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SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

**Transitions from Isolation:
An Ethnographic Study of a Contemporary
Ouachita Mountains Hillman Culture**

written by

Reyda L. Taylor

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for completion of the
Carl Goodson Honors Program
meets the criteria for acceptance
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

thesis director

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**Transitions from Isolation:
An Ethnographic Study of a Contemporary
Ouachita Mountains Hillman Culture**

The Ouachita Mountains nestle along Arkansas's western edge. This tireless range of ridges and valleys runs east to west and covers over 250 miles from central Arkansas to eastern Oklahoma (Smith 1986:7). Although once believed an extension of the Ozark range, the Ouachita range is a different mountain system. The Ouachita's uplifted diagonal rock strata stand in sharp contrast to the deeply eroded Ozark Plateau north of the Arkansas River (Smith 1986:7).

The Caddo and Tula Indians originally occupied the Ouachita region. Settlers and the federal government later pushed out these tribes. The Cherokee also occupied bits of the area when the U.S. forced them onto an Arkansas reservation before further resettlement in Oklahoma¹ (Foreman 1932:227-311). According to local lore, the last known indigenous people were forced into Oklahoma in 1902. (personal communication, anonymous 15, January 7th 2003). Some believe that DeSoto's expeditions brought him and his entourage to the Ouachita Mountains before being stalled by the region's natives². To this day the region offers many stories of lost "Spanish diggings" gold mine discoveries (Fletcher 1947:20).

Settlers began moving into the region early in the 1800s. The first children of European descent were born around 1820 (Krosby 1986:278). The Southwest Trail was the most common wagon route into the Ouachitas. When federal funds improved it in 1836, the Southwest Trail was renamed the National Trail (Krosby 1986:279). This track allowed many new travelers to make their way into and through Arkansas.

By the late 1800s the railroads began contributing to Arkansas economic development (Hull 1969; Hull 1997). Lumber companies appeared and worked the vast timber resources. In 1896 a forester observed that Ouachita trees were “less resinous, and of a fine grain” (Smith 1986:14-15). Tree quality increased interest in the Ouachita region. Despite the rough terrain that makes maneuvering difficult, timber remains an economic main stay for this portion of Arkansas.

Mining also contributed to the region’s economy. The Ouachita Mountains contain many minerals, ranging from gold and silver to quartz and pyrite. With the timber industry in place as gold and silver rushes swept the area in the mid-19th century (Fletcher 1947:21), many of the region’s small settlements swelled in size. Because travel was difficult, which increased the need for sawmills and trading depots. Yet, by the late 1800s, the region’s isolation and its transportation difficulties impeded the mining industry’s development (Early 1982:50).

Barite became an important resource with the country’s oil reserves depleted after World War II (Early 1982:13). Deep-ocean exploration needed barite as a weighted drilling mud (personal communication, anonymous 4, November 10, 2001). This mineral is abundant in the Ouachitas. It attracted mining companies and gave residents new job opportunities. The development of cheaper synthetic alternatives has diminished barite production (personal communication, anonymous 17, November 6, 2001). Slate is an important mineral product in the region. Slate mining began in 1902 and has been a major source of revenue ever since (Early 1982:50). Today, mining in the Ouachitas today focuses on semiprecious stones. Driving down any Ouachita highway, one notices the numerous “rock shops” that sell turquoise, jasper, agate, and quartz crystals.

The cultural history of the Ouachitas is one of isolation and self-reliance. People who moved into the area had to be tough and willing to work hard. The mountainous land is ill-suited to large open farming, requiring rather the cultivation of small plots. The land, however, was and still is rich with wildlife. Settlers and current residents persist and persisted despite the tough landscape and because of the land's bounty.

Dramatic increases in the population of the eastern United States after 1800 drove pioneers into Arkansas. As the price of eastern land rose, settlers moved into Arkansas looking for cheaper property (Flanders 1979:150-167). These people kept close kinship ties. Robert Flanders believes that "Scots-Irish hillman" kinship with was not due to geographical influences but rather to cultural patterns already established among more eastern populations.⁶ These hillmen had adapted to life in the upland environments of the east and perhaps also lowland Scotland. When the eastern populations grew, they migrated to areas similar to those familiar to their culture (Hart 1977:148-166). Flanders believes that by choosing to migrate to a similar geographic region, they were also choosing to maintain the same cultural way of life (Flanders 1979:150-167).

Flanders describes these settlers as "hunter-herder American hillmen" rather than frontiersmen, arguing that "frontier" is equated with progress and that only the agriculturists of the region can claim much advancement (1979). Flanders described them as:

"more devoted to clan loyalties than democratic institutions, to custom than to law, to tradition than to schooling, and lacking mainstream attitudes and values regarding work, thrift, property, money, and lifestyle;

the hillman class tended to remain outside the conformities of new frontier communities” [Flanders 1979:178].

This mindset allowed populations to remain isolated in their mountainous niches for many generations.

Just as in the Appalachians and Ozarks, the Ouachitas provided safe haven for its occupants—a haven still revered for its ability to take an urbanite tourist away from the bustle of the modern world. However, unlike Appalachia and the Ozarks, the Ouachita hill tradition has been, for the most part, undocumented. Although numerous studies on the Caddo and Tula intersected local hillmen history (ex: Early 1982), scant historical or anthropological scholarship regarding the Ouachita hillmen exists.

The land in which these American hillmen established residence remained isolated from the “new frontier communities” (Flanders 1979:178) for a much longer time than other geographical locations. Isolated groups elsewhere did not have the geographical resources enjoyed by these hillmen. As the nation’s population increased, groups lacking the resources needed to maintain their unique cultural identity were quickly assimilated. Natural geography has protected cultures from the Amazon to the Pacific Islands (Peters-Golden 2002). American mountain ranges were just as protective, especially Appalachia, sheltering the migrating cultures of the Scot-Irish hillmen as it has for the native Cherokee¹ (Neely 1991:3-4).

The hillmen came to the Ouachitas on wagon train as pioneers (Sabo 1990:138). Many settled land as a way-station before heading further west; however, some did choose to permanently settle. According to local lore, this mountainous region’s present population is descendent of original Arkansas settlers.

Although never extremely populous, the Ouachita Mountain county populations have dwindled through the years³. Not until recently has the region's counties reached population heights similar to that of 1900 (U.S. Census Bureau).² Many town populations today are in the low hundreds. Residents move out in search of work while fewer and fewer stay or return to rear a family. In recent years the principle migrants to the area have been from central and South American countries. The timber and poultry industry provide many low-wage jobs and give the region one of the fastest growing Latino populations in Arkansas (U.S. Census Bureau).^{4,5,6} In fact, between 1990 and 2000 the Ouachita mountain region's individual counties have all seen at least a doubling in their Latino populations. Some counties have even reached thousands in percentage increases (U.S. Census Bureau)⁵. Despite this population shift and ongoing widespread poverty, descendents of the original pioneers still occupy the region, creating a rich and colorful culture.

Among these American hillmen descendents is the MacCleod Family (pseudonym). In early 2001, I heard stories about a clan that lived in the Ouachita woods like "savages." Not originally from Arkansas, I had often heard scornful jokes about Arkansas being a backward state. This perpetuated stereotype enticed me to find out if these extreme MacCleod tales were true. What I found in the region from which the stories originated was a large extended family. I also found that the stories I initially heard were not the only inflated tales circulating the region regarding this particular group. As I become increasingly intrigued with MacCleods and the stereotype surrounding them, I decided to begin an ethnographic study.

Being completely unfamiliar with the region, I started with nothing. To begin, I tracked down local professionals in various fields—ranging from mining to social work—that could point me to the sources I needed. Creating an informative network was difficult, and at times I found myself naively going door-to-door in search of information. After over two years of building my network base and conducting interviews, I received Ouachita's Ben Elrod Scholarship. This enabled me to spend the summer of 2003 conducting in-depth participant observation. I spent the summer in the mountains participating in the everyday life of some MacCleod family units. I traveled almost daily from Hot Springs, my home, to various MacCleod subgroups, learning what I could about their lives.

Methodology and Hypothesis

I approached this research from different angles. In addition to seeking out local professionals, I spent a great deal of time, at first, searching in the archives of various libraries while seeking informants and researching background. Time spent in libraries and archives was essential in this process. Many hours were spent reading and analyzing local newspaper clippings, county records, genealogy references, census data, and general regional history and geographical information. Although rarely were MacCleods specifically mentioned, this peripheral data has proved very important in influencing analysis.

The MacCleods have a very strong attachment to their heritage and have created large genforums at various genealogy sites (i.e. www.genealogy.com; www.ancestry.com; www.RootsWeb.com; www.usgenweb.org). I used these genforums for both contacts and genealogical research, becoming a daily site visitor during the first

year of my study. I made contacts with MacCleod family members via their published e-mail addresses on the genforums. On occasion I would post questions on the forum itself or send specific e-mails to individuals. Over time, I developed a “digital” rapport with many of the sites’ consistent users and they would then direct to other contacts. Most of my early MacCleod informants came either directly through these sites or indirectly through reference from members on the sites.

Eventually I stepped out into the field and began personally interviewing both MacCleods and non-MacCleods with whom I had made prior contact. I approximate that I spent about 200 direct contact hours. By “direct contact,” I mean time spent using participant observation, informal interviewing, and formal interviewing as opportunities to gather information. Distinguishing these activities separately is difficult as they all (especially participant observation and informal interviewing) tend to overlap. For example, in participant observation, such as milking the cows, I ask questions, which blurs the line between informal interviewing and participant observation.

When I began this study, my hypothesis was that MacCleod culture was the result of generations in isolation. After more participant observation during the summer of 2003, I have concluded that isolation is not directly responsible for the cultural characteristics I observed. Rather, the MacCleods, as perhaps always, are a dynamically adapting group who are in transition. In this text I am not using *transition* in a hierarchical unilinear sense with simple beginning to complex end or in a format requiring a distinct beginning and end. The MacCleods transitioned through time from the original, isolated generations to a state in which they directly confront today’s western society as present in the Ouachitas. With ideologies developed in generations of

isolation, the MacCleods are now forced to adapt to social and material pressures within the broader American society.

History of MacCleod Family

Of Scottish ancestry, the MacCleods migrated from Europe to the United States in the mid 1700s. According to many family members, a few of these individuals can be directly pinpointed through genealogical study. However, I have not been able to see hard copies of anything, only the current living relatives' hand notes.

Several served during the Revolutionary War with companies from Virginia and South Carolina. At some point after the war, the veterans and their families dispersed (if they were ever together to begin with), with one large group heading to Georgia and another first to North Carolina then on to Tennessee and Missouri.

Eventually, according to lore, from the edges of Appalachia in Tennessee and Georgia, these two now distantly related MacCleod populations traveled to Arkansas, settling in the same local area, the Ouachita Mountains. In fact, not only did they settle in the same mountains but also in the same county, Galloway (all names are pseudonyms). I have not been able to determine if these different groups knew of the other's migrating plans with Galloway County as a preset location or if the convergence was coincidental. Much information cannot be properly documented. Almost all is hearsay save a few ambiguous census and military records. Most of the Georgia group did move on from Galloway, pioneering farther west into Texas.

Although some from the Tennessee/Missouri group moved on as well (to Texas, and the west coastal states), many of their members chose to permanently settle in Arkansas. Settling in a large valley (called "Back Valley" by locals) with access to

numerous streams that feed into the Clyde River, the original MacCleod homestead was—and still is—called Oaks Grove. Arriving there in the mid-19th century, the MacCleods set up residence in this very isolating valley. Miles of mountains surround Oaks Grove. The Clyde River provides the only eastern opening into the valley. Tight and entangling ridges ward off intrusion from the western end of the valley. Like a geographical fortress, Back Valley kept its settlers secluded from the rest of the world.

For the next half-century, the MacCleods cultivated the Oaks Grove area into a large settlement stretching over many miles with perhaps hundreds of family units. When the Civil War began, most of the MacCleods sympathized with the North and many traveled north to enlist. The women left behind had to fend for themselves, fighting off roaming bands of jayhawkers who took advantage of a nation in turmoil.

The Civil War was a devastating time for the MacCleods at Oaks Grove. One MacCleod woman (personal communication, anonymous 18, June 23, 2003) recalls her grandmother telling of how one winter she had to sleep on leaves under a bear skin every night while living off a handful of cornbread a day because jayhawkers burned homes, and destroyed what livestock and crops they could not carry out of the valley. Another man (personal communication, anonymous 10, Spring 2001) mentioned how his family had to re-use the salt in the smoke house after it had dripped to the dirt floor.

There are many caves and hiding places in the valley area that the women and children used for shelter during raids. While MacCleod settlements may have been attacked, and in some cases destroyed, people were able to survive because of a keen knowledge of the woods and individual tenacity.

After the war, life seemed to pick up where it left off. The MacCleod families went back to subsistence farming and hunting for their livelihoods. However, the area around Oaksgrove began to grow. Many of the smaller towns began gaining population as railroads established a line running through the Ouachita Mountains. In fact, this line followed the Clyde River past the entrance to Back Valley. Cotton was the main export at the time, and the railroad allowed many local families easier travel to other markets (personal communication, anonymous 19, June 16, 2003).

The railroad fueled migration leaving the valley. Tales of “big money” drew droves of Ouachita occupants to the west coast, and the MacCleods were not slow to jump at this opportunity. Many left for Oregon, Washington, and California looking for economic opportunity, especially in the timber industry. This migration continued until the mid-20th century. Although some members of the MacCleod family decided to try something new, many stayed behind, choosing to remain isolated from the surrounding communities. Here began a rift between MacCleods and other families that is present in the area to this day.

The early 20th century brought the Prohibition to the MacCleods and changed their lives forever. While the origin of the MacCleods’ first knowledge of the process of moonshining is debated, bootlegging became the MacCleods’ claim to fame. This era was a period of rapid change with the clan. Cracks in the MacCleod family’s cohesion began to form. Some took to moonshining and other illegal activity while others condemned it. The feuding that developed during Prohibition remains among the MacCleods to this day.

Eventually, the feuding forced various MacCleod factions to other locales. Some moved to find a “safer” life for their families, away from the illegal activity flourishing in

Back Valley. Many stayed and developed their family hand in the bootlegging industry. MacCleod "Wild Cat Whiskey" become so well known that people traveled from all over the region to get a swig and a jar. Many organized crime ties are mentioned in retellings of the family's moonshining days, including tales involving such infamous figures as Machine Gun Kelly and Baby Face Nelson.

The MacCleods had a strong hold on the local whiskey market because of ties with "the law." Many of the MacCleod men played both sides of the fence and worked with law enforcement to control all but the MacCleod business. Many were sent to prison for moonshining and then were deputized after promising to use their skills to catch other prohibition violators. Lore holds that many MacCleods who cut deals with local authorities rarely held up their end of the bargain, instead used their new position to further monopolize the trade.

The Prohibition Era was a high point in MacCleod family lore. Many family legends arise from moonshining activity. However, the past fifty years have seen the MacCleod family in the Ouachitas diminish as family members found better jobs being elsewhere. The forest land was set aside for corporate businesses, governmental, and tourism interests.

MacCleods Today

Today the MacCleod clan is smaller and widely dispersed over the Ouachita Mountains. Many have moved to find jobs or mates. From my experience, the Ouachita region seems to be slipping into a devastatingly impoverished state. Many of the younger generations take the first chance they get to "make a new life" elsewhere. Many go off and work until they can pay for some form of higher education or start a family. Most

never return. Those who do stay rarely find new niches in life, simply filling the position of the last employee to retire or move. The principle source of jobs in the area is blue collar labor: chicken houses, glove plants, and construction—if one is lucky. These jobs can be grueling and monotonous but require little, if any, education, which makes them the only option for many MacCleods and others in similar socioeconomic conditions.

As mentioned earlier, MacCleods have fissioned into smaller subunits over time. Units seem to emerge from a few nuclear families who break away to start a slightly variant life. However, many of these sub-unites maintain close connections to the original Oaksgrove homestead, at least in reverence. Although most do not, some of these fissioned groups find new opportunities and achieve economic advance.

Classifications and Descriptions

Contemporary American culture rarely uses surnames to define a person's identity except, occasionally, for organizational purposes. Surnames fall to the wayside as barely significant in western society's individualistic ideologies. However, in the small southern town settings where MacCleods typically reside, a surname means a lot—especially if it signifies the part of society to which one belongs.

Because many outsiders have ingrained negative views of the MacCleods, defining who is and is not a MacCleod is difficult. Variety among MacCleod sub-units prohibits general demographic description for the clan as a whole. Even still, several individual identities⁷ and subgroups can be generally described. However, the reader should bear in mind that the interpretation of their identity is from my etic perspective

trying to interpret their emic impressions. However, I have developed many different etic designations for both MacCleods and non-MacCleods.

The first and most central type of individual, *Full MacCleod*, is a person who has MacCleod heritage and carries the surname. The second type, *Part MacCleod*, MacCleod individuals are those who have MacCleod heritage but married out or changed their name and are only “part MacCleod.” These individuals do not carry the MacCleod surname but are very involved in the family directly and usually live in or near the sub-groups.

Thirdly, an *Entering MacCleod* is an individual who is not part of the MacCleod clan by blood but has married into the family whether carrying the MacCleod surname or not. Entering MacCleod individuals are also directly involved with the family. All three of these types of MacCleods fit into a more central role in the family and are usually the first to be ascribed negative stereotyping by outsiders.

The next three types are MacCleods who fit into the “periphery” of the MacCleod social realm. These individuals (with exception to the *Leaving MacCleod*) usually do not have a behavioral history directly associated to MacCleods. *Leaving MacCleod* is a type of individual who is related to MacCleods through heritage but does not usually take much involvement in the family’s current activities. These individuals are usually not associated with MacCleods directly whether by their own intentions or due to natural relationship drifts. However, these individuals, while not involved with the family, are recognized by MacCleods as being a MacCleod regardless of how distant the relationship. “Kin is kin, no matter what.”

An *Honorary MacCleod* is an individual who does not have to be recognized by all MacCleods as being related but is looked is considered to have a closer more insider

type relationship. These individuals are usually outsiders who have formed close bonds with many members of the MacCleod clan, not just an individual MacCleod. I can give a personal example. Depending on which sub-group you speak with, I am considered a “MacCleod.” At an extended MacCleod reunion I was actually called an “honorary MacCleod” and even had MacCleod used as my last name in various activities, instead of Taylor. Another example: many MacCleod sub-units are very involved in Native American culture due to their heritage and personal interest thus many Native Americans are given an honorary MacCleod label as well.

Finally, the last MacCleod label is that of *Rhetorical MacCleod*. A Rhetorical MacCleod member is usually ascribed that position by outsiders from the surrounding community. Rhetorical MacCleod individuals and families are considered and even called MacCleods due to their living conditions or geographic proximity to a core MacCleod sub-group. Rhetorical MacCleod individuals or families do not have direct genealogical connections to MacCleods but are ascribed this label by outsiders, thus MacCleods view them as having a common bond due to the ascription and will call them “MacCleod.”

Although not MacCleods, there is another group of people, outsiders, which need to be described in order to better explain the MacCleod world. Outsiders are basically anyone who is not a MacCleod. Typically though, if I use the term “outsider” I am referring to a member of the local population who has contact with MacCleods on various levels. This contact could come in the form of direct one-on-one encounters to simply being the recipient of gossip regarding MacCleods. The latter being the usual relationship most outsiders have to MacCleods.

I use the term outsider in a broad non-ethnocentric format. The MacCleods do not have a specific word used to describe any one other than a MacCleod. They simply use terms such as “they” or “them.” Very ambiguous terminology makes it difficult to find a proper label for a Non-MacCleod. Outsiders, when referenced by MacCleods, are usually members of the local communities within the Ouachita Mountain region who are not part of the MacCleod clan and usually are referenced in discussion of prejudicial situations. However, MacCleods have used “them” or “they” to reference ANYONE who is not a MacCleod. That label is usually directed toward the mass of modern western society. However, in my use of the term *outsider* I am intending it to be general and designated toward the local community of individuals whom MacCleods consider to be not of any MacCleod insider group. *****

I have classified not only individuals and their standing in relation to the clan but have also developed three categories to describe MacCleod subunits. These MacCleod sub-units are mostly all within thirty miles of the original homestead in every direction, both in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and are loosely connected socially. (There are many MacCleod sub-units in Texas, California, Oregon and Washington that are too distantly related both socially and ancestrally to be considered as part of this study population). A MacCleod subunit is an extended family group numbering from 15 to 50 individuals. Most of the groups with whom I dealt had populations closer to 50. Not only is subunit usually synonymous with extended family, but also the individuals that make up that subunit tend to live within the same general geographical location.

The first category is the *Core MacCleods* who reside in closer-knit groupings of extended families and tend to be of low, often impoverished, economic standing. The

individuals within this classification live in tighter quarters and maintain close social ties. It is from groups in this classification that most of the “tall tales” arise.

In general, the *Community MacCleods* live in larger towns and are spread out. Individuals from this category are more closely tied to immediate kin rather than extended family. The self-identification of these individuals as extended family tends to be confined to family reunions. Community MacCleods often live at a socioeconomic level akin to lower-middle to middle class, yet are typically in a higher socio-economic position than that of the Core MacCleods. More often than not Community MacCleod members consist of Leaving MacCleods.

Dispersed MacCleods are isolated immediate families who fissioned off of either a Core or a Community group in efforts to start a new life and who are thus separated from their extended groups. This category can range across all socioeconomic categories. Dispersed MacCleod subunits are small groups made up of individuals, numbering from one person to the number within an immediate family currently living together under one roof. Aside from heritage, Dispersed MacCleods are usually not directly affected by outsider MacCleod stereotyping because they moved to a location where their surnames no longer carry Ouachita region’s local stigmatization. Most of those in this third group have cut ties to extended family members and will travel to a reunion every few years only if a closer family member also plans to attend.

In the past, members of at least the first two categories of subunits were much more closely bonded. Today, subunits socially drift apart from one another other as the common ancestors between them die, leaving few functional reasons to maintain contact. Community MacCleods tend to be spread out within a town or around its outskirts, with

members residing separately over a short radius of a few miles. Core MacCleods tend to live in very close physical proximity to one another. Given my own categorizations, of the 6 subunits with whom I worked, three of them were Core MacCleods. Most of the hostility I have witnessed between subunits is between Core and Community MacCleods.

One problem I encountered while constructing and employing these categories—a problem the reader should take into consideration—is that these category lines are rather general and, at times, are necessarily vague. On many occasions, lines among the individual and group categories blur. For instance, a Part MacCleod may live in a location geographically associated with a given Community MacCleod subunit while claiming to be a heritable member of a Full MacCleod in a Core subunit a few miles away. Whether I place that individual in a Core or a Dispersed group depends on how recently they moved away and how close socially they are to the Community group. In most such cases, I am inclined to place them amid the Dispersed MacCleods while regarding their statements about their life in context to both their self-identified Core ties and the Community ties in where they currently reside. This separating and teasing of definitions is difficult, and the reader should bear this in mind while reading the text and coming to conclusions.

Relationships in Classifications

The various MacCleod members, sub-units, and classification groups interact in diverse ways, dependent on type of MacCleod, of sub-unit, and of classification. Usually members of each classification and sub-unit keep to themselves rather than branching out to the other groups, only noting their distant relationship to other MacCleod units.

Typically the only time, other than coincidence, that different classifications or sub-units cross paths is at a reunion or funeral.

Normally the relationship between Core and Community MacCleods are more negative in nature. Members of Core often feel that members of Community are looking down on them and won't acknowledge them as kin. Many Core members feel this way regarding many Dispersed individuals as well. In my experience, these defensive ideas regarding the other classification are not completely unwarranted, but perhaps a bit inflated, and in some cases even self-fulfilling.

The Dispersed and Community groups do shy away from directly connecting themselves to Core groups or individuals. In fact, when asking Dispersed or Community members about their feelings in regard to Core groups, I usually get an ambiguous response expressing a simple desire to "make a new life." Their parents, or they themselves, moved out of the Core situation forming a Dispersed MacCleod sub-unit elsewhere. This relocation can lead to a Community MacCleod structure if other associated kin follow the original departing nuclear family or if proceeding generations take root in the same area. Community and Dispersed groups are often angered by things that Core members might do, because whatever comes out of the Core sub-unit usually affects the Dispersed and Community groups indirectly through further generalized social ridicule.

In fact, the terms "good" and "bad", used to describe which group of MacCleods one is referring to, is most often used by members from Community and Dispersed units. "Good" being used by MacCleods and outsiders, typically, to refers to those categorized in Dispersed or Community groups. Dispersed, Community, and outsider groups usually

see Core sub-units as having totally separate heritage from them. Core units, however, see any person carrying the MacCleod surname as kin and do not separate out types of MacCleods. Core groups, however, do realize that other MacCleod groups use the terms “good” and “bad,” and that Core groups are usually labeled as the “bad.” This, of course, leads to serious resentment.

Relationships among members of Community MacCleod sub-units are usually much more distant than in the Core groups. Community sub-unit members, as stated earlier have more geographic space between individual members. Typically they commonly associate with their immediate and closer extended relatives, and with outsiders on a regular basis. They see their cousins and other kin at school functions or reunions typically, since members of one sub-unit usually all reside in one school district. Community MacCleods are also far more assimilated into the local culture.

Core MacCleod members are usually much more closely bonded socially. They are generally in much tighter living conditions, and depend on each other more communally. There are many Core groups in which several immediate families, which are all extendedly related, will live within one, very small grouping of homes, or even under one roof. These sub-units usually consist of many trailers or mobile homes closely grouped together.

There are many differences between Core and Community classifications. Community group members are far less dependent on one another as compared to those of Core units. Core units might depend on communal efforts to run a chicken house or tend the cows. Everyone pitches in and everyone receives due benefit. They also share vehicles more freely—borrowing as needed—and help each other in the raising of

children and taking care of the elderly. Separate Core members also often work together on temporary jobs. Core members also seem to keep in closer touch with the Dispersed/Leaving MacCleod break-offs from their particular sub-unit. This is probably due to the already existing collectiveness felt by Core members. However, one thing, in particular, I have seen which is very common among both Core and Community MacCleods is their focus, especially by the older generations, on one individual as the principal man or woman in the group: the figurehead.

Figureheads and Big Gahbran

Since moving to Arkansas, there has been at least one man or woman in each generation who is looked-to as a major figurehead in the family. After various fissionings, the figurehead number increased, reflecting the greater number of sub-groups of MacCleods. The most famous MacCleod figurehead is Big Gahbran.

Big Gahbran was legendary in the Ouachita Mountain region during the early 20th century, and to this day many locals recognize him as if he were a super hero. Awaiting trial for murder, he was deputized and sent to Texas to track down a stealthy bootlegger. Instead, Big Gahbran joined up with the outlaw, keeping the judges in Arkansas busy with stories of being “hot on the bootlegger’s tracks.” After many years of using the law to help monopolize the local bootlegging industry in Arkansas, Big Gahbran’s double-sided acts were discovered, sending him on the run.

Big Gahbran was the “Billy the Kid” of the Ouachitas, and it seemed no one could stop him. He was said to have managed fully-MacCleod-manned stills all over the Ouachitas. The MacCleods, of course, protected their kin, and would keep Big Gahbran

up for the night if needed. He was never known to stay in one place two nights in a row. He had secret stashes of whiskey and guns hidden in caves and dug-outs all through the Back-Valley area.

Big Gahbran died in the mid 1940's of old age, but his son lives on to take his place as one of the major figureheads of the family today. Many will debate over just how many men Big Gahbran killed, or what kind of man he really was, good or bad, but the fact remains that both his life and the legacy he left have had a major influence on the MacCleod family, both then and now.

This man has been such a strong figure in the family's lore and identity that his presence is still felt. As times were changing and western society was slowly creeping into the Back-Valley area, the MacCleod family had to face transition from the old ways. In particular, they had to face outsiders telling them what they could and could not do. Being raised to fend for themselves and as independent people, this assimilating force—taking shape in the form of the “law” (revenuers)—became a symbol against which to defend their way of life. Big Gabhran became an ideal figurehead in this battle against assimilation. Choosing his own ways, without regard to the law, made him a leader for his clan—an example of how to survive both the “law” and nature.

His crafty knowledge of the mountains allowed him to escape detection when revenuers were on his tracks. At the time, everyone wanted to be like Big Gabhran because he was a living example of how to survive and even thrive, against all odds. Today, he seems to take the role of not only folk hero, but also the ideal that many men of the family strive for. Big Gabhran “made it” through his rebelliousness and knowledge of the woods—a formal education played no part. Today's MacCleod men (and women)

face serious prejudices because of their rebellious stereotype, allowing them to find a strong affection for Big Gabhran. Big Gabhran's example of how to deal with the "outsider" label served them well, an option many have chosen through out the generations.

Today, the figurehead ideal is dying out. The generations that still idealize one principle leader within a sub-group are slowly dwindling in number, and the title is becoming even more ambiguous and unimportant in the family dynamic. Today's school age MacCleods are rarely informed of the exciting and unique individuals within their heritage. They are being directed to acknowledge their family as a whole. While this newer methodology does help to break down social barriers between sub-units and outsiders, it is accelerating the loss of the MacCleod family's rich oral tradition.

The "Law"

During Big Gahbran's Prohibition days, the "law" was a continuous thorn in the MacCleods' sides. Revenuers were constantly working to stunt the MacCleods' brewing strength. There are many sore spots still felt by MacCleods today. One story that is brought up often is that of a young deaf MacCleod boy, working with his father at the still. The boy was going to the stream to fetch water when revenuers came to the still's vicinity and yelled to him. Being deaf, the boy didn't turn around, but instead kept on walking (some say that the boy was running to fetch the water). The revenuers shot the boy in the back before the father, who saw the whole scene, could stop them. This story is told most bitterly by most MacCleods today.

MacCleods claim that revenuers used “dirty” tactics to try and get information about MacCleod stills. Revenuers even went so far as to beat MacCleod wives to get them to reveal their husband’s where-a-bouts. Finally, a settler took the law into his own hands, gathered a small band of MacCleod men, and killed the revenuers. MacCleods use this story and others like it to help explain the grudges they hold against the “law”, even today.

At present, the bitterness between MacCleods and the “law,” while seeming less violent, has not subsided, and if anything, only deepened. Typically though, the law is only an issue to Core sub-units. Community and Dispersed groups are much assimilated, and do not have the same collective-interconnected view of the MacCleod identity or history as Core groups typically do.

Today even some MacCleod sub-units “fight fire” (shoot-out) with the law. Many see the “law” as dangerous to their livelihood. In the past, the revenuers were the only nemesis to the MacCleods, other than the harsh lifestyle the Ouachita Mountains have to offer. Today, however, the “law” has evolved to three main forms: local law enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and the Forestry Service.

The DEA is what the MacCleods view as having taken place of the law present during prohibition, and in fact, many times they refer to DEA officials as “revenuers.” As the stereotype goes, old moonshining stills have been turned into Methamphetamine Labs. “Meth” and marijuana are considered the “new hillbilly trade.” Due to some MacCleods participating in this business, and the strong stigmatization of lower back-country socio-economic groups being involved in drug trafficking and growth,

MacCleods have received a great deal of drug related labeling, locally. If one carries the MacCleod surname, many outsiders automatically assume a relationship to drugs.

I have heard many stories of MacCleods being unduly searched for drugs, or accused of drug involvement even though not possessing any or ever having been involved with any. Many MacCleods believe this treatment is due to their surname alone. According to both MacCleods and outsiders who listen in on the “CB”, if there is a local fire jokes ring out over the radio about how someone needs to go down to a specific MacCleod Core unit and see what they have been “cooking-up.”

Some MacCleods have been, and are involved with, drugs, however the majority is not. Usually Rhetorical MacCleods living in Core areas will be involved with drug activity, yet the blame is given to Full MacCleods. This makes determining the facts very difficult—both by law enforcers and me. Many MacCleods claim that DEA officials, in association with the local law enforcement, harass them. One figurehead MacCleod claims that the EMTs asked for police back-up (before reaching the scene) on an emergency call to his home in the heart of a thick Core neighborhood. While he was being loaded onto the ambulance for a heart attack 20 police cars pulled up and began searching cars and homes in the Core neighborhood for illegal stashes (personal communication, anonymous 1, 2, 3, and 9, July 2, 2003).

The MacCleods’ superb knowledge of the woods allows them a keen advantage, just as it did their ancestors during the prohibition. This backcountry knowledge has allowed them the ability to evade getting caught. The old roads and trails used during Prohibition, to carry whiskey to and from Oklahoma, are still used today in transport of some methamphetamines but mostly marijuana.

The Forestry Service, also, puts a major cramp in the MacCleod lifestyle. Many MacCleods enjoy roaming the national forest land and hunt off-season. Of course, not all land is accessible and is guarded by fences, but the MacCleods typically by-pass these fences and illegally trespass. Many often hunt off-season, getting in to trouble with game wardens. While the Forestry Service may play a role in the MacCleod's frustrations, most of them are indirect, and related to timber or tourism.

The Woods

Nature has always played a very important part in MacCleod life. In the past, understanding the environment was essential to survival. Until the mid-20th century, most of the Core sub-units still lived off the land. Today, while not essential, the woods are still an extremely important part of their lives and during certain seasons some Core sub-units will board up and spend time exclusively camping and hunting in the forests.

As stated earlier, their knowledge of the woods served them well in illegal activity. The woods and mountains were extremely helpful in eliminating detection both when conducting those activities and when hiding from the law. Their exceptional capabilities, developed in the woods, also allowed them an advantage while in the military, as many were drafted for the World Wars and Vietnam.

When seeking a job, many joined the CCC camps or the timber industry. Having to be tough and *mountain savvy* made them excellent for the rigorous trekking involved in cutting, hauling timber, and in construction of roads and bridges. The environment of the CCC and timber camps is described as really rough, and sometimes even dangerous. Some MacCleods say they had to fight at least once every day just to protect themselves.

MacCleods also learned to drive while on the job, and many became skilled “ridge-runners,” driving log trucks along perilous, Ouachita mountain roads. Today, many still work in the timber industry, but for the most part that has become a serious sore spot for many Core units.

Many Core units still attempt living off of the land when they can. They get a great deal of their meat from fishing and from hunting turkey, rabbit, and deer. They also hunt bees, retrieving what honey they can. Many are actually “contract bee hunters” as a side job to raise a few extra dollars. They also get a lot of their herbs from the forests.

MacCleod antagonism erupts out of the forest slowly being pieced off to private companies. Many MacCleods are extremely angered by this, because it makes a great deal of the national forest inaccessible to them. They are being more and more confined to what few acres they personally own. Having been raised with the idea that the National Forest is “for the people,” MacCleods are very bitter, and feel betrayed by the government. The government is in turn equated with the law, which takes form in the Forestry Service. Some sub-units have gone so far as to use defensive force when dealing with the situation, using guns to try and ward off forestry service men who are attempting to evict them from the forests. Some have even claimed that they will burn their plot down before giving up to the government.

This tightening of public land causes other problems as well. The Ouachitas are a major tourist attraction for Arkansas, bringing in droves of campers and hikers from all over the world. State parks have cropped up everywhere, even further constricting hunting activities for the MacCleods. Sharing the open land with tourists is frustrating to

them. This restricts the isolation they desire while hunting, camping, or even conducting illegal activity.

Deviance and Stereotypes

Today, dealing with the stereotype carried over from the prohibition days is a difficult and daunting situation for MacCleods. Many of their ancestors passed on a tradition of autonomy and self-sufficiency from outsiders. The environment they settled in, the Ouachitas, and the environment from which they migrated, the Appalachians, caused them to teach a more independent way of life, pointing to family as the social bond which, above all, must be held together in order to survive. Dependence on kin was necessary to live in such harsh conditions.

In today's independent western culture, this kinship ideology is viewed as old-fashioned in comparison to the small, more urban and transient nuclear family ideal. In the American South, however, the large, tightly bonded, and less mobile family seems to be the ideal held over from past tradition. I believe this has allowed the MacCleod family, as a unit, to preserve strong kinship bonds, due to the outsider surrounding communities reinforcing extended family relationships.

However, even though locally a strong family unit bond is ideal, it has a downside. Having such strong bonds in families creates a social environment in which the surname is a powerful and separating identifier. As in most places, Ouachita Mountain communities have social stratification. Many times, in the small towns, extended family members all reside in similar socio-economic classes, so one's name can mean a lot when

making assumptions. This social hierarchy phenomenon is prevalent in the Ouachita region.

In the case of MacCleods, their surname is associated a great deal with “white-trash,” deviance, and poverty. Many MacCleods, especially those of Core groups, at least in appearances, reinforce this stereotype. The stereotype is so strong and the local fame of MacCleods so great that their name is now used to label most anyone who fits the description with which MacCleods are associated. This stereotype can be very constricting to them as a group and as individuals.

One of the areas of life that they feel this prejudice most is in the education system. MacCleods believe that, due to their surname, it is almost impossible to get good education locally. Due to consolidation, a great deal of the discrimination against MacCleods has been alleviated, but there are still some schools that have not been consolidated in which family feuding still thrives. Many Community and Dispersed MacCleods recognize that moving out of a school district with a Core MacCleod sub-unit in the district alleviates the prejudice problems they faced.

Most children today from Community and Dispersed units do not experience the stereotyping associated with the MacCleods because they attend consolidated schools, where the student population is larger and more diverse. Also, many once Core MacCleod units who experienced school consolidation said that it gave them a new opportunity to re-develop their socio-economic situation by allowing for potential development into a now Community unit.

While the Community and Dispersed units have moved out of such prejudicial districts, those Core units still holding out have been, and are, being greatly discriminated

against in the schools. One such school that is at the cross point for most Core units is Falkirk district. According to many MacCleods and some outsiders, Falkirk's school board is run by one outsider extended family. Many Falkirk administrators and teachers are also from this same family, or are related through marriage. Due to state legislation, Falkirk was intended for consolidation, however, according to MacCleods, the wealthier Falkirk families pulled together and built a brand new school outside of the consolidating district lines.

MacCleods hold very few grudges against the other districts in the region, and if possible many out of Falkirk district for the sake of their children. Many of the more defensive MacCleods claim that, at Falkirk, if a person carries the MacCleod name they will automatically be placed in special education. However, instead of being taught, they are placed in front of a TV screen for the entire day.

I have met very few MacCleods residing in Falkirk district who have graduated high school. More often than not, I meet MacCleods in the district who cannot read, and sometimes who cannot even sign their own name. Many will tell me that the teachers would purposely place MacCleods at the back of the room and not help them read directions for assignments. I have been informed that the principle has told a few MacCleods that because of who they are—because of their surname—they will not ever graduate from Falkirk, as long as he is in charge.

Not only is the faculty “anti-MacCleod,” but so are the other students. Many MacCleod youth attending Falkirk have stated that they are constantly picked on and beaten for simply being a MacCleod, or for being related to the family. However, MacCleods are not the only one's low on the totem pole; other families in the area fall

into a similar situation. Usually these students form “family alliances” in their with Rhetorical MacCleods, which only creates further stereotyping of identifiers. A popular MacCleod adage on the subject: “its like the Indian said, you take one stick and you can break it, you put a bunch together and you cain’t, so they stick together in their wad, somebody come in there, n’ they all stick together” (personal communication, anonymous 3, June 23, 2004).

School is not the only setting in which Core MacCleods are discriminated against. With the MacCleod surname it is difficult to get a job. This coupled with poor educational backgrounds equates to few opportunities. MacCleods will say that the only jobs available for “people like them” are muscle work or menial task jobs. In the region they live in, their name carries such strong significance that employers are afraid to hire them. MacCleods are thought of as lazy, dirty, and “hot headed.” Some MacCleods have even told me that if they do get a job somewhere outside of typical MacCleod options co-workers usually don’t even realize they are MacCleods. So few carry the surname today, and unless someone already knows who a person is, a MacCleod can fade into the background just like everyone else.

One Part MacCleod woman got a new job at a factory, and no one knew who she was. Quite often the other employees would talk about MacCleods, but she just kept her head down focusing on work. Finally, another employee asked her if she had any relatives in the area and who they were. She said she was a MacCleod by birth and then married someone else. After her “confession” other employees avoided and ridiculed her socially (personal communication, anonymous 3, June 23, 2003).

Not only is the work place and job-hunt a source of difficulty, but also finding a meaningful relationship outside of the MacCleod family is hard to do. The MacCleod stereotype is so strong and so wide-ranging that it can be extremely difficult to even get a date, especially for a Core MacCleod. The baby boomer generations of MacCleods say that when they were growing up, if they showed up to a party, no one would even dance with them and that they would have to resort to dancing with their cousins, reinforcing the stereotype of being a family full of incest.

For many MacCleod women the stereotype had very strong ramifications for their dating experiences. MacCleod women are thought of as “easy” by many outsiders. This made it extremely difficult to find an outsider looking for a long-term relationship. One woman recounts how she was at a dance and a young man approached her and immediately began groping her. She slapped him and his response was “you are a MacCleod aren’t you” (personal communication, anonymous 3, July 2, 2003).

Today, the dating youth find it extremely tough since many outsiders, whether enjoying the company of a MacCleod or not, won’t be “caught dead in public” with one. I have spoken with many Entering MacCleod women who have married in yet they were extremely ostracized by both outsider family and friends when they started dating the MacCleods who later they married.

Even making friends can be difficult. Outsider parents are so cautious of MacCleods that many won’t even allow their children to befriend them, much less date them. While a very young girl, a MacCleod informant was invited to a slumber party by a girl in her class. Once arriving at the girl’s home the mother discovered that her daughter’s new friend was a MacCleod. The mother immediately drove the MacCleod

girl to her home, remarking how a “MacCleod would never stay under her roof.” This extreme prejudice has caused many families to go so far as to change their name from MacCleod, or take the Entering MacCleod wife’s maiden name.

All MacCleod categories are very keenly aware of the stereotypes that exist and can articulate them well. The Core group most directly and most often faces prejudice, as Community and Dispersed units are typically very assimilated and rarely have members who fit the popular MacCleod stereotype. Also, Community and Dispersed groups typically make very distinct efforts to separate themselves from the Core identities, avoiding further stereotyping. Though they are very bitter about the stereotype, their resentment is rarely directed toward outsiders, but rather toward Core units, blaming Core MacCleods for reinforcing the stigma.

Core MacCleods feel most of the burden of prejudice. Many claim, “it is easier to fit the stereotype than to fight it.” They would rather live the lifestyle that the stereotype suggests and wall-up within a world of mostly kin who can all relate to the same social sufferings, than to try and work extra hard to become something else. This just fuels the self-fulfilling cycle.

Transitions Hypothesis

Change, going from old to new, is always difficult, and transitions can take a great deal of time to come to a comfortable level. However, transitioning never ends. There is always something new to adapt to. No one knows this better than the MacCleods who, through the past few generations, have had to deal with a vast amount of change.

Their Arkansas heritage is based in isolation, and it has been only recently that their culture has had to confront modern western society. Some have taken it with ease while others have taken it with extreme difficulty. Through transition, aspects of their isolated culture and lifestyle have been strained, some have been erased, and some have endured. But for the most part these unique cultural aspects have simply adapted.

The isolation that allowed the MacCleods to become so closely bonded as a kin-oriented group has vanished. There are very few opportunities for true seclusion in the Ouachitas now. Many have chosen to assimilate, typically represented by the Community and Dispersed units but Core units seem to be the major hold out. This could be due to clinging fast to ideals forged through isolation, or it could be because they haven't been allowed to change due to social ostracizing. My hypothesis is that both of these possibilities are responsible and play off of one another, creating a unique cultural identity, which can be seen most readily in their relationship to the woods and the education system.

The MacCleod's relationship to the woods best illustrates this hypothesis. The generations brought up in isolation were taught to respect the mountains and the woods because they could save one's life. The woods provide sustenance and retreat; if one learns their environment well they can thrive.

A symbiotic relationship to the woods providing survival held true for many of the earliest generations of MacCleods as they settled the Back-Valley area. It later held true for them in hiding from jayhawkers during the Civil War and then revenuers during the Prohibition. However, today the ideal of knowing the woods has changed. The craft's

applications have become scarce. Many members of each generation attempt to carry on teaching the old ways, but fewer and fewer of the new generations care to soak it in.

Additionally, the MacCleod's surrounding community has changed. Ouachita occupants, while still very rural, moved from an over-all isolating and low-key environment to one which is attempting to "catch-up" to the rest of the United States' more urban ideals and life style. This change in social atmosphere has taken the importance of the woods with it. Today, even in such a rural location, knowing the woods and mountains is no longer needed.

Fast food chains and cheaper groceries have taken away the call for wild game. But even if game were needed, the old hard wood forests are now pine, and a great deal of the land has been scored away for tourism, roads, or new sub-divisions. By now, the majority of animals once inhabiting the forests have been pushed out or killed on the many Arkansas highways.

However, instead of simply forgetting the old ways, the ideology behind knowing the woods has taken on a new form. In Core units the loss of the old ways and the positive relationship MacCleods had with Native Americans have melded. In many MacCleod groups, there is an ambiguous line being connected between the Native American spirituality principles and the old ways of the mountain man.

There is a great deal of Native American heritage in MacCleod genealogy lines and the nostalgia of the past is bringing many MacCleods to find a deep connection to various Indian traditions and philosophy (in a very broad sense). Much of the idealistic or "noble savage" view of Native American philosophy supports equality and humility. Also supported are the ideals of holding fast to the "old ways" and traditions. Supporting one

another in a more communal manner is highly prized. Many MacCleods, especially of Core units, find this ideology to be fair and similar to past hillman tradition.

In a social environment where MacCleods are not equal, rather but the lowest social members, Native American tradition shows a pathway to relief. Many MacCleods feel they are not accepted in the local protestant churches, and to varying degrees have found Native American spiritualism to be a spiritually fulfilling outlet. Mixing their protestant religious beliefs with this newfound spirituality, many have discovered a new reason to uphold the old hillman ways.

The woods now not only symbolize the past and tradition, but they also provide an outlet from the hustle and bustle of the world. Even though each individual MacCleods take this new direction to different levels, the basic ideology revolving around the woods—and why to sustain them—has adapted. While the local community shuns their existence, Core members can find a “unity” with the woods and a relationship connecting them to other minorities such as the Native Americans.

Not only are the woods a major area in which the MacCleod culture has had to transition but also in the social realm represented in education. As explained earlier, the non-consolidated schools in the Ouachita region, to the MacCleods, are symbolic factories of the social repression they face.

Getting an education in the past was not quite as necessary, as a strong back and good hands could make a person a respectable living. The most admired people were usually the strongest and toughest, because the environment of the Ouachitas demanded those qualities. A man who was brave, strong, agile, and bold was usually very capable of handling the hardships of the hunter-herder lifestyle (Schoolcraft 1955: 86-87). The

MacCleods were usually those that fit into this “strongest and toughest” category. Being the toughest around was something the family was proud of, and it definitely got them what they needed in life.

Today, however, having an education is what is needed to “get ahead.” Being strong and tough doesn’t always lead to long-term rewards. However, to thrive in the Ouachita mountain environment one must be “tough and strong.” Today, if this “toughness” mentality is taught without recognizing the need for education, it can cause friction with modern westernization.

Having been isolated for a greater amount of time in an environment in which toughness is prized and formal education has little value, the meeting of the MacCleods with the rest of society brought about a major clash of ideology, which is still felt today. The area in which this can be felt the most is in these “factories of social repression.” The schools are the starting points for meeting outsiders. If opinions are already formed, due to pre-existing prejudices taught in the home, the gap could widen even further. If not dispersed in the education system, such a gap will continue to grow.

The non-consolidated school, through the MacCleod eyes, is the starting point for a great deal of strife with the outside community. Having been raised with strong family principles, and having been taught that toughness was the ideal, the generations who first stepped-foot in schoolhouses were in for a shock. When schools first opened up, almost everyone in the region was like the MacCleods, but due to further isolation many MacCleods resisted schooling. Education simply was not important to “living” at that time. Being so isolated, this attitude toward school carried on while those who were less

isolated, with education on their doorstep, took it up. Thus, in a sense, the MacCleods were “left-behind.”

Finally, education was somewhat forced upon them. Toughness and special woodsman skills were no longer practical, as the mountains’ ecology was changing due to human activity and growth. The MacCleods were met head-on, in their isolated niche, by the rest of society. However, many did not freely choose to make this transition. This created a great deal of bitterness and defensiveness toward new ways, which did not help to lessen the friction between the old “toughness” ideologies and the new “education” ideologies.

MacCleod dropout rates are high, as the original friction is played out in a socially isolating game at the schools. As described earlier, the MacCleods face a large amount of prejudice at schools, especially in the non-consolidated situations. They are backed into a corner and, feeling trapped, many give up. Their dropping-out only further reinforces the stigma surrounding their family name. Since formal education was implemented in the Ouachitas, the MacCleods have been in a constant state of transition. Many still hold fast to the old ways, seeing little importance in education. Meanwhile, the rest of local society puts an extra burden on their backs in the form of social ostracizing.

Many of the older generation, lacking an education themselves, usually due to dropping out, are beginning to recognize the importance of schooling whether they like it or not. They realize that the old days are gone, taking with them the need for strength alone to get one by, and exposing the need for education. This evolutionary process of adapting to such an abstract and new ideology is difficult and slow as the result is not tangible.

Many of the older generation acknowledge a desire for an education now. They try to impress this upon newer generations; however, many of the older MacCleods did not receive an education unless having been in prison. They want to be examples of what their children should do in society but have no means by which to show that. Thus newer generations are left with few examples of how to “succeed” in today’s modern world. The transitioning from ideologies of isolation and independence is apparent in these intergenerational struggles.

Many simply cannot take the teasing and ridicule at school, and with very little motivational examples coming from the home front, many turn to drugs and alcohol to ease social frustrations. This cycle simply continues on, typically, until a Core member breaks away to become a Dispersed MacCleod, as many do. This option is usually the only visible choice to many Core MacCleods, even though extremely difficult due to the strong kinship bonds in Core units.

Conclusions

From becoming Arkansas mountain men and women one hundred fifty years ago, in a very isolated valley, MacCleods have evolved, through a mixture of adaptation and resiliency, to their current form. Transitioning through the years to face population influxes and declines, loss of the forests, depression, social prejudices, MacCleods have created a complex and multifaceted way of life and identity.

Let’s go back to the statement made by Robert Flanders of what he terms American hillman as being:

“...more devoted to clan loyalties than democratic institutions, to custom than to law, to tradition than to schooling, and lacking mainstream attitudes and values regarding work, thrift, property, money, and lifestyle; the hillman class tended to remain outside the conformities of new frontier communities.” [Flanders 1979:178].

Today, this image of the deviant “hillbilly” is viewed with great negativity. Even still, for the Core MacCleods this description holds fairly true. However, this deviation from mass society should not be viewed as negative. The MacCleods are a family just like any other, trying to hold together while factions of it are breaking off. MacCleods having been isolated for such a great length of time has caused enormous friction between their old ideals and today’s modern American society.

G. Featherstonhaugh (1844), while traversing the American South, came to these conclusions regarding the future of the American settler/hillmen:

“Where the white man comes to plant and *live*, the buffalo and elk will not stay, the deer and bear become thinned off, and amongst his former friends the hunter is almost reduced at last to the deer, the wild turkey, the raccoon, and the opossum, which being totally insufficient for his wants, he gradually becomes a dependant upon the more opulent planter, the only person who has always something to eat. This he tries for a while, and pays for his subsistence in little jobs; but the restraint is too great, and at length he bursts his chains, and plunges into the wilderness some hundreds of miles off, ‘whar the bars is a plenty.’ (Featherstonhaugh 1844:341)

This conjecture by Featherstonaugh in his journal was very insightful and appropriate, but at a time when the American frontier still seemed vast and endless. As time progressed, the entire “wilderness, some hundreds of miles off” (Featherstonaugh 1844:341) became depleted, taking with it the remaining space for hillman to migrate. Only a few of those geographic niches were left to provide the lifestyle the American hillman was accustomed to.

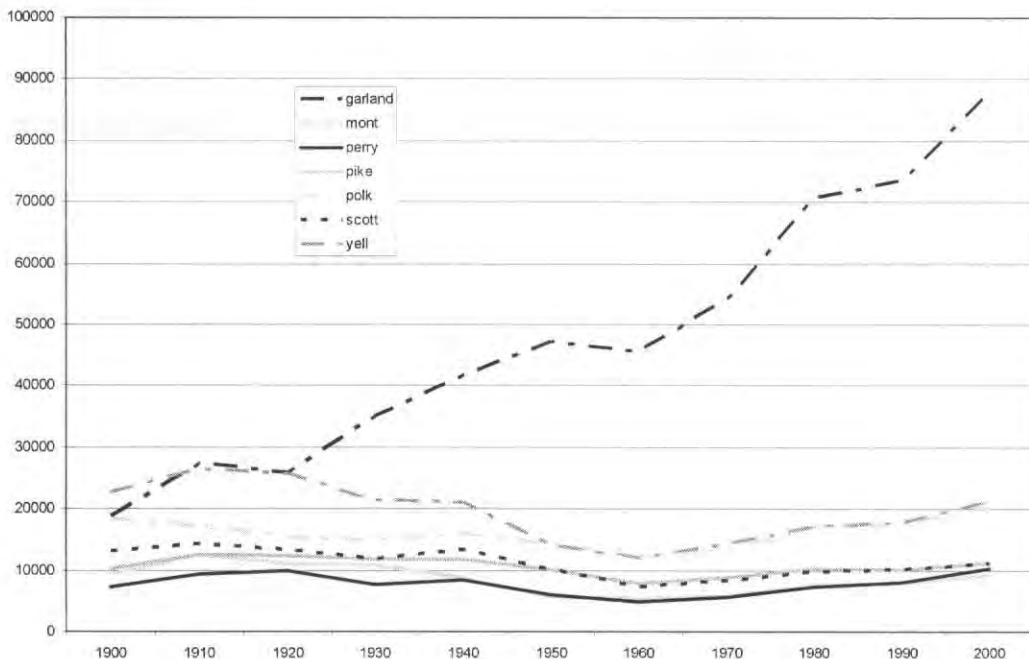
Due to being geographically cut off, many groups did not change at the same pace as the rest of American society, being left behind until the future’s society was ready to engulf even more land and begin to venture into the rougher terrain that has been the isolating home for so many. Being confronted with this new world without a choice can be painful, and no one better represents this struggle of transition than the MacCleods.

As populations increase, the inhabitants of the very few isolated regions remaining within the United States, and even the world, will be forced to face the rest of society, whether they desire to or not. Hopefully though, society will accept its new members without backing them into a corner and banishing them to the lowest social strata. Instead, we should offer them a doorway to enlighten us of their culture, so that we all may grow and transition.

Notes

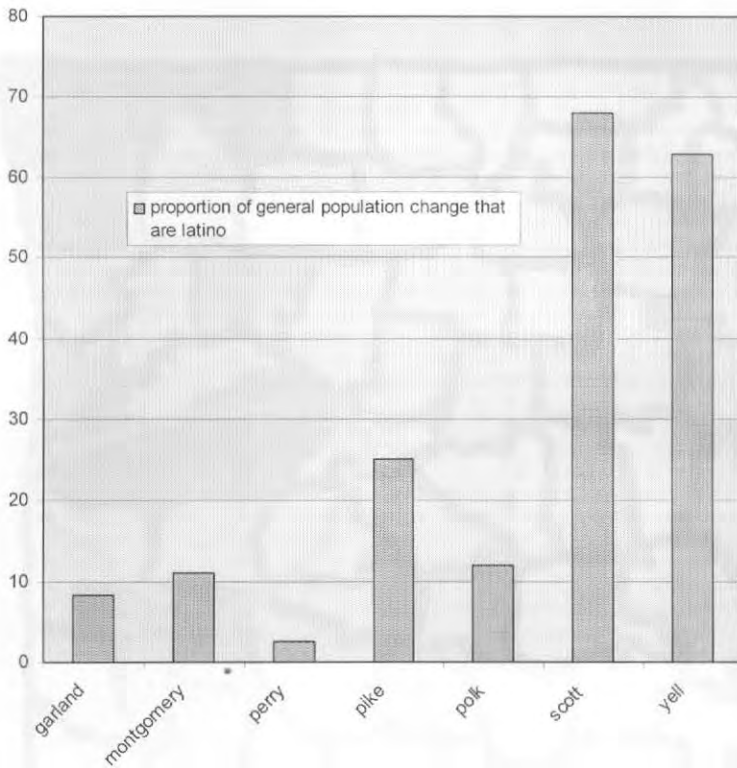
1. In the early 1800's there was a socially and politically motivated movement to relocate the Cherokee and Cree Indians living in the east, specifically beginning in Georgia. A reservation was set up in western Arkansas for the Cherokee to be relocated to in the 1830's (Foreman 1932:227-311). Many Cherokee still remain in the Appalachia back hills and were left undisturbed due to such geographic isolation. Today, this specific group is known as the Eastern Band Cherokee while those that were removed and now reside in Oklahoma are considered the Western Band Cherokee (Neely 1991:3-4).
2. Caddo Gap, Arkansas, is home to a historical monument recognizing De Soto's march through the Ouachita Mountains. The monument is of a Native American with the local legend engraved on the four sides of the base. Caddo Gap is located on Highway 8 between Mt. Ida and Glenwood.

3. General Population Changes in Ouachita Region Counties 1900-2000



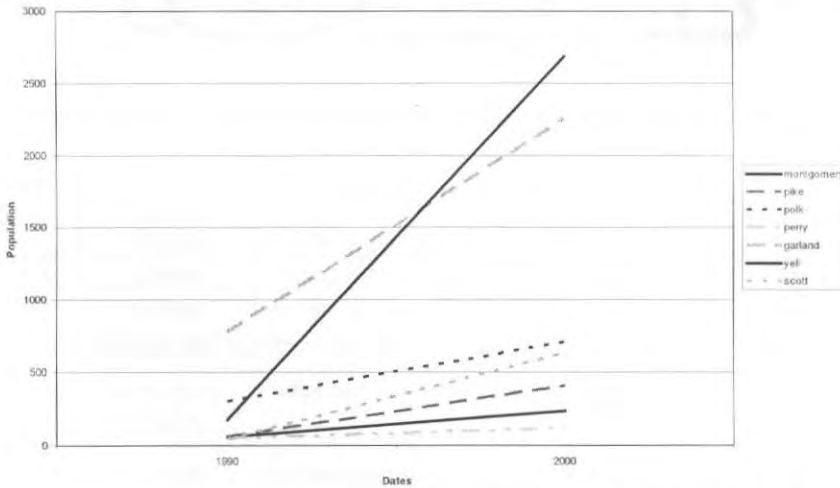
United States Census Bureau. Retrieved March 2004, from <http://www.census.gov/>

4. Proportion of General Population Increase that are Latino



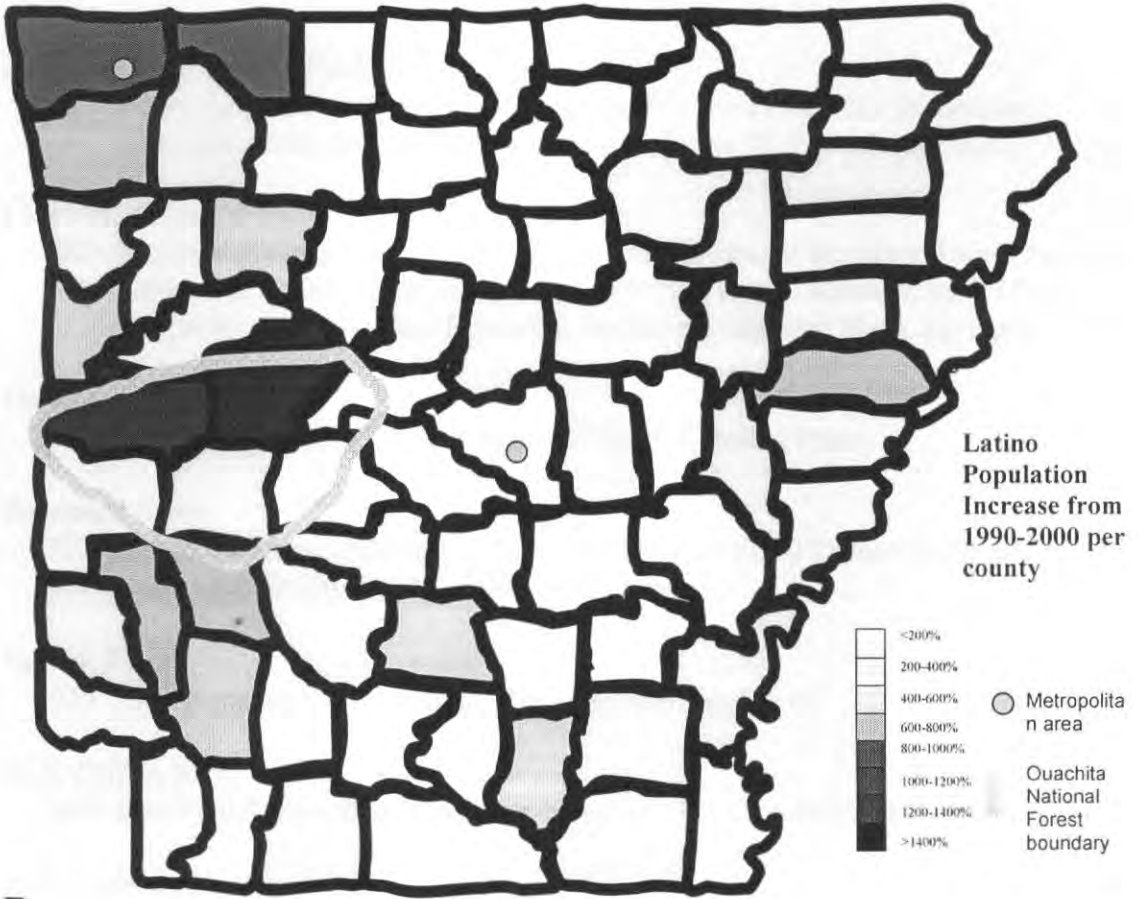
United States Census Bureau. Retrieved March 2004, from <http://www.census.gov/>

5. Latino Population Change between 1990-2000 in Ouachita Mountain Counties



United States Census Bureau. Retrieved March 2004, from <http://www.census.gov/>

6. Latino Population Increase from 1990-2000 per county in Arkansas



7. Description Break-Down of MacCleod Type and Label

TYPE	DESCRIPTION				LABEL
	Familial Heritage	Familial Identification	Behavioral History	Clan Involvement Today	
T-1	heritage	MacCleod surname	yes	center	Full MacCleod
T-2	heritage	no MacCleod surname (married out or changed surname)	yes	center	Part MacCleod
T-3	no heritage (married in)	MacCleod surname	yes	center	Entering MacCleod
T-4	heritage	no MacCleod surname	some	periphery	Leaving MacCleod (no clan involvement, no clan interest, break perhaps due to natural relationship drift)
T-5	no heritage	no MacCleod surname	some	center	Honorary MacCleod (explicitly bestowed by individual MacCleod family members upon select outsiders)
T-6	no heritage	no MacCleod surname	some	periphery	Rhetorical MacCleod (ascibred designation bestowed by outsiders with derisive connotation)

Chart originated by Randall Wight Ph.D., April 2004

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