

BIO and Filmography

Anne Lewis is an independent documentary-maker associated with Appalshop Films, a media arts and cultural center located in Whitesburg, Kentucky, in the heart of the Central Appalachian Coalfields. Her work reveals working class people fighting for social change. Anne was associate director/assistant camera for HARLAN COUNTY, U.S.A., the Academy Award-winning documentary about the Brookside strike. After the strike, she moved to the eastern Kentucky coalfields where she lived for 25 years.

Documentaries she produced, directed, and edited include: ANNE BRADEN: SOUTHERN PATRIOT co-directed with Mimi Pickering (Texas Observer screening at the Alamo Drafthouse, 2013 Kentucky History Award, KY Historical Society) about the extraordinary life of a civil rights leader; MORRISTOWN: IN THE AIR AND SUN (Austin Film Festival, AMBULANTE) a working class critique of globalization, TO SAVE THE LAND AND PEOPLE (SXSW, Texas Documentary Tour) a history of a militant grassroots environmental movement; JUSTICE IN THE COALFIELDS (INTERCOM gold plaque) about the community impact of the Pittston strike; ON OUR OWN LAND (duPont-Columbia award for independent broadcast journalism) about the citizens' movement to stop broad form deed strip mining; CHEMICAL VALLEY co-directed with Mimi Pickering (P.O.V., American Film and Video Blue Ribbon) about environmental racism and most recently, and SHELTER (Honorable Mention, New Jersey International Film Festival) which tells the stories of 5 West Virginia women as they try to find freedom, justice and safety.

Her documentary, FAST FOOD WOMEN, about women struggling to raise families in minimum wage jobs with no benefits, received national airing on P.O.V. and was part of a Learning Channel series of films about women by women.

Other recognized work includes: EVELYN WILLIAMS, African American activist, coal miner's wife and mother of nine (Juror's Choice, Black Maria Film Festival, Margaret Meade Festival); BELINDA, the AIDS activist who spoke of the need for a collective response not crippled by homophobia, racism, fear, or ignorance (CINE Golden Eagle); MINNIE BLACK'S GOURD BAND (Retirement Research Foundation Silver Owl Award, Museum of Modern Art screening); and MABEL PARKER HARDISON SMITH about an African-American teacher and gospel musician (Atlanta Film and Video Festival, Anthros '87/the Barbara Myerhoff Film Festival, Women in the Director's Chair).

Anne moved to Austin, Texas in 1998. She currently teaches film editing and documentary at the University of Texas at Austin. Texas based work includes: UN TRIP a jazz documentary based on the poem by Raúl Salinas "Un Trip through the Mind Jail" written in Leavenworth prison; ON DYING OF DEMENTIA IN A CAPITALIST SYSTEM, in progress short animation documentary which will include a digital humanities website; TENDER PROMISE: EDUCATION STORY an intimate look at public education in progress; and A STRIKE AND AN UPRISING (IN TEXAS) (Cine Las Americas Hecho en Tejas audience award, DC Labor Fest, "Hidden Histories," San Antonio). In addition, she directed two shorts for young people that reference the longer piece: with work partner Laura Varela EMMA TENAYUCA AND THE SAN ANTONIO 1938 PECAN SHELLERS STRIKE, and ANNIE MAE CARPENTER AND THE UPRISING IN NACOGDOCHES. These include interactive websites and have played in festivals as well.

Anne has created a number of short experimental films, including A BROKEN CLOCK TELLS TIME TWO TIMES A DAY (Honorable Mention, WIF Film Festival) and THE WOMEN ON THE BUS (14 PEWS, Houston). She serves on international judging panels and is an executive board member of the Texas State Employees Union TSEU-CWA 6186.

Selected Films

UN TRIP: RAÚLSALINAS AND THE POETRY OF LIBERATION 25:08 2023 with Laura Varela, a jazz documentary based on the poem by Raúl Salinas “Un Trip through the Mind Jail” written in Leavenworth prison. Cine Las Americas Hecho en Tejas audience award; San Diego Latino Film Festival; “50 Years of Partial Freedom” Symposium, UT Benson Center; Moody College of Communications Creative Achievement award.

A STRIKE AND AN UPRISING (IN TEXAS) 65:17 2018, “weaves together an alternative history of Texas from the pecan shellers of the early twentieth century through the removal of the Jefferson Davis statue from the University of Texas, Austin, in 2015. Texas radicals, especially women of color, and their hidden histories shine in this beautiful and innovative film. It is rich with archival footage and photographs, and we see the protagonists of these struggles piecing together fragments of their memories and their pasts. The connections between past and present-day struggles are vividly rendered.” Aviva Chomsky *I think of this film as the monument that replaces the removed statue of Jefferson Davis: a monument to equality and freedom against one of oppression.* Alessandro Portelli 2018 Cine Las Americas (Hecho en Tejas audience award); 2018 DC Labor Fest; 2018 San Francisco Labor Fest; screening in Rome, Italy; Interview, Texas Public Radio. Distributor, Anne Lewis Productions. www.strikeandanuprising.org

THE WOMEN ON THE BUS 12:50 2017 Fifty-seven women met on a ranch outside Austin, Texas for a thirty-hour bus ride to the Women's March on Washington. An unlikely group, they were age 13 to 70; white, Latina, and black, CIS gendered and off the binary; rural and urban. Four were undocumented -- one had spent 10 months in detention. They brought pillows, blankets, food, and clothing for 3 days. Several crocheted pink hats on the way. Most had never been to a mass demonstration. An informal video I made as one of these women. <https://vimeo.com/204238602>

WILLIE NELSON ON SAVING THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE, 2016, 2 minute spot for the convention of the United Postal Workers of America and web release. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0bB281GeMU>

AUSTIN BELOVED COMMUNITY 2014 multimedia website based on Anne Braden: Southern Patriot which pulls together Austin based social justice organizations. With Jeanne Stern, animator. Funded in part by the City of Austin cultural contracts program. www.austinbelovedcommunity.org

ANNE BRADEN: SOUTHERN PATRIOT (1924-2006) 67:00 2012 in partnership with Mimi Pickering; funded in part by the Southern Humanities Media Fund. “A gem of a film, accented with freedom fighters who speak firsthand about carving a path through a traumatized, violent, racist South, to make way for one of the largest and most effective nonviolent movements for social change the world has ever seen.” Joan Baez. “A magnificent portrait of the Anne Braden I knew: militantly anti-racist, and radical to the core. Anne Braden changed my life; this film will change yours.” Robin D.G. Kelley. Screened at the S. Alamo Drafthouse, co-sponsorship with the Texas Observer and the Austin Film Society; DOXA film festival, Vancouver; numerous academic conferences and workshops. Available on Kanopy <http://newsreel.org/video/anne-braden-southern-patriot>

MORRISTOWN: IN THE AIR AND SUN 60:00 2007, “brings the complex issue of globalization down to its human level where workers on both sides of the border, men and women, struggle to survive. Workers speak from the heart, whether in Spanish or English.” Howard Zinn, Author, A People’s History of the United States. Screened at the 2008 National Jobs with Justice Conference; 2007 U.S. Social Forum; 2007 Library of Congress *Laborlore*; 2007 Austin Film Festival; 2008 AMBULANTE Festival (16 cites in Mexico); Best Foreign Feature Documentary, 2008 International Film Festival of the Border.
<https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/morristown-in-the-air-and-sun/>
<https://vimeo.com/226763842>

TEXAS MAJORITY MINORITY 10:30, 2004, part of the “Voting in America” project. One of 9 projects selected nationally in collaboration with Heather Courtney and Laura Varela. Screenings at the Pioneer Theater, N.Y.C.; Echo Theater, Dallas; before the Hispanic caucus at the Texas Democratic Convention; and universities including U.C. Berkeley, Southern Oregon University, and St. Mary’s. Distributed to grassroots organizations and labor unions including CWA-TSEU, South West Voter Registration and Education Project, and Buena Vista. Offered to PBS stations through NETA and PBS Plus. <https://vimeo.com/226773399>

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW 26:40, 2003, “captures Ethel Caffie-Austin in all her splendid humanity,” Jude Binder, director, Heartwood Dance Company. “the importance of culture and religion in shaping community life,” John David, Southern Appalachian Labor School. 2005 International Festival of Cinema and Technology; 2004 Dallas Film Festival; 2004 St. Louis Film Festival; 2003 Cinema Texas faculty screening; 2003 Cine Las Americas; 2003 Headwaters series on public television stations (52% national coverage).
<http://www.folkstreams.net/film-detail.php?id=280>

SHELTER 56:40, 2001, “thank you so much for validating 30 years of my life's work” chapter president, Katy, Texas NOW. “a quietly spectacular achievement,” Barbara Garson, NYC author. Funded by ITVS; 2004 screening, Bass Lecture Hall, UT; 2003 benefit screening, the HideOut; 2003 screening, the Kentucky Theater, Louisville, Kentucky; 2002 New Jersey Film Festival; 2004 Great Lakes Film Festival; 2003 Philadelphia International Festival; 2001 West Virginia Filmmakers’ Festival; Appalachian Studies Conference. 2003 PBS as part of Headwaters. <https://itvs.org/films/shelter> <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/Shelter/>

TO SAVE THE LAND AND PEOPLE, 56:40, 1999 “downright truth telling of a defeat without despair” George Stoney, New York University. “Extraordinarily powerful and moving... a masterpiece deserving of national and international recognition,” Herb Reid, University of Kentucky. Mountain Justice Film Festival 2005-6; Jurors’ Award, Louisville Film and Video Festival 1999; screening, Texas Documentary Tour 1999; SXSW 1999. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/to-save-the-land-and-people/>

ROUGH SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN, 56:40, 1997, “dramatically different economic renewal strategies in an increasingly global economy,” Steve Fisher, Emory and Henry College. “a fine evocative film. Its lessons are universal and should be seen by everyone concerned with community renewal and social justice.” Director’s Citation, 1998 Black Maria Film and Video Festival; Screening, National Council on Foundations; Screening, Louisville Film and Video Festival 1998. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/rough-side-of-the-mountain/>

EVELYN WILLIAMS, 27:40, 1995, “...what much of feminist analysis and theory misses, the lived reality of women’s lives.” Jean Grossholtz, Mount Holyoke College. “A long overdue revelation of the essence of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity in the struggle to keep our own, keep keepin’ on.” Ed Cabbell, John Henry Center for Culture and History Exchange. Museum of American Broadcast, 2005; Screening, Margaret Meade Film Festival, 1996; Juror’s Choice, 1995 Black Maria Film Festival, tour of over 50 sites; Screening, National Organizers Alliance, 1996; Charlotte Film Festival, 1996; Louisville Film and Video Festival (Artswatch), 1996; PBS broadcast as part of the “Headwaters” series.
<https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/evelyn-williams/>

JUSTICE IN THE COALFIELDS 56:30, 1995, “A compelling, timely, and important documentary” Tom Zaniello, George Meany Center for Labor Studies. “A first rate document that should be appreciated for

sterling achievements in filmmaking.” Jane Agee, Duke University. Gold Plaque, 1995 International Communication Film and Video Festival; Screening, Big Muddy Film Festival; International Labor Film and Video Festival, Seoul, Korea, 1995; finalist, Sinking Creek Film Festival, 1995; screening, Women in Film/Chicago, 1995; screening, Emory University; PBS broadcast as part of the “Headwaters” series and offered by ITVS; funded by ITVS. <https://itvs.org/films/justice-in-the-coalfields>

BELINDA 28:00, 1992, “*A film of extraordinary grace*” Malcolm Warford, Bangor Theological Seminary. “... speaks eloquently for a generation of HIV-infected people. wonderfully sensitizing to the human condition.” John Standridge, M.D. CINE Golden Eagle Award, 1993; Honorable Mention, Big Muddy Film Festival, 1993; Screening, Charlotte Film and Video Festival; Mayor’s EarthPeace Award, EarthPeace International Film Festival, 1993; Finalist, Health and Medical Film Festival, 1993; Best AIDS Advocacy Video, Image Film Video Center, 1993; finalist, New York Film Festival, 1994; finalist, USA Film Festival, 1994; screening, Women in the Director’s Chair, 1993; Bronze Apple, National Educational Film Festival, 1993; PBS broadcast as part of the “Headwaters” series. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/belinda/>

CHEMICAL VALLEY with Mimi Pickering 56:40 1992 PBS national broadcast on POV; Blue Ribbon, American Film and Video Festival; Blue Ribbon, U.S. Environmental Film Festival; Honorable Mention - ‘92 Baltimore International Film Festival; San Francisco International Film Festival; Special Jury Award - ‘91 Big Muddy Film Festival; Certificate of Merit - ‘91 Chicago International Film Festival. <https://vimeo.com/84007947>

FAST FOOD WOMEN 27:30, 1991 “*a must-see film about women who are part of the nation's 'working poor.'*” The Minneapolis Star Tribune. “*a stinging indictment of an industry that takes unfair advantage of people struggling to make ends meet.*” The Chicago Tribune. Nominated for inclusion in the National Registry. Honorable Mention, American Film and Video Festival, 1992; Honorable Mention, Baltimore International Film Festival, 1992; Certificate of Merit Award, Chicago International Film Festival, 1992; screening, International Labor Film and Video Festival; Judge’s Choice Award, London Film Festival, 1992; Bronze Apple, National Educational Film Festival, 1992; cash award, Sinking Creek Film Festival, 1992; Special Jury Award, USA Film Festival; screening, International Women’s Day, 1992; PBS National Broadcast on P.O.V.; cablecast on The Learning Channel’s “The Independents: Through Her Eyes.” <https://vimeo.com/49954840>

ON OUR OWN LAND 28:30, 1989 “Scrupulously balanced... it illustrates a conflict that won’t go away, in which the texture of community is pitted against the drive towards profit.” Pat Aufderheide, In These Times. Alfred I. duPont/Columbia University Award for Independent Broadcast Journalism, 1990; finalist, American Film and Video Festival, 1989; cash award, Athens International Film and Video Festival; screening, Robert Flaherty Seminar, 1996; PBS broadcast as part of the “Headwaters” series. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/on-our-own-land/>

READY FOR HARVEST, CLEARCUTTING IN THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS
Best of Show-’93 North American Association for Environmental Education; ‘93 San Francisco Environmental Film Festival; Silver Plaque-INTERCOM ‘94; ‘89 Athens Film and Video Festival; ‘94 Charlotte Film Festival; finalist-’94 Sinking Creek Film Festival. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/ready-for-harvest-clearcutting-in-the-southern-appalachians/>

MORGAN SEXTON: BANJO PLAYER FROM BULL CREEK about the National Heritage Award winner. Honorable mention- ‘92 American Film and Video Festival; ‘93 Margaret Meade Film Festival. Streaming on FolkStreams along with transcript and filmmaker notes. <http://www.folkstreams.net/film-detail.php?id=216>

YELLOW CREEK, KENTUCKY about a community's efforts to resolve a toxics issue. Finalist - ‘87 American Film and Video Festival, ‘87 Atlanta Film and Video Festival, ‘85 Athens International Video Festival, nominated for a Chicago area Emmy; ‘94 NAAEE Film and Video Festival. <https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/yellow-creek-kentucky/>

MABEL PARKER HARDISON SMITH, African American teacher in the coalfields for 35 years and gospel musician. Anthros ‘87/the Barbara Myerhoff Film Festival, award-‘86 Atlanta Film and Video Festival award,

'86 Chicago Community Television award for Excellence in Ethnic Programming.
<https://www.appalshop.org/media/mabel-parker-hardison-smith/>

MINE WAR ON BLACKBERRY CREEK, about the United Mine Workers strike against A.T. Massey Coal. '86 Global Village Festival; finalist-'87 American Film and Video Festival; '87 Athens Film and Video Festival; '87 Big Muddy Film Festival; '86 BACA/Brooklyn Arts Council. <https://vimeo.com/226773637>

PEACE STORIES, experiences of three veterans from the south who decided that war is wrong. Special Merit Award-'91 EarthPeace International Film Festival; '96 National Organizers Alliance meeting.
<https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/peace-stories/>

MUD CREEK CLINIC Blue ribbon, '87 Columbus Video Festival; '87 Athens International Video Festival; Council on Foundations Film and Video Festival; Science Film Festival.
<https://www.appalshop.org/store/appalshop-films/mud-creek-clinic/>

MINNIE BLACK'S GOURD BAND '89 Owl Award from the Retirement Research Foundation for positive portrayal of older Americans; screening at the Museum of Modern Art). <https://vimeo.com/220374096>