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### Film-Reinduced Tourism. The Hatfield-McCoy Feud Case

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#### ABSTRACT

In places like those of the Hatfield and McCoy feud, where blood, legend, myth and film-making have shaped images over the years, tourists come visiting with a state of mind that searches for answers to several sensorial stirrings, mostly visual. These stirrings reveal the desire to identify with the visited places, which change and palpitate like living beings.

Parts of Southern Appalachia, where Ellen Churchill Semple went on a field research in the late 1890s, were the location of this feud. From then on these sites have been connected with their images. Representations of the feud that, according to their aims, have often highlighted the horror, the romance, the violence over and above the reality of the feud.

Here touristic places and spaces have been established hand in hand with the creation of the myth, by telling and retelling the legend of a blood feud. Nowadays, also thanks to the contribution of the 2012 miniseries starring Kevin Costner, the Hatfield-McCoy feud is part of the folklore and known to every American. However, what visitors and tourists traveling to this area get to know are many myths and legends but only few actual facts. Yet these myths and legends, endorsed by the development of tourism, contribute to redefining the image that local residents have of their own territory.

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**Keywords:** Blood-feud, Film-Induced Tourism, Geography, Hatfield-McCoy, Semple, Tug Fork.

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## Introduction

Many of the complex aspects of film-induced tourism have been defined and researched, out of which a twofold pattern often emerges: movie locations become popular tourism destinations with all the positive and negative fallouts on local communities. When films take their subject matter from historical events that occurred in a particular place, the boundaries between reality and fiction often become blurred. Notable historical feuds in remote parts of Texas or in the Appalachians have provided extensive material for film-making over the years, creating images that have shaped these places themselves as well as local residents' perception of their own identity. In turn, through cinematographic transposition, these places exert a powerful appeal to visitors in search of sensations and tourism experiences, however close or distant from the original historical facts.

This publication focuses on one of the most infamous family feuds in U.S. history, namely the Hatfield-McCoy feud, in that it has fostered so much interest in scholars, filmmakers and popular media and with such recurrence over time as to suggest a pattern of repeated impacts on the development of local tourism.

The first part will try to retrace the historical data, starting from the results of the first field research in human geography carried out in the region where the Hatfield-McCoy feud took place, therefore outlining some of the complex factors involved.

A brief review, according to Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com/>), of the large amount of films and TV series produced over the years will follow, to highlight the shift operated from historical facts to the creation of myth and legend.

Finally the interaction between territory and identity and its implications for today's visitors is surveyed in a diachronic perspective, in terms of social, cultural and economic development.

Special thanks go to Andrea Bond, West Virginia Division of Tourism, Jay Shepherd, Marketing Director of Pike County Tourism CVB, and Hatfield descendant Bob Scott, property owner of the site where the McCoy's home place was, and where the family hand-dug well is. Their expertise and helpful information have proved a valuable source.

### 1. Acquisition of background sources

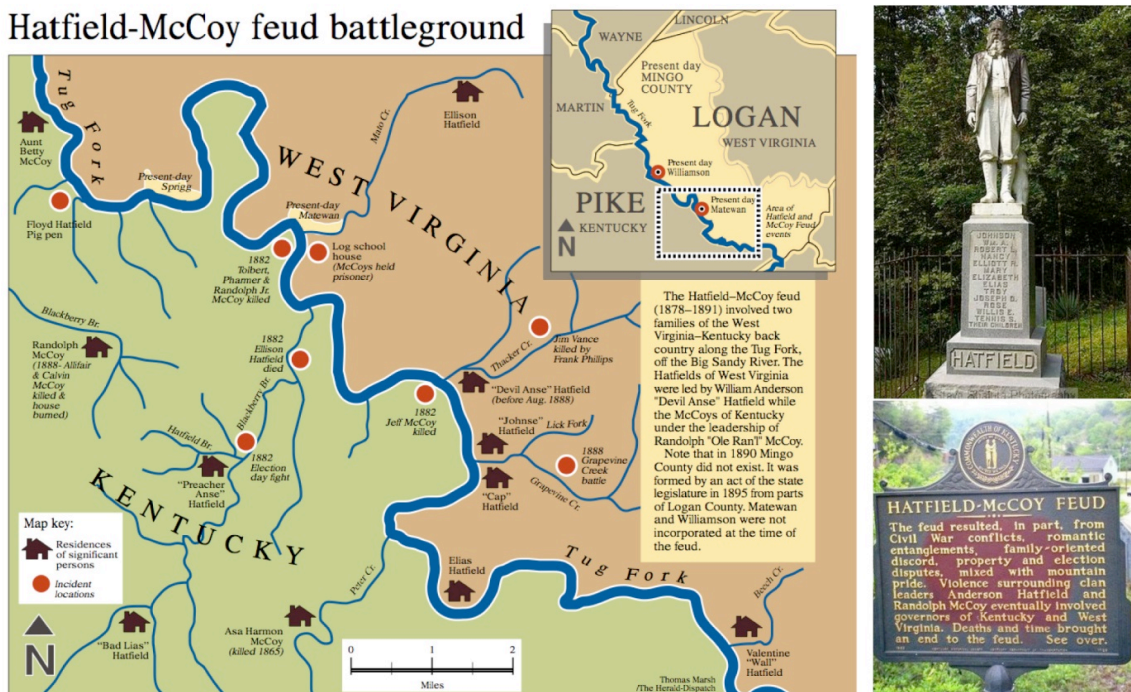
Feuding is a widespread phenomenon, often involving social groups, especially families or clans. U.S. history is particularly cluttered with feuds that, in more extreme cases, became blood feuds, clan or private wars. The violence of these many battles often occurred where there was no law or the law was too weak to enforce any type of change. Regardless of the reasons, these "wars" resulted in hundreds of deaths, when vengeance was taken and bloody vendettas resulted in warring factions continuing to battle, sometimes for years.<sup>1</sup>

Most of these feuds can be interpreted as an extreme outgrowth of social relations based on family honor. Intense feelings of resentment, due to the perception of one party that feels itself to have been attacked, insulted or wronged by another, trigger

the initial retribution, causing the other party to feel equally aggrieved and vengeful. The dispute is subsequently fuelled by a long-running cycle of retaliatory violence. This continual cycle of provocation and retaliation makes it extremely difficult to end the feud peacefully.

In addition to many everlasting battles between outlaws and vigilantes trying to control them, range wars, Indian raids, and political conflicts that created yet more bloodshed, the major feuds occurred in the Old “Wild” West<sup>2</sup>. But the most infamous feud in U.S. history, an icon of American folklore, is the conflict that involved the Hatfield and McCoy families from 1863 to 1891, in the West Virginia-Kentucky area along the Tug Fork Valley of the Big Sandy River basin (Snuffer, 2012; McCoy, 2012).

**Figure 1: Map, monument and sign showing the places along the shores of Tug Fork Valley, where the Hatfield-McCoy feud took place**



Sources: <http://blog.lemuriabooks.com/2013/05/murderland/> and [www.mountainmonergism.com/](http://www.mountainmonergism.com/)

So much has been told that this feud has entered the American folklore lexicon as a metonym for any bitterly feuding rival party (Pearce, 1994; Salkeld, 2010). More than a century later, the feud has become synonymous with the perils of family honor, justice, and revenge (Alther, 2012).

One major source of valuable information into the context of the feud is the work of one scholar, who «in the late 1800s undertook a 350-mile horseback trek through the most remote district of the eastern United States (i.e. the blackwood of Eastern Kentucky). During the entire trip only a few wheeled vehicles were reported to be seen. Blood-feuds still characterized the area, which remained largely beyond the reach of modern economy as well as that of state authority» (Lewis, 2011). This scholar was geographer Ellen Churchill Semple «a woman used to face many obstacles, having

traveled to Leipzig to study with Ratzel; she was not allowed to enroll in the university or even to sit in the lecture hall. To learn from the famous professor, she was forced instead to listen from the hallway. Yet student and scholar did work together, and Ratzel was sufficiently impressed with her that he picked Semple to translate his major work into English. This she refused to do, preferring instead to write a book of her own—albeit one dedicated to his memory»<sup>3</sup>.

Field research was new to human geography in that period, and Semple was one of its pioneers. Her main purpose in this part of Southern Appalachia was to confront the idea of racial superiority directly through research. Her question was simple: if public opinion proclaimed the progressive virtues of the Anglo-Saxon race, how then to explain the lack of progress in the backwoods of eastern Kentucky? In *The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains: A Study in Anthropogeography* (1901), she showed that in the 1890s, the Kentucky hill-folk could barely participate in wider economic and social circles due to transportation constraints. «The mountains are not particularly high, but the land is steep almost everywhere, and the reach of the State did not extend to road-building in such inhospitable terrain. Given the primitive infrastructure, the only salable products that would bear the costs of porting to market were ginseng and moonshine; even hogs, which could walk themselves to distant markets, would lose too much weight en route to make the trip worthwhile. Social travel was also highly constrained, enforcing isolation. The geographic environment, in other words, was a major influence. Rugged and remote mountains are indeed difficult for States to control and markets to penetrate» (Lewis, 2011).

Some of Semple's own words can be cited to introduce the Hatfields and McCoys Feud. Many men in these mountains had never seen a town. «Those who have obtained a glimpse of civilization have gone down the head-waters of the streams on lumber rafts or have been sent to the State penitentiary at Frankfort for illicit distilling or feud murder. The women, however, could not enjoy either of these privileges; they are [were] almost as rooted as trees» (1901, p. 593). Deterministic and judgmental though they may have been, Semple's conclusions about the mountaineers were not without merit. «The same conditions that have kept the ethnic type pure have kept the social phenomena primitive, with their natural concomitants of primitive ethics and primitive methods of social control. Such conditions have fostered the survival of the blood-feud among the Kentucky (and West Virginia) mountaineers» (1901, p. 614).

## 2. Between Civil War and timbering disputes

William McCoy, the patriarch of the McCoys, was born in Ireland around 1750 and many of his ancestors hailed from Scotland. The McCoy family of Kentucky was led by his grandson Randolph McCoy (1825-1914)<sup>4</sup> nicknamed "Randall" or "Ole Ran'l". Of English origin, the Hatfields were under the leadership of William Anderson "Devil Anse" Hatfield (1839-1921)<sup>5</sup>, and mostly lived on the West Virginia side of the Tug Fork. Both patriarchs outlived the almost thirty years long rivalry, and Randall McCoy lost five of his sixteen children to the violence of the feud that claimed more than a dozen



lives on both sides. This conflict has become the most famous historical example of the destructive power of vendettas (Jones, 1948; Hardy, 2011).

During the Civil War (1861-1865), the feud leaders from both families were staunchly pro-Confederate, but right in that period the differences between the wealthy Hatfields and the more working class McCoy's became evident<sup>6</sup>. Devil Anse formed a Confederate guerrilla fighting unit (home guard) named "The Logan Wildcats". But on the other side while Randolph McCoy served in the Confederate Army during the opening years of the war, and was a prisoner of war from 1863 to 1865, his younger brother, Asa Harmon McCoy, enlisted in the Union Army (45<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Infantry) as "Asa H McCay" (Speed, Pirtle, & Keely, 1897, p. 637). After suffering a broken leg, he was discharged from the Union Army on December 24, 1864, and returned home. The Hatfields made no secret of their disdain for the McCoy's support of the Union, and soon after Asa McCoy's return, Jim Vance, uncle of Devil Anse, and a member of the "Logan Wildcats" let the word get out that they (the Wildcats) would soon be paying him "a visit". Asa Harmon McCoy tried to escape by hiding out in a local cave, but was tracked to his hideout and killed<sup>7</sup>. Devil Anse had been home ill at the time of the killing, and even if no charges were ever filed, it was widely known that Vance and members of Hatfield's Wildcats were directly responsible for his death (Waller 1995; Hatfield, 2008). Due to the fact that the McCoy's were staunch Confederate supporters, they probably didn't take Asa's Union activities kindly, yet his death cannot be considered a direct cause of the Hatfield-McCoy feud as the bad blood between the two families did not develop until much later (Hill, 1888).

**Figure 2: Left: a section of the floodwall built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along the Tug Fork in Matewan (WV), depicting the Hatfield-McCoy feud; right: a timeline monument, representing a map of the Tug River, with key events and locations inscribed on granite, in Blackberry Community Park (Ransom, KY)**



Sources: <http://www.travelchannel.com> and <http://www.geocaching.com>

In the late 1870s, Devil Anse Hatfield was involved in a land dispute with Perry Cline, Randolph McCoy's relative-by-marriage, over a 5,000 acres (more than 2,000 hectares) tract of timberland that both held title to<sup>8</sup>. Hatfield eventually brought a civil suit against Cline, and won in what was seen by the McCoy's as a Hatfield friendly court. However the feud didn't really begin to gain steam until 1878, when a dispute arose over the ownership of a pig. Floyd Hatfield, a cousin of Devil Anse, had the hog, but

Randolph McCoy claimed it was his, and brought charges against Floyd Hatfield saying that the “notches” (markings) on the pig’s ears were McCoy, not Hatfield, marks. The matter was taken to the local Justice of the Peace, Anderson “Preacher Anse” Hatfield, who ruled in favour of the Hatfields on the testimony of Bill Staton, a relative of both families. In June 1880, Staton was killed by the two McCoy brothers, later acquitted on the grounds of self-defense<sup>9</sup>. From that time on, the conflict escalated into an all-out war, with both sides regularly perpetrating killings, beatings, and kidnappings against the other (Jones, 1948).

#### **4. The dispute that became a feud, the feud that became a legend**

In this part of Appalachia, hunting, timbering and farming were the main ways people supported themselves (McNeil, 1995)<sup>10</sup>.

Election Day was treated as a holiday of sorts, with many people gathering together to eat, drink and be merry. In 1880, with his existing resentment of the Hatfields still simmering, Randolph McCoy found new reasons to hate Devil Anse and his kin, during the celebration held near Blackberry Creek (KY). In one of the feud’s most dramatic chapters, Randall’s daughter, Roseanna McCoy (1859-1888) began an affair with Johnson “Johnse” Hatfield (1862-1922), the eldest of Anse’s boys. Much to Randall’s dismay, Roseanna ran off with Johnse, living with him and his family in West Virginia<sup>11</sup>. In 1881, when Johnse abandoned the pregnant Roseanna, marrying her cousin Nancy McCoy instead, the bitterness between the two families grew. Roseanna, unwanted by both families, moved in with her aunt Betty Blankenship; the baby died before her first birthday and the abandoned Roseanna died at the age of 28.

The escalation of the blood feud continued when three of Roseanna’s brothers killed Ellison Hatfield, brother of Devil Anse, on an election-day dispute in 1882. Many locals, including McCoys and Hatfields, gathered at the polling place in Pike County (KY). Unfortunately, the joyous festivities of this Election Day soon turned sour. The McCoys fought a drunken Ellison and his other brother (Elias) in a violent brawl; Ellison was stabbed 26 times and finished off with a shot. Devil Anse retaliated for the killing of his brother by executing, without trial and while in the custody of the law, Tolbert, Pharmer and Randolph Jr. (Bud), three sons of Randolph McCoy, near present-day Matewan (WV). An indictment was issued against Devil Anse and 19 others for these killings, but no one was willing to arrest the Hatfields and their kin for the crimes<sup>12</sup>.

The feud became worse soon afterward<sup>13</sup>, and reached its bloody peak in 1888. In 1887, Perry Cline had convinced the governor of Kentucky to issue a reward for the capture of Devil Anse and the others indicted in the McCoy murders. He brought in “Bad” Frank Phillips to assist in the capture of the fugitives, and Phillips led raids into West Virginia to get these men. He was able to take into custody several of them, including Devil Anse’s brother Valentine. At that point the Hatfields decided that the best way to end the indictments against him and his supporters was to get rid of the witnesses.

On January 1, in what has come to be known as the New Year’s Night Massacre, several of the Hatfield gang, led by Jim Vance and including Johnse and Cap Hatfield, attacked

the McCoy cabin in the middle of the night. After opening fire on the sleeping family, the house was set on fire trying to drive Randolph McCoy into the open. He escaped by making a break with part of his family, two of his children (Adelaide and Fanny) survived the attack, while his daughter Alifair and his son Calvin were murdered. His wife Sally was brutally beaten and left for dead, with several broken ribs and skull fractures.

Nowadays the home place of Randolph McCoy, where the Hatfields attack on New Year's Eve took place, and the location of the McCoy family hand-dug well, are the most famous feud-related sites (Fig. 1), attracting thousands of visitors every year according to property owner Bob Scott.

Over the past decades there had been a sporadic modest number of passionate feud tourists, but after the airing of the 2012 TV miniseries starring Kevin Costner, as many as 30 to 40 carloads of tourists have been flocking each day. In this case, to figure the impact of the media, it should be noted that since the miniseries, the CBS live at the McCoy well site (Hardy, KY), and the airing of the episode detailing the McCoy homestead discovery – within the National Geographic Channel “Diggers” series on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 – there have been at least 15,000 visitors, according to the register which Bob Scott keeps together with his neighbor (people from 9 foreign countries have signed it so far). The number of visitors may be well over that, as Bob Scott points out “I work 5 days a week and play golf on the weekends, and that’s just the ones that signed a register if my neighbor was home and available” (January 2015).

### 5. Media coverage at the time and after the feud

Reports of the attack made newspaper headlines across the country, and the Hatfield-McCoy feud became a subject of great interest to many, a media event ante litteram. Reporters traveled to this remote region to get more on the story, and the press exaggerated the details of the conflict. They would also follow the ensuing trials, as some of the conspirators in the McCoy brothers’ murders and the New Year's Day attack were brought to justice.

**Figure 3: the Hatfield clan in 1897, at a logging camp in southern West Virginia**



**Figure 4: The touristic site where the Election Day fight of 1882 took place**



Sources: <http://appalachianlady.com/> and <http://myamericanodyssey.com/>

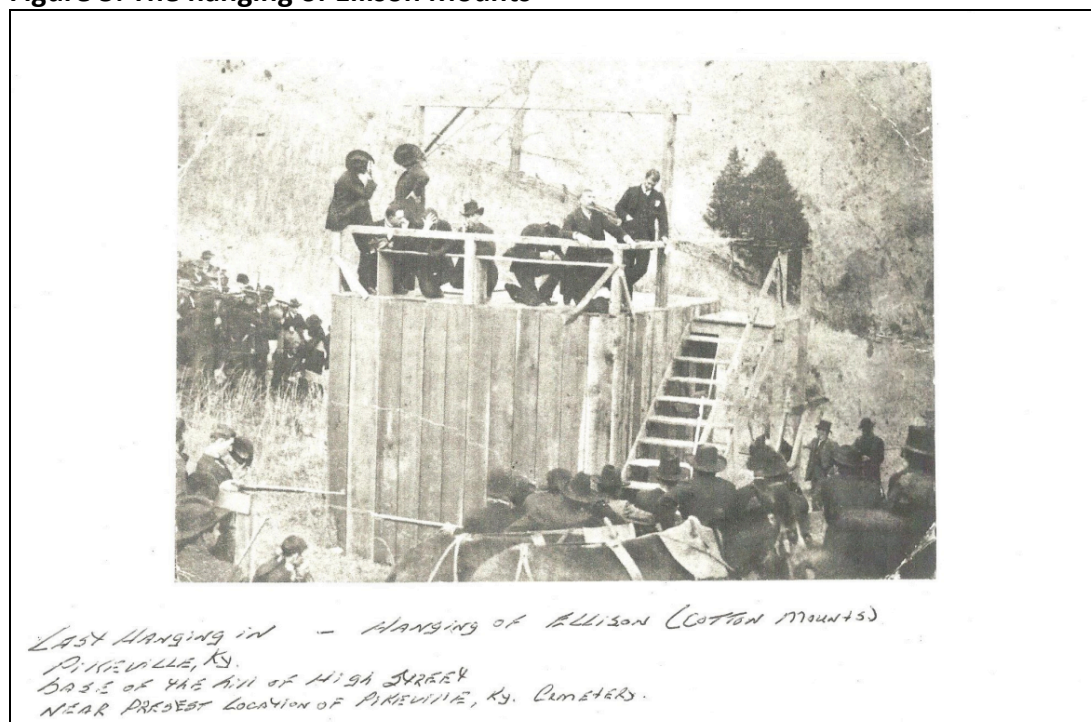
Due to the feud, the Hatfields were always posed with guns by photographers passing through (which is how most family portraits were taken back then), even after it was over. So they were exploited in that respect, and it probably never even occurred to them how history would view them in light of those photos. They did not ask to be famous, nor did they ever aspire to be famous, so they just did not think that way<sup>14</sup>.

Between 1880 and 1891, the feud had claimed more than a dozen members of the two families, becoming headline news, and involving West Virginia and Kentucky's politics (Wheeler & Crane, 1888).

The Governor of West Virginia, Emanuel Willis Wilson accused Kentucky of violating the extradition process and appealed the matter to the Supreme Court of the United States. Kentucky Governor Simon Bolivar Buckner sent his Adjutant General to Pike County to investigate the situation (Hill, 1888). In May 1889, the Supreme Court ruled 7-2 against West Virginia (*Mahon v. Justice*, 127 U.S. 700, 1888)<sup>15</sup>; the nine Hatfields were indeed tried in Pikeville (KY) and all were found guilty.

Private detectives hunted down many Hatfields, though Devil Anse was never tried nor jailed. Valentine "Uncle Wall" and six other Hatfields received life imprisonment<sup>16</sup>, while the eighth, Ellison "Cottontop" Mounts, was sentenced to death by hanging in 1889 and executed in 1890 (The evening bulletin, February 19, 1890)<sup>17</sup>. No one had been sent to the gallows in Pike County for forty years, and after Ellison, probably the perfect scapegoat, no one ever would be again. The feud between the families slowly eased following the hanging of Cottontop.

**Figure 5: The hanging of Ellison Mounts**



Source: Pike County Tourism, Convention and Visitors Bureau



Finally, in 1891, after ten years of bitter conflict and more than a dozen deaths, the two families agreed to a truce, and since then the feud eventually eroded. Trials, however, continued for several years; the trial of Johnse Hatfield in 1901 was the last one<sup>18</sup>.

At the time of the feud the majority of the Hatfields was living in Mingo County (then part of Logan County), West Virginia; while most McCoys were living in Pike County, Kentucky.

After the New Year's Massacre, Randall and the remaining McCoys had already moved to Pikeville (KY), where he operated a ferry for some time, spending the rest of his life in bitterness and grieving. He was extremely traumatized by the war, and suffered from what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder (back then, it was called shell shock).

After maintaining a largely agnostic or anti-institutional view of religion for most of his life, Devil Anse was baptized in 1911 and, converted to Christianity, he went on to found a Church of Christ congregation in West Virginia<sup>19</sup>.

In May 1944, an issue of *Life* magazine revisited the Hatfields and McCoys nearly 50 years after violence among them rocked the Tug Fork Valley. The article was meant to show how the two "famous families now live together in peace". Among the photographs there was a shot of two young women, Shirley Hatfield and Frankie McCoy, working together in a local factory that produced military uniforms. This was of course meant to symbolize the unifying effect of America's war efforts at the height of World War II (Life, *LIFE Visits the Hatfields-McCoys*, May 22, 1944, p. 108)<sup>20</sup>.

## 6. The Hatfields and McCoys truce legacy

Amazingly enough, and despite their family histories of violence against one another, descendants of the Hatfields and McCoys have had regular friendly reunions in the years since. In perhaps the most bizarre meeting of all, the two groups even appeared as rival contestants on the TV game show *Family Feud* in 1979. The families, united for a special week's taping of the popular game show, played for a cash prize and a pig which was kept on stage during the games (Game Show Network, GSN). The McCoy family won the week-long series three games to two. While the Hatfield family won more money – \$11,272 to the McCoys' \$8,459 – the decision was then made to augment the McCoy family's winnings to \$11,273<sup>21</sup>.

In 2000, great-great-great grandsons of feud patriarch Randolph McCoy, Bo McCoy of Waycross (GA), and his cousin, Ron McCoy of Durham (NC), organized a historic joint family reunion of the Hatfield and McCoy families. More than 5,000 people attended that reunion, which drew national attention.

Two years later, Bo and Ron McCoy brought a lawsuit to acquire access to the McCoy Cemetery which holds the graves of six family members, including five slain during the feud. The McCoys took on a private property owner, John Vance, who had restricted access to the cemetery that is now part of the Hatfield-McCoy Feud Historic District. This historical marker, approximately 4.5 miles from Toler, holds the graves of Randolph McCoy's three sons, Tolbert, Pharmer and Randolph Jr., who were killed by

the Hatfields during the feud. Alifair and Calvin McCoy, also killed by the Hatfields, are buried there too<sup>22</sup>.

Worth to remind is the reunion held on June 14, 2003, in Pikeville (KY), when the McCoy cousins partnered with Reo Hatfield of Waynesboro (VA), to author an official truce between the families. The idea was symbolic: to show that Americans could bury their differences and unite in times of crisis. With no little rhetoric Reo Hatfield said that he wanted to show that if the two families could reach an accord, others could too. He also said that he wanted to send a broader message to the world that when national security is at risk, Americans put their differences aside and stand united: "We're not saying you don't have to fight because sometimes you do have to fight", he said. "But you don't have to fight forever". Signed by more than sixty descendants during the fourth Hatfield-McCoy Festival, the truce was touted as a proclamation of peace, saying "We ask by God's grace and love that we be forever remembered as those that bound together the hearts of two families to form a family of freedom in America". Governor Paul Edward Patton of Kentucky and Governor Bob Wise of West Virginia signed proclamations declaring June 14<sup>th</sup> Hatfield and McCoy Reconciliation Day. Ron McCoy, one of the festival's founders, said it is unknown where the three signed proclamations will be exhibited. "The Hatfields and McCoys symbolize violence and feuding and fighting, but by signing this, hopefully people will realize that's not the final chapter", he said (<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/929852/posts>). The feud was long over in 2003, but it was sure an occasion to start promoting and marketing the Hatfield-McCoy territory as a tourist destination.

## **7. Historical events, literary and cinematographic transpositions**

From the well-known Burr-Hamilton duel of 1804, when Aaron Burr mortally wounded Alexander Hamilton (a Founding Father and former Secretary of the Treasury of the United States), memorials, iconographies, legacies, literature, and above all cinematography have played a major role in making such events an enduring part of popular culture beyond their outer reach, and in turning the very places where such events occurred into popular tourist destinations.

Texas was the scene of many blood feuds such as the Regulator-Moderator War (1839-1844), the Early-Hasley (1865-1869), the Lee-Peacock (1867-1871), the Sutton-Taylor (1868-1877), the Horrel-Higgins (1873-1882), and the Reese-Townsend (1898-1907) feuds. Indeed the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral and the Earp vendetta are probably the best known events of the Earp-Clanton feud (1880-1882) and of all the American feuds, thanks to the movies *Tombstone* (1983), *Wyatt Earp* (1994), and *Wyatt Earp's Revenge* (2002).

About mountain feuding, in his novel *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the famous writer Mark Twain lets his character Buck Grangerford say: «Well, a feud is this way. A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills him; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes [go] for one another; then the cousins chip in – and by-and-by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time» (1885, Chapter 18, p. 110)<sup>23</sup>.

Since the 1923 Buster Keaton's comedy *Our Hospitality* that centers on the "Canfield-McKay feud", a thinly disguised fictional version of the Hatfield-McCoy feud, there have been at least thirty representations including films, shorts, miniseries, and cartoons in which we can find traces, parts or the Hatfield and McCoy feud itself.

The 1946 Disney cartoon short, *The Martins and the Coys* in *Make Mine Music* animated feature was another very thinly disguised caricature of the Hatfield-McCoy feud. While the 1949 Samuel Goldwyn feature film *Roseanna McCoy* told the story of the romance between the title character, played by Joan Evans, and Johnse Hatfield, played by Farley Granger. This film seemed pretty much an American version of Romeo and Juliet (<http://www.imdb.com/>).

The 1949 Screen Songs short *Comin' Round the Mountain* features another thinly disguised caricature of the Hatfield-McCoy feud, with cats (called "Catfields") and dogs ("McHounds") fighting each other, until a new school teacher arrives.

In 1950, Warner Bros. released a *Merrie Melodies* spoof of the Hatfield-McCoy feud titled "Hillbilly Hare", featuring Bugs Bunny interacting with members of the "Martin family" who had been feuding with the "Coy family". When Bugs Bunny is asked, "Be y'all a Martin or be y'all a Coy rabbit?" Bugs answers, "Well, my friends say I'm very coy!" and laughs. The Martin brothers chase Bugs for the rest of the short and are outwitted by him at every turn.

The 1951 Abbott and Costello feature *Coming Round the Mountain* gives prominence to a feud between the Winfields and the McCoys (<http://www.imdb.com/>).

After a couple of decades, in 1975, the television movie titled *The Hatfields and the McCoys*, written and directed by Clyde Ware, told a fictionalized version of the story. Starring Jack Palance as "Devil Anse" Hatfield and Steve Forrest as "Randall" McCoy.

In 1977, it was the Scooby-Doo series to host the family rivalry in "The Ozark Witch Switch" episode. The gang arrives in the Hatfield's cabin and the Hatfields say their long times enemies, the McCoys, are all dead. But the ghost of Old Witch McCoy is out to get them for revenge and turns the Hatfields into frogs.

In 1987, the movie *Matewan*, written and directed by John Sayles, dramatizes the events of the Battle of Matewan, a coal miners' strike in 1920, in Matewan (Mingo County, West Virginia)<sup>24</sup>.

The feud was again in the movie theaters in 1996 with the film *Hatfields and McCoys: An American Feud* (<http://www.imdb.com/>).

The 1998 award winning film *Feud: The Hatfields and McCoys*, by Bill Richardson was then considered "The most interesting and accurate film to date about the Hatfields and McCoys". Best Historical Documentary, at the West Virginia International Film Festival, this documentary was prized for revealing the truth behind the highly mythologized tale of the Hatfields and McCoys. A story as colorful and complex as any in American history. There is murder, revenge, love, betrayal, injustice and punishment (<http://www.wviff.org/>).

Again, in the 2007 made-for-TV film *Pumpkinhead: Blood Feud* (Pumpkinhead 4) the two feuding Virginia families are called Hatfield and McCoy.

In 2012, Lionsgate Films released a direct-to-DVD film titled *Hatfields & McCoys: Bad Blood*, starring Jeff Fahey, Perry King, and Christian Slater.



Allusions and connections to the rivalry between the Hatfields and the McCoys have made their way in many television productions as well; as in episode 9 (“A Feud is a Feud”) of *The Andy Griffith Show* first season (1960). In this case the feud is between the Wakefields and Carters.

In January 1964, *The Flintstones* featured a feud between the Hatrocks and the Flintstones in the episode “The Flintstone Hillbillies”, which was loosely based upon the Hatfield-McCoy feud.

The 1968 *Merrie Melodies* cartoon “Feud with a Dude” has the character Merlin the Magic Mouse trying to make peace with the two families, only to end up as the new target. This short has Hatfield claiming McCoy stole his hen, while McCoy claims Hatfield stole his pig.

As already mentioned the Hatfield-McCoy feud is said to be the inspiration for the long-running game show, *Family Feud*, with the Hatfield and McCoy families’ appearance in 1979.

Closer in time, the second-season (2004-2005) episode “Vanished” of *NCIS* takes place in a Virginia rural valley, the two sides of which are feuding in a manner that the leading fictional character, Leroy Jethro Gibbs (Mark Harmon), compares to the Hatfields and McCoys.

Sometimes the idea of a remake didn’t work out, as in 2013, when NBC commissioned a pilot for a television show locating the feud in present-day Pittsburgh with Rebecca De Mornay, Virginia Madsen, Sophia Bush and James Remar, but it was not picked up.

Vice versa on August 1, 2013, the reality television series *Hatfields & McCoys: White Lightning* premiered on the History channel (<http://www.history.com/>). The series begins with an investor offering to set up the feuding families into business making moonshine, and follows the families’ attempt to run the business together.

On April 6, 2014 the broadcast television Fox aired “Herpe the Love Sore” the sixteenth episode (226th overall) of the animated comedy series *Family Guy* (twelfth season), featuring the feuding families and a new neighbor in a skit.

Overall what makes the Hatfield and McCoy feud special is that over the years it has become an entertaining subject of comic strips, popular songs, movies, and television; it has long been a part of American folklore and legend. Such extraordinary endurance of the myth that has grown around the Hatfields and McCoys has obscured the consideration of the feud as a real historical event.

## **8. The Hatfield and McCoy Feud and the development of tourism**

Over the years tourists have traveled to parts of West Virginia and Kentucky to see the areas and historic relics which remain from the days of the feud (1863-1891)<sup>25</sup>.

Here touristic places and spaces have been created hand in hand with the creation of the myth, by telling and retelling the legend of a blood feud. The Hatfield-McCoy feud is part of the folklore and known to every American. However, what visitors and tourists get to know when traveling to these areas are many myths and legends but only few facts.

In 1999, a large project known as the “Hatfield and McCoy Historic Site Restoration” was completed, funded by a federal grant from the Small Business Administration. Many improvements to various feud sites were carried out. A committee of local historians spent months researching reams of information to find out about the factual history of the events surrounding the feud. In 2005 this research was compiled in an audio compact disc, the *Hatfield-McCoy: Historic Feud Sites Driving Tour*. The CD is a self-guided driving tour of the restored feud sites and includes maps and pictures as well as the audio CD.

In the 2000s, a 500-mile (800 km) all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trail system, the Hatfield-McCoy Trails, was created around the theme of the feud. The multi-county project, including nine West Virginia counties, opened in October 2000 with 300 miles (480 km) of trails. In 2002, the trail system added 100 miles (160 km) of trails in Boone County. In 2004, other 100 miles brought the system to 500 miles, making it the second largest off-highway vehicle trail in the world, second only to the Paiute ATV Trail in Central Utah (2,000 miles). Currently there are six of the nine WV counties (Wyoming, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Logan, and Boone) with over 700 miles of off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails<sup>26</sup>. An expansion plan for the trail system plans for 2,000 miles of trails with suitable facilities and an Off-Highway Vehicle Park located in Kanawha County (<http://www.trailsheaven.com/> & American Trails).

The trail system caters to ATV, UATV, and motorbikes (dirt bikes), but hikers, mountain bikers, and horse riders can also use the trails. Besides marketing the trail system globally (the trails now receive visitors from all 50 states and nine other countries), the trail system staff also builds, maps, and maintains the trails<sup>27</sup>.

According to *The Economic and Fiscal Impact of the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System in West Virginia* «while population has declined in the seven West Virginia counties in which the Hatfield-McCoy Trails has a physical presence, this region has experienced growth in both labor force participation and income. Regional income growth and labor force participation rate growth have exceeded the State as a whole. The number of regional businesses in the accommodations industry has increased by about 45% between 2000 and 2011» (Pardue et al., 2014, p. 1).

The total economic impact of the Trail System «has grown by 74% since 2006». Because of the expansion of the Hatfield-McCoy Trails, «but also of the additional economic activity generated, as indicated through the larger indirect and induced effects of the initial spending». «The nearly \$1.7 million visitors’ spending for day-to-day operations stimulates the local economy and West Virginia’s, with an additional \$1.6 million in economic activity within the State. The total operational impact of \$3.3 million. Even more notably, the Hatfield-McCoy Trails bring non-local visitors to the area whose spending is estimated to generate an additional \$19 million in economic activity in West Virginia. Together, the total estimated economic impact of the Hatfield-McCoy Trails is more than \$22 million» (Pardue et al., 2014, p. 2).

Since 2011, in the resort community of Pigeon Forge (TN), near the entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one can attend the *Hatfields and McCoy’s Dinner Show*, a musical comedy production. The dinner show is held at 8 p.m. daily. During peak tourist seasons there is also a 2 p.m. lunch program.

Figure 6: The Hatfield-McCoy musical comedy dinner show in Pigeon Forge



Sources: <http://fancyrednecks.com/> and <http://www.knoxnews.com/>

### 9. In the wake of 2012 TV series featuring Kevin Costner

In 2012, the two feuding families became the subject of a television three-part miniseries, *Hatfields & McCoys*, with Bill Paxton as Randall McCoy and Kevin Costner as Devil Anse Hatfield (Imbrogno, 2012). Mare Winningham also appeared as Randall's wife Sally, Tom Berenger as Jim Vance and Powers Boothe as Judge Valentine "Wall" Hatfield. Aired on May 20-30 by the U.S. television network History<sup>28</sup>, the miniseries set the record as the most-watched entertainment telecast in the history of advertising-supported basic cable. The premiere episode drew a staggering 13.9 million total viewers (it showed twice that night and, combined, the two airings had 17 million viewers). Night three of the miniseries was the highest-rated of all, with 14.3 million total viewers (6.3 million adults 25-54 and 5.1 million adults 18-49), making it the most-watched entertainment telecast of all time on ad-supported cable (breaking the record previously held by night one of the same miniseries)<sup>29</sup>. On the whole, over the three nights it premiered, *Hatfields & McCoys* averaged 13.8 million total viewers. In 2012 the miniseries won five Primetime Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Supporting Actor and Outstanding Lead Actor, Tom Berenger and Kevin Costner respectively. For his interpretation as Devil Anse Hatfield, Costner also won a Golden Globe (Dotson, 2013).

In January 2014 the *Hatfields & McCoys* miniseries was broadcast in Italy too, as first run by Rete 4.

With the broadcasting of the miniseries *Hatfields & McCoys* on the History Channel in the United States and on History Television in Canada, and subsequent release on DVD (July 31, 2012), the feud held in Pike and Logan (Mingo after 1895) counties was back once more in public notice, and set once again to attract new visitors.

While everybody could agree on the wide popularity of the miniseries, it has been criticized for being so relentlessly violent and not quite realistic (Farley, 2012; Stanley 2012). As far as the locations are concerned, except for a few scenes shot in West Virginia, the *Hatfields & McCoys* miniseries was almost entirely filmed in Romania, transforming the Carpathian Mountains in the Appalachians.

**Fig. 7: Pictures of William Anderson “Devil Anse” Hatfield and Randolph “Randall” McCoy, next to Kevin Costner and Bill Paxton interpretations in the 2012 miniseries**

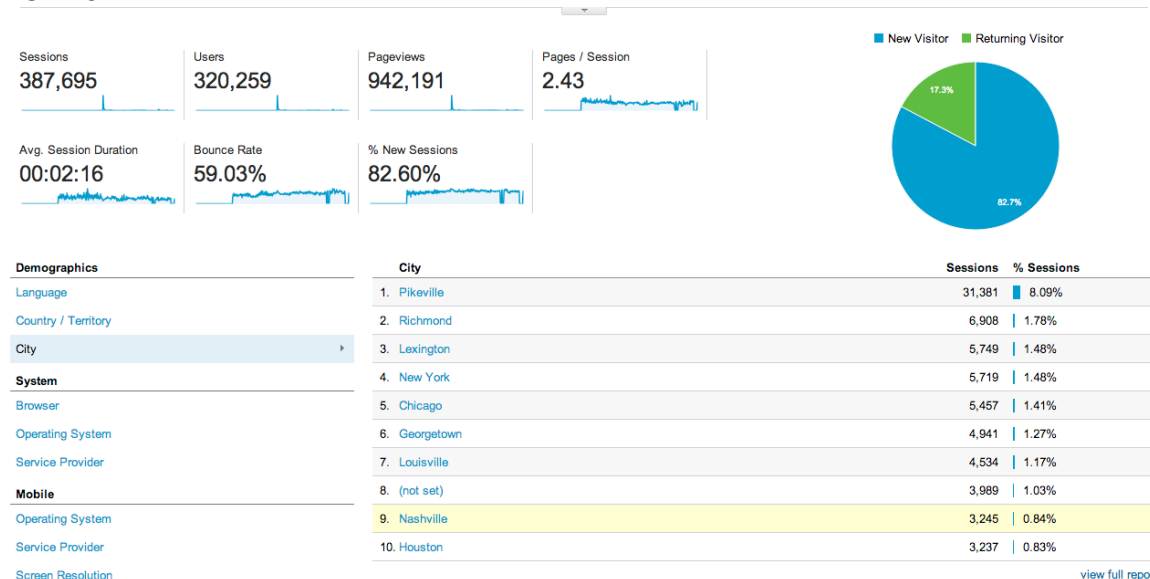


Sources: <http://www.matewan.com/> and <http://hatfieldsandmccoysf.blogspot.it/>

The airing of the miniseries in 2012 greatly affected tourism in the Tug Fork Valley, though I must say that the Kentucky shores (Pike County) seem to gain more than the West Virginian do, when it comes to the economic impact. Even if West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin said tourism officials in southern counties have been inundated with calls, and websites are getting hundreds of hits, it looks like in this case the McCoys are winning. The Breaks Interstate Park on the Kentucky-Virginia border, with its 300,000 visitors per year, is of course one major help in drawing the travelers' and tourists' attention to Pike county<sup>30</sup>.

Since the airing of the miniseries in 2012, there have been about 250 brochure requests a day on the Pike County tourism website (tourpikecounty.com), up from 30 daily, and an average of 125 visitors a day to the county’s tourism office, seven days a week. The website had 319,000 hits in June 2012, up from an average of 5,500 a month. Souvenirs sales have skyrocketed too.

**Figure 8: A screenshot of the website analytics totals, from Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, until July 15<sup>th</sup> 2014**



Source: www.TourPikeCounty.com

According to the Point of Sale System, Jay Shepherd, Marketing Director of Pike County Tourism, Convention and Visitors Bureau, told me that they have sold more than 650 Driving Tour CDs over a period of seven months, from December 2013 to July 2014. Jesse Bowling, Pikeville tourism director, says the miniseries has sparked tremendous interest in the sites associated with the feud. «We’ve had visitors here from 44 states that I know about and from Canada, since the series aired» he says. To aid visitors, the city and Pike County have produced a brochure outlining the feud and pointing out the sites. Today, besides the CD with the accompanying self-drive map, there is even an iPhone App launched in 2013 and created by direct descendants of the two families. “The Hatfield and McCoy Feud Tour”, available in Apple’s App Store and iTunes, is a mobile app designed to run on smartphones, tablet computers and other mobile devices, and features a GPS map to help locate the feud sites. Background information and historical photographs about each site guide the tourist on a tour program in Kentucky and West Virginia border, on both sides of the Tug Fork Valley<sup>31</sup>. In the same period, escorted tours of the feud sites of the Hatfields and McCoys sold out<sup>32</sup>. “These tours give visitors an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the feud while seeing many of the significant feud locations”, the website reads. “Pike County is the only place visitors can still see historic buildings from the feud”.



**Table 1: Travel and Tourism Economic Impact (in millions of US dollars) 2010-2013**

		KENTUCKY	Appalachians Region	Pike county	WEST VIRGINIA	Hatfield-McCoy Mountains	Mingo county
Surface km <sup>2</sup>		104,659	12,774	2,004	62,755	6,045	1,098
Population (2013)		4,413,000	369,660	63,380	1,850,000	149,100	25,900
Direct expenditures	2010	7,225.8	348.6	54.6	4,313.0	171.0	22.9
	2011	7,439.5	365.7	59.1	4,842.0	200.0	29.4
	2012	7,765.1	384.7	64.3	5,103.0	201.0	29.6
	2013	7,968.3	381.6	64.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total expenditures	2010	11,358.9	548.0	85.8	6,112.0	206.0	27.8
	2011	11,694.9	574.8	92.9	6,725.2	238.6	35.7
	2012	12,206.8	604.7	101.1	7,009.1	239.7	36.0
	2013	12,526.2	599.8	101.6	n/a	n/a	n/a

Sources: Kentucky Department of Travel and Tourism; West Virginia Division of Tourism

In terms of economic returns, Table 1 shows that figures for the 2010-2013 period follow a steady upward trend. This comes after a temporary setback due to the economic and financial recession, when travel and tourism industry underwent a major decrease in these regions, with Mingo county losing 29.3% of Direct Spending and 26.1% jobs between 2008 and 2009 (Dean Runyan, 2012), whereas the economic impact of tourism in Pike county fell by 4.7% only over the same period (Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet, 2010).

Tourist spending at attractions, overnight hotel stays, campgrounds, tax data, attendance figures and airline business remained an important potential path for Central Appalachia's economic future. Of particular interest, as Tamara Sandberg wrote in 2010, was the fact that in mostly rural areas of Kentucky tourism saw gains, while its impact in more urban portions of the state declined<sup>33</sup>.

In 2013 travel spending by overnight and day visitors in the Hatfield-McCoy Mountains (West Virginia) exceeded one million dollars<sup>34</sup>, providing 235 jobs in Mingo county, worth 3.1% of total county employments. In Pike county (KY) tourism related jobs were 4.6% (1,010) of total employed persons. Between 2004 and 2012 the average employments were 220 and 950 in the two counties. In 2013, at the regional level, there were 1,300 and 5,960 jobs provided from direct travel and tourism expenditures, in "Hatfield-McCoy Mountains" and "Kentucky Appalachians"<sup>35</sup>.

Similar to other areas, this bi-state region primarily entertains leisure visitors. Most travelers drive there, and stay an average of three nights; about a quarter of all visitors are families with young children (<http://www.kentuckytourism.com/> and <http://www.wvtourism.com/>).

Launched in 2000, the Hatfield and McCoy Reunion Festival and Marathon are held annually in June on a three-day weekend. The events take place in Pikeville (KY), Matewan (WV), and Williamson (WV). The festival commemorates the famed feud and includes a marathon and half-marathon (the motto is "no feudin', just runnin'"), in addition to an ATV ride in all three towns. There is also a tug-of-war across the Tug Fork tributary near which the feuding families lived, a live re-enactment of scenes from their

most famous fight, a motorcycle ride, live entertainment, Hatfield-McCoy landmark tours, a cornbread contest, pancake breakfast, arts, crafts, and dancing. The festival typically attracts thousands with more than 300 runners taking part in the races (<http://www.hatfieldmccoymarathon.net/>).

This and much more has contributed to creating a tourist space which is clearly an image (Miossec, 1977; Bagnoli, 2006), drawn again and again every time an old or a new representation of the feud reaches the public through the media. It is a relatively straightforward step to see the connections between the notion of hyper-reality and that of 'simulacra' (Baudrillard, 1983). In a world of layered reproduction (i.e., layers of 'copies') the idea of the original loses its privileged place, or any place at all. The so-called original itself becomes understood as yet another 'sign', constantly reproduced in its own image (Buchmann, Moore & Fisher, 2010, p. 231).

### **10. Film re-induced tourism and something more**

Film-induced Tourism and the promotion of Film Locations as Touristic Places often have to do with fiction (Beeton, 2005; Di Cesare & Rech, 2007; Nicosia, 2012). But since in this case we are talking about real history and its representations I would rather call it a re-induction of tourism, due to the fact that every time a new film is shot the feud places receive new attention and emphasis, contributing to their touristic development.

However, dealing with reality and fiction, the tourist traveling through the Tug Fork Valley, a natural border between the "Bluegrass" State of Kentucky and the "Mountain" State of West Virginia, should be careful to place the real story of the Hatfields and McCoys in the context of community and regional change in the era of industrialization.

In her 1998 study *Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900* Altina Waller argues that the legendary feud was not an outgrowth of an inherently violent mountain culture, but rather one manifestation of a contest for social and economic control between local people and outside industrial capitalists, especially from railway building and coal mine companies, whereby the Hatfields would stand in defense of community autonomy while the McCoys would favor alliances with the forces of industrial capitalism<sup>36</sup>. She goes on illustrating how Appalachians both shaped and responded to the new economic and social order.

In this area, large scale coal mining developed throughout the 20th century with peaks in production in the 1920s and 1940s-1950s periods. Topmountain removal mining (TRM) was introduced in the 1970s but it raises many ecological and social concerns such as post-mining land reclamation, valley fills, lower employment rates and subsequent depopulation of large areas<sup>37</sup>. Over the 2008-2009 recession, Pike county alone lost over 2,500 jobs, mostly coal jobs. Economic growth might come from improved infrastructures and a diversification of activities, such as farming on flattened mountain tops<sup>38</sup>.



Nowadays coal and natural gas reserves are still important to the local economy; however, it seems all but easy to combine mountaintop removal mining with tourism, even if there are Mountaintop Removal Driving Tours in Pike county.

Another aspect that should not be overlooked when considering major community change is the importance of cemeteries and places of burial.

Before the Civil War, America had no national cemeteries; no provisions for identifying or burying the dead, notifying the next of kin, or providing aid to the suffering families of dead veterans; no federal relief organizations; no effective ambulance corps; no adequate federal hospitals.

Three months into the American Civil War, on July 21, 1861, more than 60,000 men charged into each other on a field outside the Virginia town of Manassas. It was the War's first major land battle, and in just 12 hours, 900 men were killed and 2,700 wounded. At the Battle of Bull Run, the terrible reality of the War had come crashing down. Though universally predicted to be a brief and bloodless military adventure, the Civil War dragged on for four dark years, killing an estimated 750,000 men – nearly 2.5 percent of the American population. The impact permanently altered the character of the republic, the culture of the government, and the psyche of the American people for all time<sup>39</sup>.

The families felt the Civil War's effects first and hardest. Death on distant battlefields or in camps moved the experience from an intimate family setting to a haphazard public sphere, one dramatized by the new art of photography. Families no longer had the ingredients for "the good death", desired in a largely Christian culture, which included a body, a grave, and a minister.

In 1866, according to Union Army quartermaster Edmund Burke Whitman, the South was "one vast charnel house of the dead" (Faust, 2008, p. 222)<sup>40</sup>. An 1838 graduate of Harvard College, Whitman was charged with scouring battlefields to account for the dead, and went on to establish a structure for national cemeteries. The first national cemeteries excluded Confederates and placed the bodies of black soldiers in segregated sections. The exclusion foreshadowed "neo-Confederate" sentiments that echo even today.

In this context, it is much more likely that Asa Harmon McCoy was murdered because he was an unrepentant Union supporter, who came home from the Civil War still wearing a Union jacket, when most in that area (including Devil Anse and Randall McCoy) had fought for the Confederacy. Meaning that he was viewed as a traitor (Waller, 1998).

Violence and feuding aside, familism and family loyalties have been forces that have dominated Appalachian life and politics following the Civil War (Opel, 2003). Furthermore, war issues cemented partisan loyalties to such an extent that political affiliation came to be determined by birth. Following 1865, in many parts of Appalachia the family was the only institution stable enough to wrest control from the bushwhackers. Approached this way, the emergence of the family as the unit of control casts important new light into understanding the so-called "Feud Era" (Drake, 2001).

However, some major inaccuracies that can be found in the fictions concern timber rights, an underlying theme to the real feud: land. For many years, Devil Anse had

worked that land, cutting trees by hand, and he had scrimped and saved to buy the vast majority of his timberland. The Perry Cline's attempt to use his relationship with some State authorities in Kentucky, to embezzle Devil Anse's timber rights, was sure a pivotal point in the feud. When Anse took Cline's timber rights over 5,000 acres, in exchange for not filing criminal charges for fraud of official documents, the McCoys were sure enraged, and determined to get revenge against Devil Anse.

As a matter of fact, if feuds were at times the result of long-running arguments between two groups of people, and perhaps may have started decades earlier over the smallest insult, this is not the case. Like the vast majority of the well-known feuds in the American West, the Hatfield and McCoy feud was the result of land control and political confrontations. It was truly geographic. For those involved, their actions were rarely seen as lawless, but rather a means to bringing some kind of "law" to an area where chaos tended to prevail. Since Preacher Anse and Wall Hatfield were both judges in West Virginia, it was obvious to all of the McCoys that they would never have got any justice in that State. Those who felt they were unduly wronged, were prone to take the law into their own hands (Waller, 1998).

Again as Ellen Churchill Semple explains: «The remoteness of their scattered dwellings from each other and from the big world beyond the natural barriers, and the necessary self-reliance of their pioneer-like existence, has bred in them an intense spirit of independence which shows itself in many ways. It shows itself in their calm ignoring the revenue laws, and in their adherence to the principle of the blood-feud which inculcates the duty of personal vengeance for a wrong» (1901, p. 608).

On the other hand, what the 2012 TV miniseries got right was the portraying of the McCoys as being on the Hatfield side of the feud. Many family members were actually friends prior to the feud, some Hatfields were married to McCoys, and as stated, many McCoys were employed by Devil Anse in his timber business. Several McCoys who worked for Anse continued to show allegiance to the Hatfields during the feud, and they were considered Hatfields even though there was no blood relation. This takes us to a social theme that is very important to deeply understand the Appalachia of the feud.

At that time claiming someone as a relative when they were not wasn't unusual at all, since families were inclined to take in what they called strays (people who are estranged from their own family). So McCoys being viewed as Hatfields (or Smiths being viewed as Joneses) was not unusual at all in that Region.

### **11. Territory and identity**

As Newman and Paasi pointed in 1998, boundary narratives (in this case the ones concerning the feud) range from foreign policy discourses, geographical texts and literature (including maps and films too), to the many dimensions of formal and informal socialization which affect the creation of sociospatial identities, especially the notions of 'us' and the 'Other', exclusive and inclusive spaces and territories (p. 201). What these narratives often fail to underline are the boundaries, the lines, fences and edges, some visible and many invisible, which separated the Hatfields and the McCoys.

Deconstructing these narratives and representations, understanding who creates them and for what purpose, is the key to fully comprehend the conflict situations.

As far as the creation of socio-spatial identities is concerned, I believe it is quite interesting to point out that the 55 West Virginian counties are grouped into nine Touristic Regions, including the Hatfield-McCoy Mountains Region, consisting of Boone, Lincoln, Logan, Mingo, and Wayne counties (6,045 km<sup>2</sup> and population density 25/km<sup>2</sup>)<sup>41</sup>.

«Tourism development can be tricky because it can often lead to low wages and seasonal jobs; negative environmental and quality of life impacts; and the commercialization of local culture. But Central Appalachia's stunning forested mountains and rich cultural traditions are important assets with tourism potential. With good, careful planning, communities can take advantage of those opportunities in ways that are beneficial and sustainable» (Sandberg, 2010).

The first approach to a place, beyond and before the intellectual involvement, always deals with physical and emotional participation. In places like those of the Hatfield and McCoy feud, where blood, legend, myth and film have shaped their image, the tourists' state of mind searches for answers to several sensorial stirrings. Such stirrings reveal the desires to identify with the visiting places. Not just historical marks but places that move and palpitate like living beings.

The «audience's personal engagement with TV programs and films create personalized memory and its associated symbolic meanings, and shape the audience's feelings, emotions and attitudes toward places» (Sangyun, 2012, p. 388).

The "relationship" between the tourist, the places and the landscapes, while always changeable and enigmatic, produces touristic experiences. Space derives meaning through visitors' encounters and the social construction of place, rather than through objective elements, creating a sense of place (Relph, 1976), and the emotional significance of place in human identity (Lefebvre, 1991; Pocock, 1981). Spaces are produced and defined by one's projection in the observed scene, by the tendency to identify with the nature, the touristic environment where one sneaks in. Into its clefts and hideouts, observed, perceived, and detected, written, described, and filmed, by many, as in this case, over the years.

Visitors taking any of the given tours board on a 14-passengers van and are transported to Hardy, to Blackberry, to Buskirk, to Mate Creek, and ultimately to Pikeville, and given both a visual and oral history of the now world-renowned feud.

The site of the Hog Trial at the base of Blackberry Mountain, the site of Asa Harmon's murder near Blackberry Grade School, the Paw-Paw Tree site outside Buskirk where brothers Tolbert, Bud, and Pharmer McCoy were tied and executed by Anse Hatfield and his sons<sup>42</sup>, and the birthplace of "Devil" Anse Hatfield at Mate Creek are just a few of the sites visited.

«Over the past hundred years or so, the people of the Tug Valley have overcome one adversity after another... from infamous feuding families to deadly labor management disputes in our coalfields, to not one, but four devastating floods [...] Through it all, we have continued to persevere and yes, even flourish. By protecting our towns with multi-million dollar flood walls, working diligently to improve the quality of life for our

miners through advances in safety and technology, we have shown that the folks of the Tug Valley have true grit in our blood and we've got the history to back it up» reads the website of the Tug Valley Chamber of Commerce and lists six top things to do and see in the area for a lifetime experience<sup>43</sup>.

**Figure 9: Images from the Hatfields and McCoys tours**



Sources: atvconnection.com and www.tourpikecounty.com

One can only wish for the development of further tourism activities in a region so marred with misrepresentation, as a way to enhance the life of the local people first and above all. A way for achieving this goal could be to boost interest in longer overnight stays and to create more activities for first-time travelers as well as returning visitors, as the Hatfield-McCoy Region can certainly play a role as one of the additional destinations for Kentucky and West Virginia. Eventually if the I-73 Corridor project,

from South Carolina to Michigan<sup>44</sup>, will be completed it will sure have an economic impact and may add better accessibility to the Hatfield-McCoy Region.

I also believe the Media “re-induced” Tourism concept will even be further strengthened in 2015, since National Geographic and the University of Kentucky Archeological Department returned back the week before Thanksgiving 2014 to develop a new Diggers episode that will be aired in 2015.

### **Conclusion**

Recovering and retracing historical facts in an accurate way might not be the purpose neither of film-making nor of tourism, yet in the specific case of the Hatfield-McCoy feud, visitors travelling to places where the events occurred might gain much from a more in-depth approach to data and knowledge and more vivid insight, into the complex reality of the so-called mountain culture. However regional and large-scale development strategies appear to have a mixed impact at the local level, in distressed or formerly distressed Appalachian counties.

Local leaders and stakeholders are often oblivious to regional efforts. Local development programs are, in many cases, ad hoc initiatives perceived and conducted regardless of any larger strategy. In some cases regional development efforts are even seen as a detriment to local growth, as they may siphon jobs, residents and resources away from smaller communities (Ezzell et al., 2012, p. IV).

In the light of the Hatfield-McCoy family feud, this article has attempted to examine the phenomenon of interaction between fact and fiction in the shaping of an entire society, leading to the possibility of establishing a threefold pattern of film-induced tourism based on historical facts: acquisition of background sources, creation of myth and the significance of social construction of place in human identity. The sheer amount of interest that these events have aroused in the film industry over time has impacted the development of local tourism activities, with each new successful film or TV series bringing new waves of visitors, and leading local tourist boards to further promote sight-seeing tours. This also makes it possible to single out recurrence as a major trait of this process, thus suggesting that it might be more appropriate to speak of film re-induced tourism rather than just film induced-tourism.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-feuds.html>

<sup>2</sup> In the state of Kentucky alone about 40 feuds were counted between 1874 and 1895, which allows assuming similar values for the whole Appalachian region (Waller, 1995, p. 354).

<sup>3</sup> While she lectured at a number of universities, Semple did not gain a regular faculty position until hired by Clark University at the age of 57 (at a significantly lower salary than that of her male peers). Her classroom prowess was legendary; while illustrating her lectures with glass-slide projections, she allegedly never turned to look back at the images, as she always knew exactly what was being shown on the screen behind her. She held seminars with graduate students while visiting other schools, and is said to have been inspiring. In 1921, Semple's contributions to the profession were recognized when she was elected president of the Association of American Geographers. Needless to say, she was the first woman to hold that position. Until 1985, she was also the last (in 1986 AAG elected Risa Palm).

<sup>4</sup> Randolph McCoy was born the fourth of thirteen children to Daniel McCoy and Margaret Taylor. In 1849 Randolph McCoy married his first cousin, Sarah "Sally" McCoy, daughter of Samuel McCoy and Elizabeth Davis, and they had 16 children together.

<sup>5</sup> William Anderson Hatfield, born in Logan, West Virginia (then Virginia), was the son of Ephraim Hatfield and Nancy Vance. William married Levisa "Levicy" Chafin, the daughter of Nathaniel Chafin and Matilda Varney, and together they had 13 children. Since "Anse" means "God's helmet", from Old German "Anselm" and Saint Anselm (archbishop of Canterbury in the 11th century), Devil Anse would mean "Devil's helmet".

<sup>6</sup> The Hatfields were more affluent than the McCoys and were politically well-connected. Devil Anse Hatfield's timbering operation was a source of wealth for his family. He employed many non-Hatfields, and even hired McCoy family members Albert McCoy, Lorenzo Dow McCoy, and Selkirk McCoy.

<sup>7</sup> Each day Harmon was supplied with food and necessities by his slave, Pete, but the Wildcats followed his tracks in the snow and discovered the hiding place.

<sup>8</sup> Timber in those immediate post-Civil War years was selectively cut and floated downriver in rafts of seventy to one hundred logs, and usually cut into lumber at such centers as Frankfort, Nashville, or Cincinnati. Until the 1880s, this locally controlled way of cutting and marketing dominated timbering in the Kentucky, Big Sandy, Guyandotte, Kanawha, Cumberland, and Tennessee River Valleys (Drake, 2001). With the diffusion of the balloon frame houses and the appearance of sawmill technology, after the Civil War timbering became a seasonal and much more profitable second occupation for thousands of regional farmers who were located close to streams and rivers (Betti, 2011, pp. 109-113).

<sup>9</sup> Anderson Hatfield was nicknamed "Preacher Anse" because he was a minister, and as a contrast for his good-temper compared to the bravery of his cousin "Devil Anse" (<http://www.ghat.com/hatfah01.html>). Wall Hatfield was a judge as well, and in 1882 he presided over the murder hearing of the three McCoy boys, and set them free (though he later regretted doing so, for obvious reasons).

<sup>10</sup> During her field research Ellen Semple conducted interviews over a wide area, collecting information on the economy, crafts, agriculture, music, language, and folklore that confirm such ways of living. She also described the resourcefulness of the inhabitants and their cultural practices, reporting that the "accuracy of their memories for ... long poems was suggestive of Homeric days" (1901, p. 622). If at that time the region was nonetheless beset by persistent stagnation that could be attributed squarely to the topography. "The whole civilization of the Kentucky mountains," she concluded, "is eloquent to the anthropogeographer of the influence of physical environment". Race, in short, was not the key to human progress.

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<sup>11</sup> Johnse was arrested by the McCoy's on outstanding Kentucky bootlegging warrants. He was then freed from McCoy custody only when Roseanna made a desperate midnight ride to alert Devil Anse, who organized a rescue party. The Hatfields surrounded the McCoy's and took Johnse back to West Virginia before he could be transported to Pikeville, the Kentucky county seat for justice (<http://appalachianlady.com/2012/05/30/johnse-and-roseanna/>).

<sup>12</sup> The McCoy brothers were initially arrested, but while they were being taken to Pikeville (KY) for trial Devil Anse Hatfield organized a large group of followers and intercepted the constables and their McCoy prisoners before they reached Pikeville. The brothers were taken by force to West Virginia to await the fate of mortally wounded Ellison Hatfield, and when Ellison finally died from his wounds, the McCoy brothers were killed by the Hatfields' vigilante justice in turn: being tied to pawpaw bushes, where each was shot numerous times. According to Rice their bodies were described as "bullet-riddled" (1982, p 26). The McCoy family took their cause up with Perry Cline, married to Martha McCoy. A few years prior, Cline had lost a lawsuit against Devil Anse over the deed to thousands of acres of land. Historians believe that Cline used his political connections to reinstate the charges and announced rewards for the Hatfields' arrest as an act of revenge.

<sup>13</sup> In 1886, the mail carrier Fred Wolford was killed by Jefferson "Jeff" McCoy, shot in turn by "Cap" Hatfield.

<sup>14</sup> In 1920, the Tug Valley witnessed another violent clash involving a Hatfield descendant. On May 19th, detectives working for the anti-union Baldwin-Felts Agency evicted the families of workers who had attempted to unionize the Stone Mountain Coal Company mines outside Matewan (WV). After Sid Hatfield, the Matewan chief of police, intervened on the miners' behalf, a violent clash broke out, leaving seven detectives and four locals dead. The Matewan Massacre became a rallying cry for union activists across the country, with Sid Hatfield garnering fame for his defense of the miners. A year later, however, Hatfield was assassinated, purportedly by Baldwin-Felts agents. The events surrounding the Matewan Massacre and Sid Hatfield's murder were also depicted in the 1987 movie *Matewan* (<http://appalachianlady.com/2012/05/31/hatfields-mccoys-a-comparison-with-the-oral-family-history/>).

<sup>15</sup> <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/127/700/case.html>

<sup>16</sup> Valentine died in jail, while his two son-in-laws Doc D. Mahon and Pliant Mahon served 14 years in prison before returning home (Rice, 1982, p. 111).

<sup>17</sup> <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87060190/1890-02-19/ed-1/seq-4/>

<sup>18</sup> Johnse went into hiding but was finally arrested about ten years later when he returned. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison, but he was pardoned after thirteen years for saving the Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky from an inmate who tried to kill him with a homemade knife during a prison visit.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.geni.com/people/William-Anderson-Devil-Anse-Hatfield/6000000006903464087>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-didnt-know-about-the-hatfields-and-mccoys>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kT8bRuLXwY>

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Hatfield-McCoy\\_feud](http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Hatfield-McCoy_feud)

<sup>23</sup> In the novel, Huck finds himself in the middle of a feud between the Shepherdson and Grangerford families. The modern text has few differences: "Well [...] a feud works like this: A man gets in a fight with another man and kills him. Then that other man's brother kills HIM. Then the rest of the brothers from both sides go after each other. Then the cousins get involved. Pretty soon, everyone's been killed off, and the feud's over. This all happens kind of slowly, and takes place over a long time". In 1999 Ann Rinaldi authored for Harcourt an historical novel titled *The Coffin Quilt*, and based on a fictionalized account of the feud.

<sup>24</sup> The film was a turning point for many local residents, as it was the first time they saw their history "portrayed in a sympathetic, even heroic light", according to the Charleston Gazette. The old railway depot is now a museum and showcases exhibits on the Matewan Massacre, the Hatfield and McCoy Feud, the Floods, the Great Flood Wall and much more ([www.matewan.com](http://www.matewan.com)).

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.tourpikecounty.com/> has its headquarter in Pikeville (KY) and is specialized in Hatfields & McCoy's Feud Tours.

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<sup>26</sup> Lincoln, Kanawha and Wayne are the remaining three counties. The trail system is managed by the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority, a legislatively created quasi-state agency and its paid staff, which is governed by a multi-county board of directors. Law enforcement officers patrol the trail to assure compliance with safety regulations. These rules, and a host of others, have allowed the trail system to enjoy a quality safety record, despite an increase in ATV-related injuries around the country (<http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/trailNRT/HatfieldMcCoy-WV.html>). There is also a Hatfield-McCoy Trails community of about 12,000 riders (<http://atvrides.ning.com/>).

<sup>27</sup> The Hatfield-McCoy Trails directly sustain 22 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs year-to-year, and can be credited with supporting a total of approximately 237 FTE positions across the State (Pardue et al., 2014, p. 2). To analyze the economic impact an input-output (I-O) model was used.

<sup>28</sup> See [www.history.com](http://www.history.com). "The Hatfield and McCoy Feud"; <http://www.cbsnews.com/> «Associated Press» June 1, 2012 "Hatfields & McCoys is a ratings record-setter".

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/hatfields-mccoys-ratings-history-kevin-costner-331753> and <http://insidetv.ew.com/2012/05/31/hatfield-and-mccoys-breaks-new-ratings-record/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://vaparks.net/target-parks/breaks-interstate-park/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://itunes.apple.com/it/app/hatfield-mccoy-feud-tour-app/id630464176?mt=8>

<sup>32</sup> Every Saturday, from April till September, the Hatfield and McCoy Guided Bus Tour uses a 14-passenger air conditioned bus that, with a friendly and knowledgeable guide, takes the visitors in a three-hour tour to see the feud sites.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.appalachiantransition.org/tourism-a-potential-path-to-a-sustainable-future/>

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.wvcommerce.org/App\\_Media/assets/doc/travelandrec/industry/reports/WV2013-RegionalReport-Final.pdf](http://www.wvcommerce.org/App_Media/assets/doc/travelandrec/industry/reports/WV2013-RegionalReport-Final.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> In West Virginia there are 237 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions supported each year due to the presence of the Hatfield-McCoy Trails (Pardue et al., 2014, p. 20).

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-didnt-know-about-the-hatfield-and-mccoys>

<sup>37</sup> But some West Virginians have been paying a hurtful price for their state's good fortune, and the coal industry's cost-cutting efficiency. In 1948 some 125,000 men worked in the mines of West Virginia. By 2005 there were fewer than 19,000, and most of these were employed in underground mines (<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2006/03/mountain-mining/mitchell-text/2>).

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.wvfocus.com/2014/11/movin/>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/introduction/death-introduction/>

<sup>40</sup> During the Civil War, in a nation of 31 million people, 3 million men were under arms. In the South, 20 percent of military age men died.

<sup>41</sup> Pike county is considered part of the Appalachian Region of Kentucky (12,774 km<sup>2</sup> and 29/km<sup>2</sup>), including other 14 counties: Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliot, Floyd, Greenup, Johnson, Lawrence, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, and Rowan.

<sup>42</sup> Someone, like the blog Eras Gone (<http://erasgone.blogspot.it/2013/01/they-died-for-tourism-update.html>) pushes it to title that "They [the Hatfields and McCoys] Gave Their Lives for Tourism".

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.tugvalleychamber.com/things-to-see---do.html>

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/Salem/I-73/I-73\\_Economic\\_Impact\\_Presentation.pdf](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/Salem/I-73/I-73_Economic_Impact_Presentation.pdf)