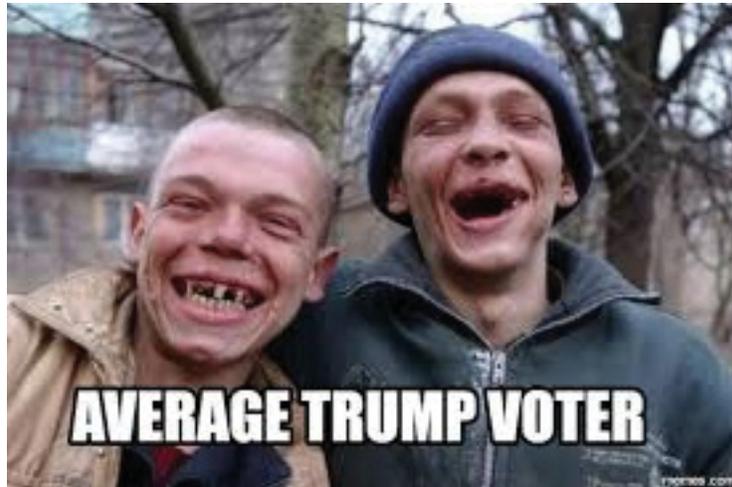
Additional Meme 2. "Funny Meme The Most Redneck Wedding in Southern History Meme." AskIdeas. https://www.askideas.com/funny-meme-the-most-redneck-wedding-in-southern-history-picture/	 THE MOST REDNECK WEDDING IN SOUTHERN HISTORY
Additional Meme 3. "Most Funniest Redneck Meme Images of All Time." AskIdeas. https://www.askideas.com/23-most-funniest-redneck-meme-images-of-all-the-time/	 NOW YOU TWO BEHAVE YOU HEAR? WE IN A ONE OF THOSE FANCY RICH PEOPLE RESTAURANTS
Additional Meme 4. "Hillbilly Whore." QuickMeme. http://www.quickmeme.com/Hillbilly-Whore.	 HILLBILLY WHORE
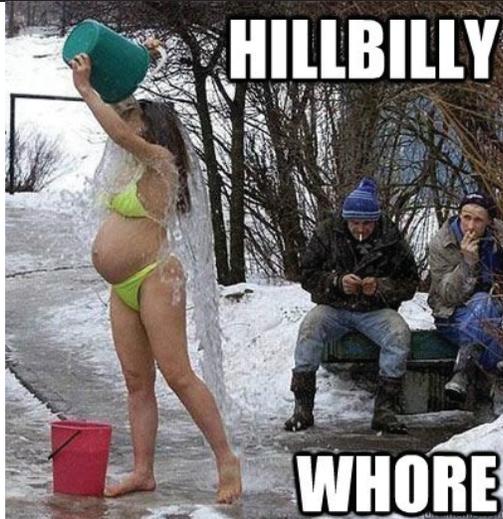
Supplementary Images

SI 1. "The Map of Lubberland or the Ile of Lasye." Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Map_of_Lubberland_or_the_Ile_of_Lasye_1670.jpg.	
SI 2. "Sut Lovingood." Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sut-lovingood-daddy-acting-horse.jpg.	
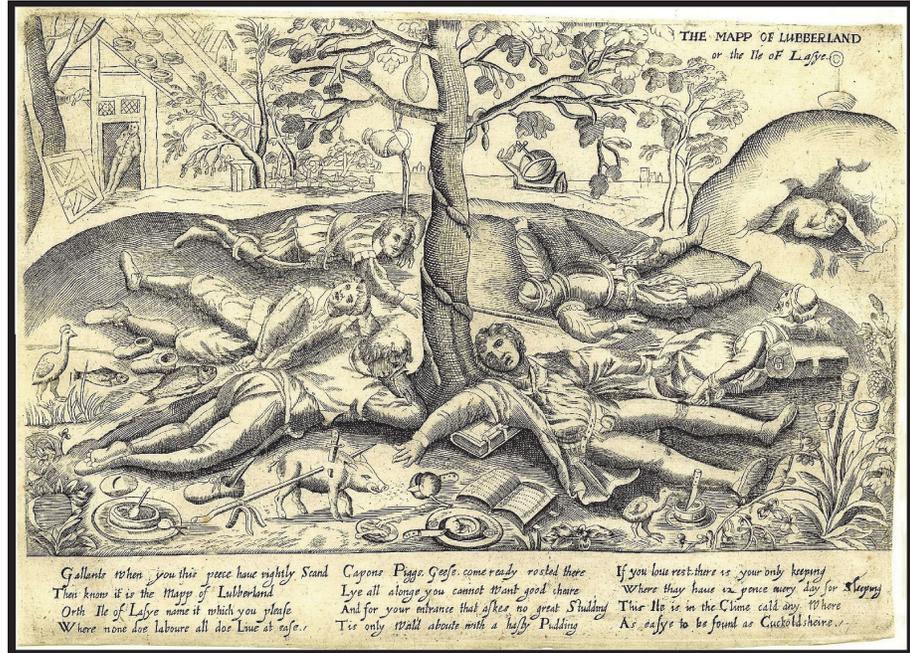
SI 3. "Lil Abner." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Li%27l_Abner.	
SI 4. "Barney Google and Snuffy Smith." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barney_Google_and_Snuffy_Smith.	

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