

WEST VIRGINIA: STATE OF CONTRASTS

Its history, people, politics, beauty, tourism, resources, industries, rivers, and music

Course #:	22S-WVSC
Format:	Seminar
Moderator:	James Scott
Date and Time:	Tues, 2:00 - 4:00 PM 10 weeks, Starting 2/21/2022
Location:	Zoom
Max # of Participants:	17
Auditors Accepted:	Yes
Max # of Auditors:	Up to 2

PURPOSE:

This seminar creates the opportunity to learn about the diversity and complexity of this state, which normally has a low profile in the midst of many apparently more dynamic neighbors.

DESCRIPTION:

On a map West Virginia appears in the middle of larger, more familiar states. It is the only state that is totally within what is labelled as Appalachia, with enduring consequences.

At the height of the Civil War in 1863, West Virginia became, with much controversy, the 35th state of the United States. Differences between eastern and western populations mirrored the divisions between North and South.

The geographic location of West Virginia highly influenced its immigrant populations through exploitation of natural resources: fossil fuels, timber, and minerals. These populations brought a range of cultural values in ethnic foods, music, and domestic handicrafts. This is reflected in today's culture.

Throughout its history the role of labor is significant. Recent changes in national environmental priorities created major consequences in the state's labor markets. As a result, its political complexion has evolved from Democratic, union-based politics to a right-wing populist majority.

The seminar will offer a rich array of topics to choose from.

ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS:

The participant will select a topic for research and presentation, with the approval of the moderator, and prepare a presentation of 20 to 30 minutes and lead a discussion on that topic in the time that follows.

RESOURCES:

There is no single text or reference for this course.

The Internet is the resource of first choice, as most of these topics are so contemporary as to not be in print.

ABOUT THE MODERATORS:

Jim Scott was born in Huntington, West Virginia, in 1937, and his parents migrated from Michigan in 1929. His brother still lives there. Jim has been a member of 5CLIR for more than twenty years and moderated many seminars on a variety of subjects, including science, history, and industry.