

The Appalachians and Ozarks

a region of rough topography and economy

First-hand Experience

I was just there!



Unique Characteristics

- topography
 - much slope, river valleys population center
- forest
 - most of the land forested
- economics
 - number-one long-run problem area in the USA
 - the United States' Atlantic Provinces
 - some things are looking up lately
- population patterns
 - significant decreases that have been reversed

Topography

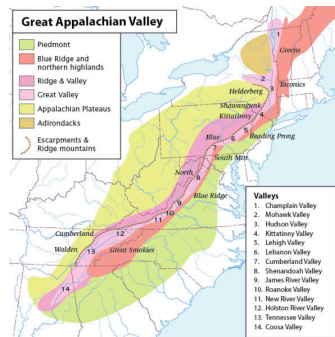
- topography
- physical subregions
 - many in the book
 - two big ones to consider
 - the Great Valley
 - everywhere else (Highlands)
 - Appalachians + Ozarks/Ouachitas

Topography

- early settlement patterns were dependent on topography
 - the Great Valley settled first
 - then people began to push into the mountains (and smaller valleys)

Topography

- The Great Valley
 - NE/SW from Hudson Valley to Central Alabama
 - One of the world's longest mountain valleys
 - Different names
 - Lehigh Valley, Lebanon Valley, Cumberland Valley, Shenandoah Valley, Valley of East Tennessee

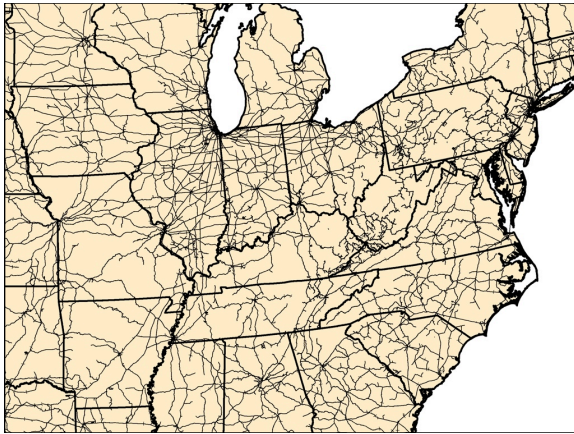


Topography

- The Great Valley
 - North-South highway of the region (obviously!)
 - one of the most important agricultural areas in the East
 - some big cities: Chattanooga, Knoxville, Johnson City

Topography

- Highlands
- Quite different human geography than the Great Valley
- key factor: very inaccessible (rugged terrain)
 - too steep for roads, railroads for a while
 - rivers too fast for transport
 - “landlocked island”
 - what effect does this have?



Topography

- Highlands
 - Appalachian settlement took place after that of Great Valley
 - for reasons of accessibility and land quality
 - most settlement took place in small valleys
 - forested ridges, cleared valleys in many places
 - some places, valleys are too narrow for inhabitation

Topography

- Highlands
 - Ozark/Ouachita Highland settlement is good case of changing site/situation advantages
 - good site for pioneers
 - bad situation for everyone else
 - forested, hilly land isolated area from progress of prairies

Topography

- Highlands
 - Ozark/Ouachita highlands settlement also took place after nearby river valley settlement
 - common pattern
 - Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas Rivers

Topography

- Highlands
- isolation
 - broke down after WWI and WWII drafts
 - created connections with rest of country
 - isolation increased briefly during depression
- in the end, appeal of modern, city life attracted young folk away

Topography

- Highlands
- isolation
 - when settled in cities, settled in groups
 - just like other immigrant groups
 - “hillbilly” cultural niches for a generation or two in cities

Topography



isolation → unique culture + moving
to city → negative stereotypes

all of this is a result of topography!



Unique Characteristics

- topography
 - much slope, river valleys population center
- **forest**
 - most of the land forested
- economics
 - number-one long-run problem area in the USA
 - the United States' Atlantic Provinces
 - some things are looking up lately
- population patterns
 - significant decreases that have been reversed

Forest

- Much of the region is in forest land
 - much of the forest land is second growth
 - relatively valuable hardwoods constitute most of total stand

Forest

- modest resurgence of foresting industries at the moment
- farm abandonment!
 - one economic era sets the stage for another
- 1/3 of nation's hardwood lumber comes from region





Unique Characteristics

- topography
 - much slope, river valleys population center
- forest
 - most of the land forested
- **economics**
 - number-one long-run problem area in the USA
 - the United States' Atlantic Provinces
 - some things are looking up lately
- population patterns
 - significant decreases that have been reversed

Economics

- “The plight of the Appalachian and Ozark Region is celebrated in song and story”
 - litany of environmental difficulties
 - economic approaches
 - negative human attitudes
 - outside forces “stealing” profits

Economics

- Outside forces “stealing profits”
 - three waves
 - each sent profits outside the region
 - each despoiled the the environment to a notable or disastrous degree

Economics

Wave 1: Forestry

- some local people made money from sale of land or resources
- many sales were at low prcies
- most jobs were low-paying, part-time, or both
- region never took over the higher-level jobs
- **struggled to transfer investment to secondary, tertiary, or quaternary economy**

Economics

Wave 1: Forestry

- some local people made money from sale of land or resources
- many sales were at low prcies
- most jobs were low-paying, part-time, or both
- region never took over the higher-level jobs
- **struggled to transfer investment to secondary, tertiary, or quaternary economy**

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- everything said about forestry also true here
- Carnegie Mellon, Oak Ridge an exception about re-investment
- lots more unique stuff about mining in region

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- mining in the region is almost all COAL
- Appalachian subregion is the world's most prolific source of good-quality coal
- 2/3 of nation's total output comes from region
- coal is of big and increasing importance to the nation's energy supply
- 1/4 of world's coal supply is in United States

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- "Coal-fired electric generating plants are the cornerstone of America's central power system."
- United States Department of Energy

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- types of coal
 - most resources are not uniform
 - have different types, which have different qualities
- three main types
 - anthracite coal
 - lignite coal
 - bituminous coal

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- lignite coal
 - none in our region
- anthracite coal
 - very high quality
 - difficult, expensive to mine
 - lower cost of bituminous coal destroyed anthracite industry
 - at one point had 180,000 miners
 - now has about 1,000 employed miners
 - change in technology, price of coal could bring resurgence

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- same pattern, minor variations with different resources
- high-quality iron in Minnesota Iron Range all mined-out after WWII
- would have destroyed industry, except for tech to use taconite
 - became too expensive
 - price went up enough that it is feasible again

Economics

Wave 2: Mining



Taconite Pellets

Steven Dutch, UW-GB

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- bituminous coal
- history of industry is one of ups and downs

188 CHAPTER 9

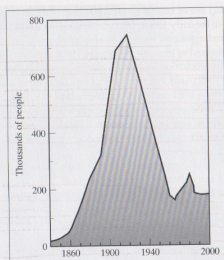


FIGURE 9-9 Historical fluctuations in coalmining employment in the United States. The half-century downtrend has now ceased, but the resurgence has been erratic.

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- main forces causing ups and downs
 - changing uses
 - price of energy & national security energy concerns
 - mechanization

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- downturn began because of loss of markets
 - domestic heating
 - railway steam engines
- stopped initially because of use in power plants
 - this is still the case

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- price of energy and national security concerns
- oil crisis of the 1970s (and now?)
 - demonstrated to politicians that U.S. must depend on domestic resources
 - coal best of these resources
 - 2x larger than all other sources of "old" energy combined
- coal production broke previous-year record by 1975, new records many years these days

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- why not explosion in employment? Mechanization!
 - new technology
 - results in dramatic increase in productivity
 - way more coal extracted per miner
 - means you need fewer miners :(
 - *sabot* story

Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- bituminous coal production
 - most output comes from large mines
 - owned by subsidiaries of giant corporations
 - surface mining is common
 - major environmental destruction
 - much cheaper than shaft mining







Economics

Wave 2: Mining

- outlook for bituminous coal looks good
 - national security
 - energy prices
 - new “clean coal” technology
 - ~3 centuries of coal left!
- mixed blessing
 - minor fluctuations has too much effect
 - profits still leaving the region!

Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- simple case of site vs. situation
 - Rockies are taller, Sierra Nevada are prettier = better site
 - Rockies and Sierra Nevada aren't right next to Megalopolis! = situation!
 - Megalopolans need to vacation outside urban areas
 - situation wins
 - Great Smokey Mountains National Park receives more visitors than any other national park in study area
- one of the densest concentrations of hotels, inns, summer camps, and resorts

Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- situation also good for Ozark-Ouachita Uplands
- the only hilly/mountains area within a few hours' drive of many big Midwestern cities
 - Kansas City, Saint Louis, Memphis, Little Rock, Dallas + Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, Tulsa...

Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- recreational potential of this region long-recognized
- true commercial exploitation had to wait until...
 - accessibility improved
 - railroads, highways
- urban centers got big enough to support big resort industry

Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- Ozark area benefits from fake lakes (reservoirs)
 - Lake of the Ozarks, etc.
 - no real lakes available!

Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- The case of Branson
 - great and entertaining box in the book
 - great example of a town that has greatly benefited from a seemingly random tertiary industry
 - book fails to capture the tackiness of the region
 - Branson = Rated-G Las Vegas
 - mostly unnamed, unknown acts





Economics

Wave 3: Tourism and Recreation

- profits still leaving the region in the case of Branson
 - country star “investment properties”, etc.

Unique Characteristics

- topography
 - much slope, river valleys population center
- forest
 - most of the land forested
- economics
 - number-one long-run problem area in the USA
 - the United States' Atlantic Provinces
 - some things are looking up lately
- **population patterns**
 - significant decreases that have been reversed

Population Patterns

- urbanization newer phenomenon in this region
- many extensive areas where rural dwellers are majority
- Pittsburgh only big metro
 - lost 150,000 jobs when American steel industry virtually died
 - why is Pittsburgh so good for steel?
 - excellent urban renewal (Carnegie Mellon)

Population Patterns

- severe outmigration after WWI through 1950s
- beginning in 1960s, big change
 - corresponds with coal employment
 - Ozarks, too
 - 2x national average
 - some due to new jobs
 - some due to old folks moving in
- Great Valley always been doing okay at least