

# MOUNTAIN TALK

Language and Life in Southern Appalachia

Produced and Directed by NEAL HUTCHESON  
Executive Producer WALT WOLFRAM

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

A production of  
THE NORTH CAROLINA LANGUAGE AND LIFE PROJECT

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## DESCRIPTION

Mountain dialect, culture and identity are explored in a people-oriented journey through Southern Appalachia.

## SYNOPSIS

The people of Southern Appalachia tell their own story, revealing the quick wit, good humor, and resilience that sustained them through centuries. Music, stories and candid conversations convey the shared sense of place that defines the mountain people. Featuring Popcorn Sutton, Mary Jane Queen, Orville Hicks, Jim Tom Hedrick and many others, with back-porch music performances by Henry Queen, Mary Jane Queen, Gilford Williams, Rufe Sutton, Leon Wells and others. Narrated by award-winning storyteller and folklorist Gary Carden.

## CREW & CREDITS

Walt Wolfram – *Executive Producer*

James W. Clark – *Co-Executive Producer*

Neal Hutcheson – *Producer & Director, Videography, Audio, Editing*

Kelly Houk – *Production & Graphic Design*

Karen Kast-Hutcheson – *Production Assistance*

Christine Mallinson – *Production Assistance*

*Narrated by award-winning storyteller Gary Carden*

*Music by Henry Queen, Mary Jane Queen, Gilford Williams, The Redeemed Quartet, The Snowbird Mountain Band, Leon Wells, Rufe Sutton*

## FUNDED BY

The College of Humanities & Social Sciences, NC State University

The William C. Friday Endowment

## REVIEWS

[http://www.smokymountainnews.com/issues/01\\_04/01\\_14\\_04/art\\_appalachia\\_talk.html](http://www.smokymountainnews.com/issues/01_04/01_14_04/art_appalachia_talk.html)

<http://indyweek.com/durham/2003-09-10/cover7.html>

## FEATURED SCREENINGS

2004 Isothermal Film Festival

2005 Appalachian Studies Conference

2006 Hillbilly Babylon Film Festival, Berlin, Germany

## TESTIMONIALS & PRESS CLIPPINGS

"marvelous and empathic...a charming, amusing and informative look at the lingering vocal mannerisms of Western North Carolina. ...briskly edited and highly entertaining... In *Mountain Talk*, [Hutcheson's] subjects have rewarded his respectfulness with remarkably un-self-conscious reflections for his camera."

- David Fellerath, *Independent Weekly*

"I'm a Russian journalist/TV director, living now in NC, and your Mountain Talk was a real feast for me. You did it with passion and soul, and it sure shows."

- Elena Popova

"A fast-paced, engaging account of traditional mountain speakers. With its lush scenery and lively music and dance, the program has plenty of charm, but its centerpiece is the local speakers, who are down-home, likable folks..."

- Michael Montgomery, Spring 2005 *Journal of English Linguistics*

"I was blown away by how true to form this documentary was in capturing such an accurate portrait of the ways in which we talk and live."

- Michelle Allen, Documentary Filmmaker, Murphy, NC

"This affectionate but clear-headed film preserves the language and character of a fading culture."

- Raleigh *News and Observer*

"This is a wonderful program. I'm so glad there is a project dedicated to preserving our cultural and linguistic heritage."

- Jack Cummins, Rural Hall, NC

"Mountain Talk is an eye-opening documentary...an enlightening way to spend an hour with some of the true mountain folk of our region."

- Jeff Eason, *The Mountain Times*

"I was really impressed by your approach. I haven't seen anyone do such a good job of presentation and not put us down."

- Bill Morris, *Ivy Creek Recordings*

"Congratulations to everyone who worked on the Mountain Talk project. A real winner. You guys should be proud."

- Thomas Crowe, Author & Musician, Cullowhee, NC

"It's a beautiful film. The photography is just exquisite. I only wished for another hour of it."

- Dot Jackson, SC Humanities Council

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

NEAL HUTCHESON (Producer / Director) is an award-winning documentary producer, whose work has appeared on PBS, The Sundance Channel, History, The Documentary Channel and A & E. His producer/director credits include the acclaimed *The Last One* (2008), *The Carolina Brogue* (2008), *The Outlaw Lewis Redmond* (2008), *The Prince of Dark Corners* (2007), *The Queen Family – Appalachian Tradition and Back Porch Music* (2006), *Voices of North Carolina* (2005), *Mountain Talk* (2003), and *Indian By Birth: The Lumbee Dialect* (2001). Hutcheson received the Bill Arnold North Carolina Film Award from the Carolina Film and Video Festival in 2008, a Visual Artist Fellowship from the North Carolina Arts Council in 2004, and project grants from United Arts in 1997 and 2002. Three of his documentary films were honored in a special showing at an annual film festival in Berlin, Germany, in 2006.

WALT WOLFRAM (Executive Producer) has pioneered the study of dialect and culture for more than three decades. Wolfram has published more than 20 books and more than 250 articles on American English dialects, and has served on the Advisory Board of the Children’s Television Workshop. A prominent concern of Professor Wolfram involves the application of basic research findings to social and educational problems, and the effective dissemination of information on language variation and cultural diversity to the American public. This interest has included work on a number of TV documentaries, including the award-winning *American Tongues* (1986) and *Do you Speak American* (2005), as well as serving as Executive Producer for *The Ocracoke Brogue* (1997), *Indian by Birth: The Lumbee Dialect* (2001), *Mountain Talk* (2003), *Voices of North Carolina* (2005), *The Queen Family - Appalachian Tradition & Back Porch Music* (2006), *This Side of the River* (2007), *The Carolina Brogue* (2008), and *Spanish Voices* (forthcoming). Among numerous other honors, Wolfram received the Extension Excellence Award from North Carolina State University and the prestigious John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities from the North Carolina Humanities Council, both in 2008.

## FILMOGRAPHY

### **NEAL HUTCHESON and WALT WOLFRAM in collaboration**

*The Carolina Brogue*. 2008.

*The Queen Family - Appalachian Tradition & Back Porch Music*. 2006.

*Voices of North Carolina*. 2005.

*Mountain Talk*. 2003.

*Indian By Birth: The Lumbee Dialect*. 2001.

## MORE ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

- Walt Wolfram on WUNC's hour-long NPR show "The State of Things," 7/28/2008: <http://wunc.org/tsot/archive/sot0728abc08.mp3/view>
- Profile of Executive Producer Walt Wolfram in North Carolina's *Independent Weekly*: <http://www.indyweek.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A38278>
- Reviews of Hutcheson's *The Last One*, released in November, 2008:
  - <http://blogs.newsobserver.com/tv/the-last-one-popcorn-and-moonshine-in-north-carolina>
  - <http://gulahiyi.blogspot.com/2008/11/last-one.html>
- Neal Hutcheson and Walt Wolfram chosen as "Tarheels of the Week" by the Raleigh *News and Observer*: <http://www.newsobserver.com/692/story/396765.html>
- Neal Hutcheson, Walt Wolfram, and Mary Jane Queen interviewed on WUNC's hour-long NPR show "The State of Things," 1/23/2006. Archived broadcast available: [http://www.ibiblio.org/wunc\\_archives/sot/index.php?p=544](http://www.ibiblio.org/wunc_archives/sot/index.php?p=544)
- Profile of director Neal Hutcheson in North Carolina's *Independent Weekly*: <http://www.indyweek.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A20124>

## ABOUT THE NC LANGUAGE & LIFE PROJECT

The North Carolina Language and Life Project (NCLLP) is a part of NC State University's Humanities Extension, and is an umbrella organization for regional research, cultural preservation, and the production of educational documentary media for television and classroom.

The goals of the NCLLP are:

- To preserve the rich heritage of language variety in North Carolina as it reflects the different cultural traditions of its residents.
- To gather basic research information about language variety in order to understand the nature of language variation and change.
- To provide information about language differences and language change for public and educational interests.
- To use the material collected in research projects for the improvement of educational programs about language and culture.

# MOUNTAIN TALK – DVD DETAILS



Distributed by  
The North Carolina Language & Life Project

USA • 2004 • 57 minutes

## SPECIAL DOCUMENTARY FEATURE

*Scenes from Southern Appalachia (25 minutes)*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### **The North Carolina Language and Life Project**

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Walt Wolfram – *Executive Producer / Director of the NC Language and Life Project*

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press photos available at [www.talkingnc.com](http://www.talkingnc.com)

video excerpts

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TFaw7Cpcgg>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03iwAY4KIIU>

NC Language & Life Project YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NCLLP>