

# Films on Stripmining and Mountaintop Removal Mining

By Steve Fesenmaier September 2008

Some of these films are available from any local public library in West Virginia from WVLC. Others are not. Sources are indicated. The Library of Congress has two subject headings that relate to these materials directly – strip mining and mountaintop removal mining.

Arranged chronologically

## **BEFORE THE MOUNTAIN WAS MOVED**

58 M. 1971 16MM/VHS McGraw-Hill

Shows the determined efforts of one coal miner to save the mountains of Raleigh County, WV. from the "strippers." Demonstrates how he succeeded in obtaining strong state legislation in the name of environmental conservation.

## **IN MEMORY OF THE LAND AND PEOPLE**

50 M. 1977 Omnificent Systems

This is a landmark documentary that was shown in Congress and helped get federal laws passed on regulating stripmining. It is an independent production by Robert Gates on the ravages of strip mining around the country, both in Appalachia and in the other coalmining areas of the country. There is no script. No narrator. Music of Bartok is interwoven with songs and dialogue of people who live in the stripped regions. Access: WVLC 16 mm. DVD - March 2007- Robert Gates – 304-342-2624. See DVD description below.

## **APPALACHIA: NO MAN'S LAND**

28 M. 1981 VHS/16MM Mary Knoll

The recent super-merger of Conoco and DuPont sets the importance of this incisive film investigation into Appalachia. Filmed in Mingo County, WV. and Martin County, Ky. Interviews with the natives, organizers, and poets are intercut with the scenes of destruction. Floods, black lung, and uncontrolled strip mining disasters which are the result of ownership by huge multinational corporations which are primary forces in Appalachia. The postscript lists results of the arc land ownership study just published. Stars Wheeling Jesuit University president Rev. Hacala. Access: WVLC

### **All Shaken Up: Mountaintop Removal Blasting and Its Effects On Coalfield Residents**

1998 Omni Productions 32 M.

This film was produced locally in the summer of 1998 by Charleston filmmaker Bob Gates and reporter Penny Loeb, who interviewed 45 West Virginia residents affected by the blasting required for the form of strip mining called “mountaintop removal.” The video shows damage to wells and houses and describes the psychological effects of round-the-clock blasting on residents who live in the proximity of the mines. Access: WVLC, purchase from Robert Gates – 304-342-2624.

### **Fight to Save Kayford Mountain**

1998 Lisa Millimet 15 M.

GOLDENSEAL contributor Lisa Millimet, a New Hampshire resident who once lived in West Virginia and still owns land here, videotaped the effects of mountaintop removal mining in the Kayford area. Larry Gibson, who is leading a one-man fight to save his family’s 50 acres at Kayford Mountain from mountaintop removal, is the focus of this short documentary. Access: WVLC

### **Nightline – Mountaintop Removal Mining**

1998 25 mins. ABC News

Ted Koppel explores the effects of mountaintop removal mining with opponent Larry Gibson and proponents. Gibson shows how the constant explosions have affected his remaining land including the family cemetery. Proponents argue that the US needs more domestic energy from coal. Access: WVLC and ABC News

### **To Save the Land and People**

59 mins. 1999 Appalshop

Strip or “surface” mining – where coal is blasted and scraped from the mountain surface – increased dramatically in the Appalachian region in 1961 when the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) signed contracts to buy over 16 million tons of strip mined coal. Though cheaper for the buyer than deep mined coal, the damage done by strip mining was far reaching and had immediate impact on coalfield residents. To Save the Land and People is a history of the early grassroots efforts to stop strip mining in eastern Kentucky, where “broad form” deeds, signed at the beginning of the 20th Century, were used by coal operators to destroy the surface land without permission or compensation of the surface owner. The program focuses on the Appalachian Group to Save the Land and People, whose members used every means possible – from legal petitions and local ordinances, to guns and dynamite – to fight strip mining. The documentary makes a powerful statement about the land and how we use it, and how its misuse conflicts with local cultures and values. Access: Appalshop

## **60 Minutes – Mountaintop Removal Mining**

15 mins. 2000 CBS News

Mike Wallace does the definitive story on mountaintop removal mining. Gubernatorial candidate Bob Wise used a clip of the story in 2000 in his campaign in which he defeated Gov. Underwood for his second consecutive term. Starting with the effects of federal judge Haden's ruling that MTR violated the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, Wallace explores the destruction of MTR on peoples' lives, interviewing many people including leading anti-MTR people such as WV Secretary of State Ken Hechler, Joe Lovett from the Appalachian Center for the Economy and Environment, James Weekly and others. He also interviews Bill Raney, the president of the WV Coal Association. Wallace asks Gov. Underwood about the half million dollars donated to his campaign and another half million donated to his 1992 inaugural party. Underwood was a long-time employee of WV coal companies after his first term as WV governor. Ken Hechler believes this story is still the best one ever filmed on MTR and its impact on peoples' lives. Access: CBS News purchase -

<http://www.cbsnews.com/sections/60minutes/main3415.shtml>

## **Razing Appalachia**

72 mins. 2002 Room 152 Productions

The place is Pigeonroost Hollow, Blair, West Virginia. The time is May 1998. On one side is Arch Coal, America's second-largest coal company, who plans to expand its mountaintop strip mine above the town. The coal company is joined by state political leaders and 400 union miners whose jobs are on the line. On the other side? The forty families remaining in Blair whose remarkable fight saved their community from being buried under the rock and soil debris of this massive expansion. Access: Bullfrog Films 55 min. version

[www.bullfrogfilms.com](http://www.bullfrogfilms.com).

## **Coal Bucket Outlaw**

27 mins. 2002 Appalshop

In the spirit of Dancing Outlaw, Tom Hansell explores the world of overweight coal-hauling trucks in eastern Kentucky. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that coal produces over half of our nation's electricity. This film is built around a day in the life of a Kentucky coal truck driver. This digital documentary gives Americans a direct look at where our energy comes from, and reveals the human and environmental price we pay for our national addiction to fossil fuels. The narrative line follows two Kentucky coal truck drivers as they chase their version of the American dream. Viewers learn how the economics of the coal business demand that both drivers break the law every day. A veteran independent trucker plays the "cops and robbers" game with the weight crew from the Department of Transportation. A young driver debates whether to keep hauling coal or to move his family to the city. And, a father describes a collision with a coal truck that killed his teenage son. Facts and figures about coal as an energy source will place these individual struggles in a national

context. Coal Bucket Outlaw examines the connection between coal haulers and the larger system that produces America's electricity. If outlaws deliver half of our nation's energy, are consumers and policymakers completely innocent? Access: <http://www.appalshop.org/film/> \$35 for small libraries and groups. Normal price is \$150 college/university. \$24.95 for home use only.

### **Mucked: Man-made Disasters—Flash Floods in the Coalfields**

52 mins. 2003 Omni Productions

Robert Gates has been making films about the effects of stripmining since his first film, "In Memory of the Land and People." (1977) Earlier he produced "All Shaken Up" (1998) about the effects of blasting from mountaintop mining on to the homes of people in the Southern coalfields. This film shows the relationship between mountaintop removal coal mining, steep slope timbering, and the wave of major regional flash floods that began on July 8, 2001 in Southern WV counties. Over 300,000 acres of land have been mined by this practice; valley fills have filled in 750 to 1,000 miles of streams. Six major regional flash floods and the Liburn Disaster have resulted as well as major impacts on 47 communities, 12,000 homes and businesses, and an estimated 1 billion dollars in damages. People have been killed in these floods. Mucked was previewed at the Spring Fling conference for librarians in April 2002 and had its official world premiere in Nov. 2003 at the Shepherdstown American Conservation Film Festival. An earlier version, "Flood Stories," had its premiere at the Flooded Out Film Festival in October, 2002. It won honorable mention in the investigative reporting category at EarthVision, an international environmental film festival in California. It was shown in 2004 by Santa Cruz public television. "Mucked" was also shown on WBGH in Pittsburgh during the Independent Filmmakers series Nov. 16-20, 2003. Bob and journalist Penny Loeb (who did a US News story on MTR and is writing a book on it) frequently work together to document the impacts of mountaintop removal and logging in the state of West Virginia. The flooding section of Penny's website- [www.wvcoalfield.com/flooding.htm](http://www.wvcoalfield.com/flooding.htm) -won second place in online reporting at the Society of Environmental Journalists 2003 awards ([www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org)). Penny has a column in Nov. 2003 Blue Ridge Country magazine. Access: call him at (304) 342-2624 or e-mail him at: [omni@ntelos.net](mailto:omni@ntelos.net). Also available on DVD.

### **Mountain Memories: An Appalachian Sense of Place**

34 mins. 2003 Real Earth Productions

Award-winning nature photographer Jim Clark is profiled in this story about his love and passion for nature photography. Clark is a native son of War, WV. The program has about 125 slides from the Allegheny Highlands of West Virginia, many of which also appear in Jim's books. The program includes stories surrounding some of the photographs, childhood memories, his approach to nature photography, a devastating fire that destroyed all his work, and his concern about mountain top removal. Filmed by Hardy County filmmaker Ray Schmitt. Access: Ray Schmitt, Real Earth Productions.

<http://www.realearthproductions.com/>.

### **Kilowatt Ours**

2004 64 mins. Jeff Barrie

Jeff Barrie, director of "Arctic Quest" (2001), traveled across the Southern East states, looking at energy problems and solutions. He found that Americans are large users of energy, causing energy companies to use devastating mining techniques like mountaintop mining to maximize their efficiency. He also found that if Americans would conserve energy, this disastrous mining technique would not be necessary, and many other ills such as childhood asthma could be minimized. Access: <http://www.kilowattours.org/>

### **Modern Marvels: Coal Mines**

2004 50 mins. History Channel

Coal is an ancient source of energy. More than half our energy still comes from coal. WV State University historian Dr. Stuart McGhee (who starred in Gary Simmons' series, "The Rock that Burns,") talks about different ways that coal has been mined and how it is mined now. New techniques like mountaintop removal mining are shown. Appalachian activists talk about the many risks coal mining creates including massive flooding of people's homes and neighborhoods. Industry leaders state their own position on these complaints. Access: \$24.95 Product No. AAE-43704 History Channel

### **Sludge**

55 mins. 2005 Appalshop

A documentary about the effects of the Martin County sludge flood in 2000, releasing 10 times more effluent into the environment than the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The film focuses on the reactions of Martin County residents and Jack Spadaro, the long-time mine safety engineer who is now under threat from the Bush Administration for refusing to sign the official report on this disaster. Spadaro is a native West Virginian, working for more than 30 years on coal mine safety in West Virginia, most recently as director of the Mine and Health Safety Academy in Beckley, beginning his career as a mining engineer looking at the Buffalo Creek Disaster. Access: Appalshop.

### **Thoughts In The Presence of Fear**

25 mins. 2005 Appalshop

Kentucky writer Wendell Berry reads his essay of the same name as scenes of Appalachian coalfields are shown. The images were captured by director Herb E. Smith throughout his 35 years as a filmmaker. The essay points to the violent consequences of the global economy and calls for a more locally based "peaceable economy." Berry wrote the essay in reaction to events of September 11, 2001. James Caudill, Dirk Powell, Martha Scanlan, and Riley Baugus perform the musical score. It is based on Jean Ritchie's Cool of the Day.

### **The Appalachians – series**

2005 180 mins Evening Star Productions

Mari-Lynn Evans, executive producer, was born and raised in Bulltown, Braxton County, WV. After more than two decades producing hundreds of health and other films, she returns home to her beloved Appalachia. The four parts are -1. "First Frontier," - Pre-History-1870 - native Americans, European pioneers, Civil War 2. "Barons, Feuds & White Lightning" - 1871-1929 - feuds, timber and coal, labor wars, moonshine and roaring 1920s 3. "Boom & Bust" - 1929-1965 - Great Depression, WWII, Migration in 1950s, War on Poverty 4. "Memories in a Modern World" - 1965-present - Legacy, Music, Land in Conflict (MTR), People and future of Appalachia. The Sierra Club, a sponsor, has built a good website for the series - [www.sierraclub.org/appalachia](http://www.sierraclub.org/appalachia). Random House published a book in conjunction with the series, edited by Ms. Evans, "The Appalachians." Access: *Every main public library in WV has a copy, sent to them in June 2005. Or the Sierra Club website*

### **The Kingmaker – Don Blankenship**

2005 30 mins. WVPBS

Reporter Anna Sale narrates this investigation of Don Blankenship, the president of Massey Energy. Blankenship told the Charleston press he considered the report to be balanced. Others think that it is not accurate because the damage he has done to the environment and workers' health is minimized. He is famous for buying union mines, closing them, and reopening them as non-union. He is best known for financing the campaign against Supreme Court Justice Warren McGraw in fall 2004, spending millions of dollars. (This is shown in detail in Wayne Ewing's film, "The Last Campaign.") Appalshop footage of his early days is used, and various supporters present positive opinions about this management style and contributions to southern WV communities. Various reporters and detractors are also interviewed. The fact that he even threatened to sue WVPBS is noted. **Access: WVPBS, \$25, (304) 556-4900. Also available at You Tube - [http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=kingmaker+don+blankenship](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kingmaker+don+blankenship)**  
**p**  
*Five parts*

## **Black Diamonds**

2006 95 mins. Catherine and Ann Pancake

Black Diamonds charts the escalating drama in Appalachia over the alarming increase in large mountaintop coal mines. These mammoth operations have covered 1200 miles of headwater streams with mining waste; demolished thousands of acres of hardwood forest; and flattened hundred of Appalachian mountain peaks. Citizen testimony and visual documentation interwoven with the perspectives of government officials, activists, and scientists create a riveting portrait of an American region fighting for its life--caught between the grinding wheels of the national appetite for cheap energy and an enduring sense of Appalachian culture, pride, and natural beauty. Filmmakers Catherine and Ann Pancake were born and raised in WV. Catherine has become an award-winning filmmaker and Ann is an award-winning WV author. Working for more than 4 years on this project, they have traveled throughout Appalachia to chronicle the unparalleled destruction. Interviews with Julia Bonds, Maria Gunnoe, Arley Johnson, Ken Hechler and William Maxey. Access: <http://www.blackdiamondsmovie.com/index.html>

## **Bringing Down the Mountains**

2006 14 mins.

Greensburg Salem High School senior Kaitlyn Walton and juniors Jill Sompel and Stephanie Loughner produced the 14-minute film to describe what life is like around MTR. Coal River Mountain Watch's Hillary Hosta said, "The girls did a great job clearly articulating with pictures and narrative what can be a very complex issue. The piece is concise, to the point and moving." It premiered on Feb. 11 at the West Virginia Energy Gathering" for young people. ([www.climateaction.net/content/wveg/](http://www.climateaction.net/content/wveg/)) Limited copies are available for outreach and educational use. Access; bringingdownthemountains@yahoo.com.

## **Mountain Mourning**

2006 30 mins. Patchwork Films

Allen Johnson, a co-founder of Christians for the Mountains, co-directed this film about the relationship between Christianity and mountaintop removal mining. He and co-director B.J. Gudmundsson have taken slides from other MTR groups, added their own narration and music, and greatly improved it with some of their own images. Many of the best known anti-MTR activists including Julia Bonds and Larry Gibson speak about the effects MTR has had on their personal lives. Many quotes from the Bible are placed on screen to remind the viewer of the Christian source for their anti-MTR beliefs. Also, powerful Christian music is used to make the film a profound experience. Johnson is the director of the Pocahontas County Free Libraries system that was chosen as one of the best three public libraries in the US in 2003. Website for CFM- [www.christiansforthemountains.org](http://www.christiansforthemountains.org) **Access: Patchwork Films.** <http://www.patchworkfilms.com/> Two other short films are included on the DVD of "Mountain Mourning"-

### **Look What They've Done - Maria's Backyard**

Film Two of The Mountain Mourning Collection

21 minutes

An outing with Maria Gunnoe in Bob White, West Virginia, provides a snapshot of the Mountaintop Removal Mining that has moved into her back yard. Filmmakers B. J. Gudmundsson and Doug Chadwick traverse the rocky road up Cazy Mountain to survey the aftermath of a strip-mining operation. Maria's Native American ancestry is revealed through her memories of family and their respect for the land. Her story is one of courage and strength that is woven around the heart by musical recordings of her mother, father and uncle.

### **Keeper of the Mountains**

Film Three of The Mountain Mourning Collection

18 minutes

Larry Gibson is the only permanent resident on Kayford Mountain, just 35 miles from the capital city of Charleston, West Virginia. For 19 years he has held on to his fifty acres – that which remains of his ancestral home. What was once a living community is now an island of life surrounded by death. The filmmakers join Larry and a band of friends as they pass through “Hell's Gate” and – in one breathtaking moment – come upon “the end of the world.”

### **TruthOut Videos - Go Tell It on the Mountain, Almost Level, West Virginia, Pennies of Promise**

2006 various times Rebecca MacNeice

Rebecca MacNeice made and posted these three digital videos about the effects of mountaintop removal mining. The first, “Mountain,” is about anti-MTR activist Larry Gibson giving a tour to other activists during a national conference on Memorial Day weekend 2006. The second, “Level” includes a brief narration given by WV's only anti-MTR politician Dr. Ken Hechler and part of activist Doris "Granny D" Haddock's speech given at the Memorial Day 2006 conference. “Pennies” is about a group of people who are trying to raise money to replace a toxic school, Marsh Fork Elementary School in Sundial, West Virginia, that is threatening by a coal silo and slurry pond that could destroy it. Access:

<http://www.truthout.org/multimedia.htm>

### **Mountain Top Removal**

2006 57 min. Haw River Films

Michael C. O'Connell of Haw River Films has created an excellent new film about the environmental devastation known as “mountaintop removal mining.” In less than an hour a viewer sees both the pro and con, the natives who are affected and the New York City writers who all have very definite opinions about the American way of producing electricity.



One of the best things about this film is that pro-coal experts like Bill Raney, the president of the WV Coal Association, have their say – and experts tell viewers the scientific truths which directly contradict Raney’s statements.

This film is a welcome addition to other environmental films on MTR including Robert Gates’ two films, “All Shaken Up” and “Mucked,” Sasha Water’s “Razing Appalachia,” Catherine Pancake’s “Black Diamonds,” “Moving Mountains” by Pa. school kids and B.J. Gudmundsson and Allen Johnson’s “Mountain Mourning.” I know of three other films on the subject that I look forward to watching.

There is an impressive list of experts including the well-known activists Larry Gibson, Julia Bonds, Maria Gunnoe, Allen Johnson and Ed Wiley, the grandfather of a girl who attends Marsh Fork Elementary. The experts include Jeff Goodell who wrote the cover story for the NY Times Sunday magazine and then “Big Coal,” Dr. Ben Stout, a Ph.D. from Wheeling Jesuit University, Dr. Schiffin from Williamson, a MD who cares for the residents injured by the pollution caused there by MTR, and Dr. Peter Huff from Duke. These interviews add great weight to the argument that the people of Appalachia are truly losing their health and environment in horrible ways not described by Mr. Raney.

The single biggest hero of this film is Ed Wiley who is shown meeting with Gov. Manchin and marching from Charleston to Washington, DC to promote awareness of what is happening to his grandchild and all of the children attended the threatened grade school. The next biggest hero is Larry Gibson who is shown leading a march to a second family cemetery already surrounded by the huge MTR site so well known to activists. I have not seen it before, but the large group that had to walk over company land to gain access to the second family cemetery is a truly poignant reminder of what is being lost.

Several other pro-MTR people are also interviewed including one man who says that it is dangerous for “outsiders” to “interfere.” His comments really reminded me of the people interviewed for “Eyes on the Prize” and other Sixties documentaries on the race war that engulfed the South. One activist indeed talks about the “all out war” that is now taking place in Appalachia – and thanks to publications such as Vanity Fair, The US News (both criticized by Raney), the NY Times and many other national publications and all of the films on MTR, national and international awareness is finally being achieved.

I particularly enjoyed the soundtrack of this film that includes music by Donna the Buffalo, Julie Miller, John Specker and Sarah Hawkes. Hopefully Haw River Films will release it as a CD. This is no accident since they earlier produced a film, "Grass Roots Stages" about a large number of musicians including Donna the Buffalo (who recently visited Charleston.) Other films they have produced include "Art in Motion,"

Haw River Films is located in Pittsboro, North Carolina. You can purchase a copy of the film from them for \$20. Visit their website at - <http://www.hawriverfilms.com/index.html>.

To visit the WV Coal Association website - <http://www.wvcoal.com/index.asp>.

To visit a list of films on MTR – [http://www.ohvec.org/links/mountaintop\\_removal/documentaries.html](http://www.ohvec.org/links/mountaintop_removal/documentaries.html)

OVEC website on Memorial Day on Kayford Mountain 2006 (shown in this film)- [http://www.ohvec.org/galleries/people\\_in\\_action/2006/05\\_29/index.html](http://www.ohvec.org/galleries/people_in_action/2006/05_29/index.html)

### **Moving Mountains**

2006 30 mins.  
30 minutes, May 2006

[movingmountains@virginia.edu](mailto:movingmountains@virginia.edu)

Virginia Bendell Moore was a communications student at the University of Virginia when she created this excellent new documentary on the effects of mountaintop removal mining, mainly in southern West Virginia. Funding to produce it came from UVA media grants and was made at the Digital Media Lab there.

She uses classic film clips, borrowed from "Harlan County, USA" and other sources to counterpoise the scenes of destruction and denial that take place on camera. I don't know if every film on Appalachia needs to open with a similar wailing, either by a man or a woman, but this film, like many others, does open that way.

The film opens with WV politicians like Earl Ray Tomlin and Senator Rockefeller talking about the importance of coal to the state. Gov.

Manchin's speech about "West Virginia – Open for Business" along with his statements about "moving WV to the forefront of the coal industry" are also shown. President Bill Raney is interviewed, talking about the coal industry being "the real environmentalists," echoing what Warren Hylton, president of Patents Coal, says. There is nothing in the film about the many coal mine deaths that took place last year.

The "usual suspects" are interviewed on the anti-MTR side – Larry Workman, Ed Wiley, and Maria Gunnoe. Also interviewed is Lenny Kohn from Appalachian Voices, Sam Cook, Appalachian studies prof at Virginia Tech, Kenny from Logan County about the bad water, and others.

The photography, editing, music, and sound are all good. This film, like all of the other new MTR films, was made for little money using contemporary digital video equipment. The film was shown at UVA in Charlottesville and several other places. Hopefully many more students and people around the Appalachian area and the rest of the world will get to see it because it does a fine job showing "both sides" of the environmental war going on in our backyards.

Visit OVEC to see a list of SOME of the many films now available on the purposive fully most destructive human activity to ever take place on our planet –

[http://www.ohvec.org/links/mountaintop\\_removal/documentaries.html](http://www.ohvec.org/links/mountaintop_removal/documentaries.html). (

They assisted the filmmaker on this film – as they have on virtually every film made on MTR.) Access: How to get a copy of this film is unknown at this time.

## **NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR THE MOUNTAINS\***

2006 2.51 mins. I Love Mountains

Introductory video for the National Memorial for the Mountains, an online memorial in Google Earth that tells the story of 450 mountains destroyed by mountaintop removal. This video is part of the National Memorial for the Mountains, hosted by [www.ilovemountains.org](http://www.ilovemountains.org). Access: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpSDY6r2BVc>  
Or <http://www.ilovemountains.org/multimedia/#video>.

***Note – there are 71 other videos on mountaintop removal mining posted at YouTube as of 3.28.07. There are also other videos on Appalachia and MTR posted at [www.ilovemountains.org](http://www.ilovemountains.org).***

## **GOD'S GIFT OF A WILD AND WONDERFUL LAND**

2007 18 mins. Patchwork Films

Using stunning photography and beautiful religious music, the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia is presented as a wilderness area that must be preserved for future generations. It is over 900,000 acres in size, located in 10 different counties. Facts about the forest and Biblical links are emphasized along with the appreciation of God's creation. Viewers are encouraged to contact national and state legislators in support of protecting WV wilderness areas forever. *Access – Patchwork Films at <http://www.patchworkfilms.com/godsgift.htm>.*

## **IN MEMORY OF THE LAND AND PEOPLE**

1977 (2007) 55 mins. Omni Productions

Robert Gates, a former chemical/computer engineer at Union Carbide, in Charleston, WV, using his own funds, traveled throughout West Virginia, Appalachia, and the country, filming the effects of stripmining coal. The film has no narration, only the voices of people whose land and lives have been devastated by stripmining coal. The music played is Bartok. The film was shown in Congress and helped motivate national legislation regulation stripmining. It has won many awards and has been shown all over the U.S. Gates was president of the WV Filmmakers Guild for many years and received the WVIFF Lifetime Achievement Award in 1985. He has produced two films on the effects of mountaintop removal mining – “All Shaken Up” and “Mucked.”

Access: You can purchase a DVD from - Omni Productions, Box 5130 Charleston, WV 25361, 304-342-2624, omni@ntelos.net. The price - \$25 for personal use only, \$50 for non-profit organizations, \$150 for funded institutions, and \$ 100 for project sponsors. Frog Creek Books also sells it.

## **RISE UP! WEST VIRGINIA**

75 mins. 2008 Patchwork Films

B.J. Gudmundsson goes on a personal journey from her birth-place in Pocahontas County to the southern coalfields. There she joins the Mountain Keepers who have been fighting a 20 year battle to save their land and homes from the destructive practices of coal mining and especially mountaintop removal mining.

People interviewed include Jean and Jim Foster of Bob White, Mary Miller and Pauline Canterbury of Sylvester, Debbie Jarrell and Ed Wileys of Rock Creek, Maria Gunnoe of Bob White, Larry Gibson of Kayford Mtn, Julian Martin of Charleston, George Daugherty of Elkview, and Robert Gates of Charleston.

Music by Agust Gudmundsson, T. Paige Dalporto, Atherine Spurline, Jim Savarino, Geroge Daugherty, Buddy Griffin, James Reams & The Barnstormers, Mindy Michael, Missing Persons Soup Kitchen Gospel Quartet and Higher Ground. The world premiere took place at The South Charleston Museum La Belle Theater on January 12, 2008, co-sponsored by OVEC and Christians for the Mountains. Access: [www.patchworkfilms.com](http://www.patchworkfilms.com)

**BURNING THE FUTURE: COAL IN AMERICA**  
2008 89 min. American Coal Productions

In the wake of the coal mining tragedies of 2006 and 2007 in West Virginia and Utah, many Americans ask why we still mine coal. The reason is startling: Each time a switch is flipped, we burn coal. According to estimates, 52% of America's electricity comes from coal, but at a shocking cost to the environment and local communities. This new film from American Coal Productions soberly illustrates the suffering of the residents of West Virginia who struggle to preserve their mountains, their culture, and their lives in the face of the omnipotent King Coal. Promoting energy conservation and the development of alternative energy sources, the filmmakers encourage consumers and suppliers to take an honest look at America's energy consumption and embrace change.

Access: [www.burningthefuture.org](http://www.burningthefuture.org)

**RENEWAL**

2008 90 mins. Center for Independent Documentary

This is the first feature-length documentary to capture the breadth and vitality of America's religious-environmental movement. In rural communities, suburbs and cities, people of faith are rolling up their sleeves in practical and far-reaching ways. Offering a profound message of hope, it shows individuals and communities driven by the deepest source of inspiration - their spiritual and religious convictions - being called to re-examine what it means to be human and how we live on this planet.

Throughout, the film attempts to paint an honest picture of how much work will be needed to stem the tide of environmental devastation. Its compelling characters and stories inspire the vision and commitment that addressing the challenge will require.

The 90-minute documentary is designed for theatrical and community screenings, and for broadcast, yet each of the eight stories also stands on its own. Religious communities include – Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, Buddhist, Native Americans, evangelical Protestants and others. Access: <http://renewalproject.net/film>

## **CRIMES AGAINST NATURE**

120 mins. 2008

This is a film version of the book by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. narrated by Morgan Freeman and directed by Angus Yates. Kennedy explores the human cost of coal mining in Appalachia using mountaintop removal mining. "In a ferocious three-year attack, the Bush administration has initiated more than 200 major rollbacks of America's environmental laws, weakening the protection of our country's air, water, public lands and wildlife," Kennedy writes in the book. "Cloaked in meticulously crafted language designed to deceive the public, the administration intends to eliminate the nation's most important environmental laws by the end of the year." Website - <http://crimesagainstnaturemovie.com/thefilm.html>

## **COAL TIES: YELLOW SPRINGS TO MEIGS COUNTY**

Directed by Carl Reeverts.

## **THE ELECTRICITY FAIRY**

25 mins. 2009 – not complete as of now Appalshop

Tom Hansell is best known for his powerful film about overweight coal trucks in eastern Kentucky, "Coal Bucket Outlaw." His new film is about West Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky as exporters of both coal and electricity. Exploitation of natural resources for power generation makes the impact of the nation's electricity consumption highly visible in these three states. The film combines present day documentary footage with old educational films and an animated folk tale to reveal the hidden costs of America's major source of electricity. Access: Appalshop at <http://www.appalshop.org/electricityfairy/>