

# 10 Hillbillies, rednecks, and southern belles

## The language rebels

One Virginian who went to Harvard in the early 1980s fantasized about putting a sign around his neck to foreclose some of the questions he repeatedly faced, or imagined he faced: "Yes, I am from the south. No, I do not know your uncle in Mobile. . . . Both of my parents are, in fact, literate. . . . No, I do not watch 'Hee Haw.' No, I do not own slaves. No, I do not want any."

Quoted by Edward Ayers, in "What we talk about when we talk about the South" (1996)

Northerners tend to think of the south as a homogenous and somewhat mysterious monolith, where English has an indiscriminate "twang" or a "drawl" and is peppered with funny, pan-regional idioms; nevertheless, when pressed northerners will divide the south into distinct parts. Geographers have noted a consistent identification of a "core" south or *Southern Trough*, which

cuts across Mississippi and Alabama, embracing parts of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Georgia at the edges. This trough appears to most Americans as the least desirable place in the United States to live. Other Southern states cannot take too much grim comfort from such disparagement of their Deep South neighbors, for the sides of the trough rise only gradually until they reach the usual boundaries of what Americans take to be the North, the Midwest, and the West. The whole South appears to be a vast saucer of unpleasant associations.

(Ayers 1996: 62–63)

The conceptualization of an undesirable south moves in concentric rings outward from this core *Deep South* or "Southern Trough," as seen in a composite "mental map" constructed from a study of environmental preferences voiced by students at the University of Minnesota (Gould and White 1974: 97) (Figure 10.1). These students found the most desirable areas of the country to be their own native Minnesota and California, with other high points in the Colorado High region. In contrast, they see the Southern Trough as the least desirable place to live.

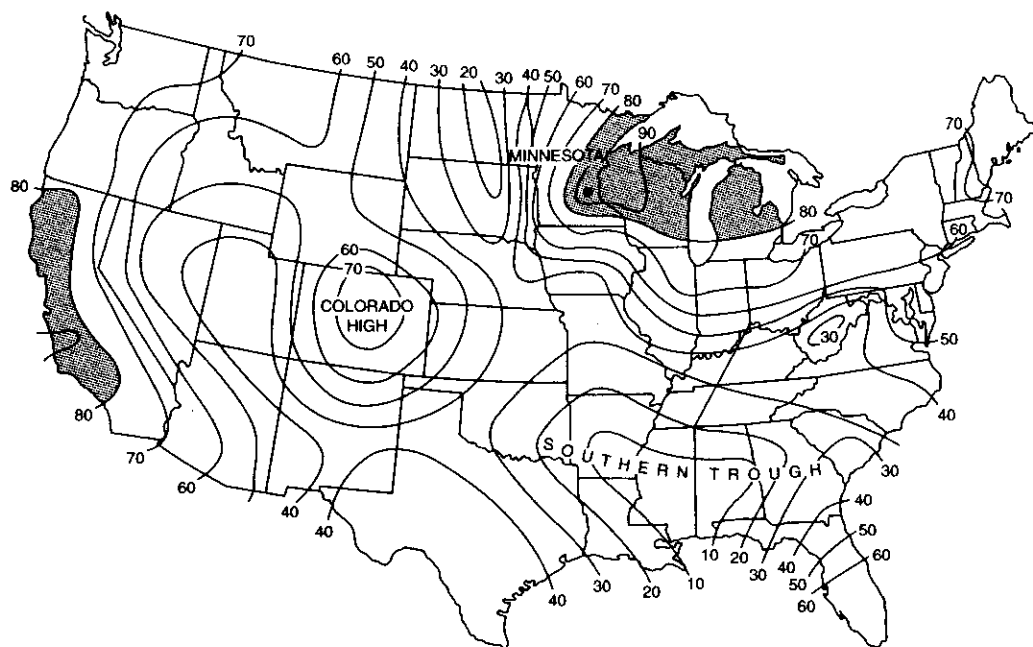


Figure 10.1 Negative evaluation of the "Southern Trough" as a place to live by University of Minnesota students

Source: Reproduced by permission of the authors from P. Gould and R. White (1974) *Mental Maps*. Baltimore, MD: Penguin, p. 98

The composite map of environmental preferences of Alabama students looks much like a mirror image of the Minnesota map, although these southerners, too, tend to see California as highly desirable (Figure 10.2).

In a range of studies focusing on *linguistic* perceptions, Preston (1986a, b, and c, 1989a and b, 1993, and elsewhere) found that northerners tend to draw rough distinctions between the Southern Trough and other southern states: Tennessee and Kentucky are the "outer south"; Texas is its own kind of south, whereas Florida is hardly south at all in the minds of most northerners. The "southwest" may include Texas, but may also exclude New Mexico and Arizona, which are often grouped with those states which are perceived as prototypically west. In spite of these perceived differentiations, northerners remain very unaware of what differentiates one southern variety of English from another, thus producing the one-size-fits-all accent when attempting to "sound southern."

The perceptions of students in Hawai'i about the distribution of mainland varieties makes very clear the schism between mental maps and linguistic evaluation (Figure 10.3). Here, Preston compares a traditional composite construction of *southern* (roughly the Trough) first to the Hawai'ian perceptual boundary of the south (which adds Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and the Virginias). The students were then asked to evaluate tape-recorded samples of speech from a much wider geographical range, resulting in the third boundary seen on the map.

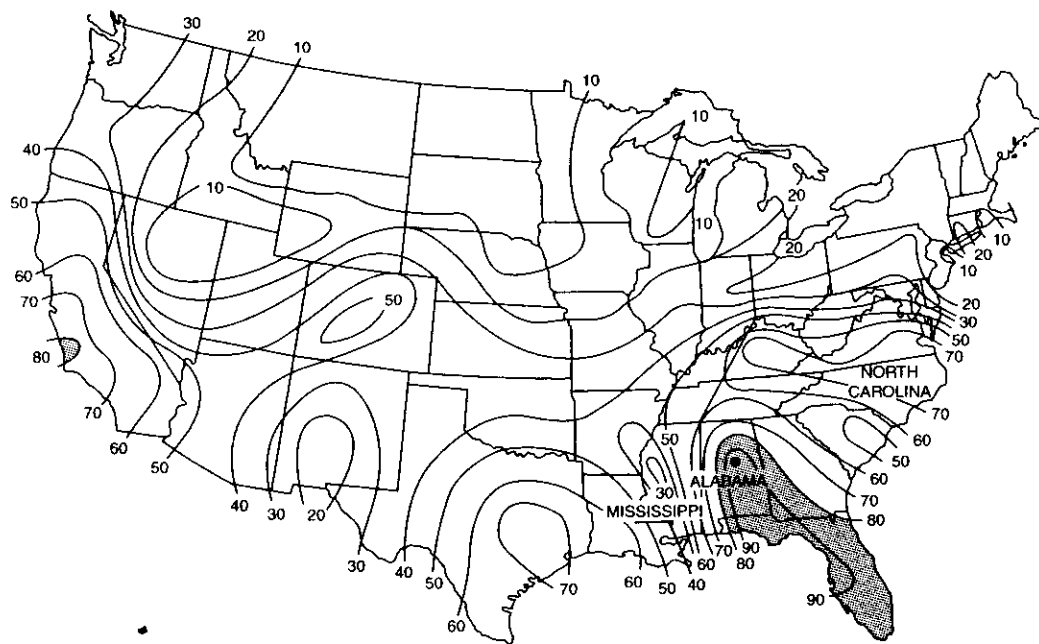


Figure 10.2 Positive evaluation of the "Southern Trough" as a place to live by University of Alabama students

Source: Reproduced by permission of the authors from P. Gould and R. White (1974) *Mental Maps*. Baltimore, MD: Penguin, p. 101

Clearly, what the Hawai'ians *hear* as a southern accent moves far beyond the boundary of what they identify as the south.

Thus, if we isolate those states which seem consistently to be marked as some kind of southern in cultural and linguistic terms (Table 10. 1), we are then talking about some 79 million people, or about 30 percent of the total population of the United States. This figure might be seen as too small, because it excludes those parts of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and the southwest where English is perceived as clearly southern in accent. On the other hand, the figure is clearly too large because it assumes that *all* 79 million people in the twelve named states are natives and speakers of the indiginous variety of English, which is clearly an assumption that cannot bear close examination. Finally, it does not take into account racial and ethnic diversity in the south which results in another dimension of language variation, particularly the presence of indiginous language communities where the core language may not be English at all (Spanish, Louisiana Creole, Native American languages), not to mention the large population of African Americans and the ways that southern AAVE differ from other geographical versions of AAVE. Thus it is only a very rough estimate to say that somewhere around 30 percent of the population speaks US English with an accent which is geographically marked "southern."

There seems to be a strong urge to synthesize the south into a single population united primarily in the fact that it is distinct from the north.

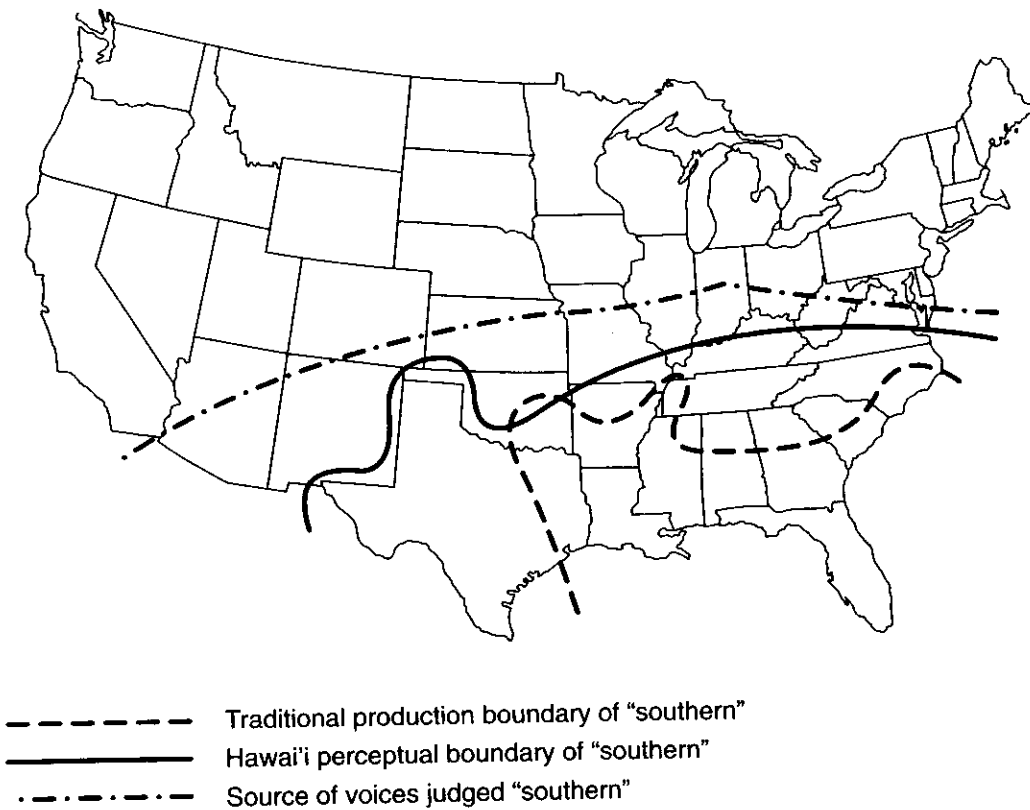


Figure 10.3 Comparison of perceptual, production, and identification boundaries for the area "southern," from the point of view of Hawai'i respondents  
 Source: Preston 1989a: 129

This is a process southerners themselves both promote and reject, according to Ayers (and see Figure 10.4):

The South plays a key role in the nation's self-image: the role of evil tendencies overcome, mistakes atoned for, progress yet to be made. Before it can play that role effectively, the South has to be set apart as a distinct place that has certain fundamental characteristics. As a result, Southern difference is continually being recreated and reinforced. Americans, black and white, somehow need to know that the South is different and so tend to look for differences to confirm that belief. This is not something that is only done to the South by malevolent, insensitive non-Southerners. The North and the South have conspired to create each other's identity as well as their own. The South eagerly defines itself against the North, advertising itself as more earthy, more devoted to family values, more spiritual, and then is furious to have things turned around, to hear itself called hick, phony, and superstitious. The South feeds the sense of difference and then resists the consequences.

(1996: 66)

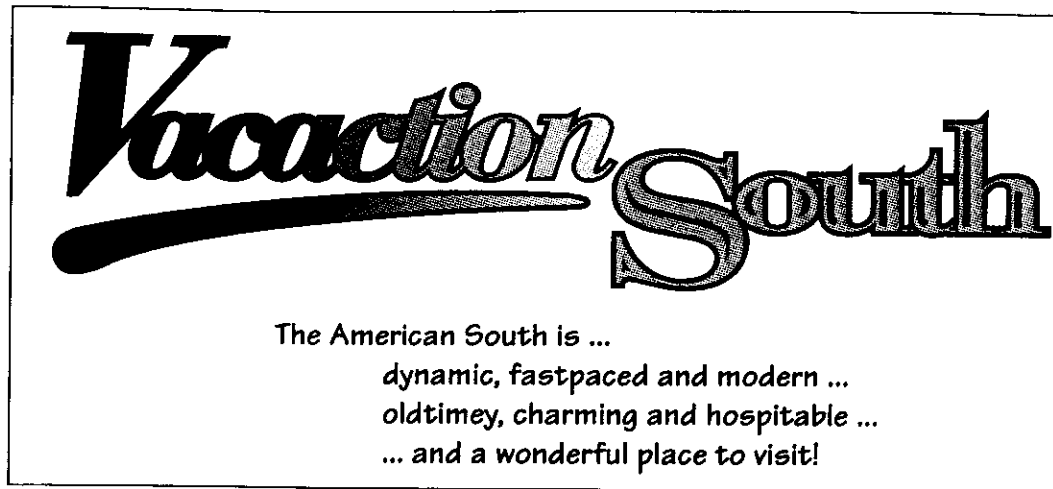


Figure 10.4 How the south sees itself

Source: <http://www.webcom.com/~markplag/vs/>

Table 10. 1 Population of the southern states in comparison to overall population figures for the US

<i>State</i>	<i>Population</i>
Alabama	4,040,587
Arkansas	2,350,725
Florida	12,937,926
Georgia	6,478,216
Kentucky	3,685,296
Louisiana	4,219,973
Mississippi	2,573,216
North Carolina	6,628,637
Oklahoma	3,145,585
South Carolina	3,486,703
Tennessee	4,877,185
Texas	16,986,510
Virginia	6,187,358
West Virginia	1,793,477
Southern states	79,391,394
Total US	248,709,873
Percent southern	31.92

Source: 1990 census figures

How the south evaluates its language is an important part of this self-perception. In a survey of 798 adult residents of Georgia, individuals answered questions about what it means to “have a southern accent”, and were subsequently asked to evaluate their own language (the results presented as “heavy” southern or “no” accent as seen in Figure 10.5). In any such direct inquiry, some people will underreport their own usage

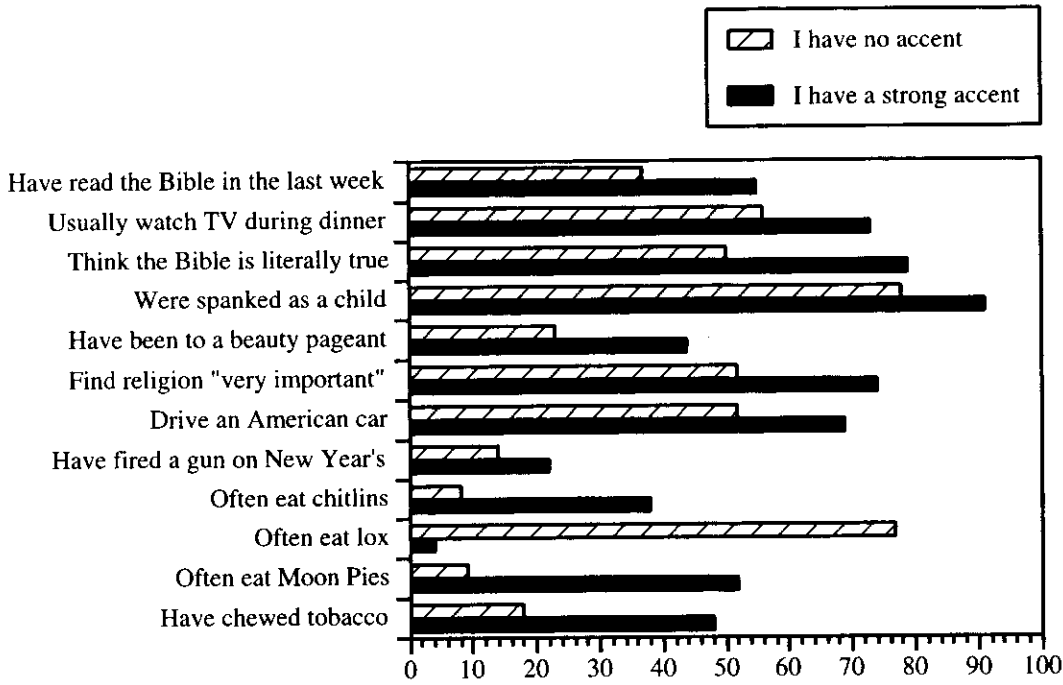


Figure 10.5 Responses of adults residing in Georgia to the yes/no question "Being southern means that you . . ."

Source: Survey conducted April 12-24, 1995 by the Applied Research Center, Georgia State University. Margin of error +/- 3.4 points

(claim to have no accent when in fact they do) and others will claim an accent when they are not local to an area and have not successfully acquired a new phonology. Thus this poll is not one which can tell us who actually has a southern accent, or how "heavy" accents really are, but it can tell us that people attach bundles of social differences to degrees of southern accent.

For that reason, the poll is useful in ways perhaps not anticipated by the persons who constructed it. In the selection of questions to be asked, the pollsters reveal much of the preconceived notions about connections between certain ways of life and language markers embodied in "accent." But do these questions constitute a set of sociocultural distinctions truly relevant to the construction of definitions of "north" and "south"? Between real southern and half-hearted southern?

In this questionnaire, most stereotypes about the south are represented one or more times. The pollster is looking for southern/non-southern distinctions based on religious and cultural practices and beliefs, so that real southerners – those who will admit to having "strong" accents – are the ones who eat chitlins and Moon Pies, and drive an American car to church on Sunday mornings while other, less southern types are at home eating lox.

The fact that a southern accent lies at the heart of much of anyone's construction of the south can be documented in a variety of ways. In an opinion piece for a small paper, the attempt is made to construct sample "State Questions" in the same way that states have official flowers and mottos, on the basis of legislation recently introduced in New Mexico.<sup>1</sup> In this column, which is meant to be lighthearted and humorous, every state included has a question which draws strongly on stereotype, but the southern states are distinct from the northern in a specific way, as seen in this excerpt:

Vermont: "Is it completely organic?"

Florida: "So, how much did he leave her?"

New York: "You got a problem with that, buddy?"

California: "You got a green card, buster?"

Montana: "You from the government?"

Texas: "Yuh shure ah cain't carry it concealed?"

Alabama: "Ain't that right, Jimmy Bob?"

South Carolina: "May ah see yo driver's license and registration?"

Mississippi: "Hunh?"

(Beckerman 1996)

\* It seems necessary to establish southern varieties of English on the basis of phonology and syntax as well as on local history, culture, fashions, or reputation. The effect of this is to underscore the social and linguistic differences, with an addition: the departure, from standard accepted spellings raises education issues in a subtle but important way. Northern ("unaccented") US English is projected as somehow closer to the written representation and therefore there is no need to use phonetic cues. The contrast in the presentation of two kinds of language – correctly spelled and "literary" northern and incorrectly spelled and "illiterate" southern is also an excellent example of Bourdieu's *strategies of condescension* (1991: 68–71). This is a tactic whereby an empowered individual – someone with social legitimacy in terms of employment and language and other kinds of authority – appropriates the subordinated language for a short period of time. In this case, the author of the opinion piece is in fact a professor of anthropology, which provides him not only with traditional authority as a highly educated academic and speaker of the mainstream language, but also as someone who has studied human culture, and therefore is expected to have an unusual degree of understanding of the way human beings interact. Thus this author has outer trappings which authorize him to choose between legitimate and subordinated language, and to publically appropriate the latter to make a point. Bourdieu points out that this strategy of condescension is in fact a part of a larger strategy of subversion (*ibid.*), or, within the framework set up for this study, part of the overall language subordination model.

Are there cultural, historical, linguistic differences between north and south? Of course, and sometimes popular consideration of these differ-

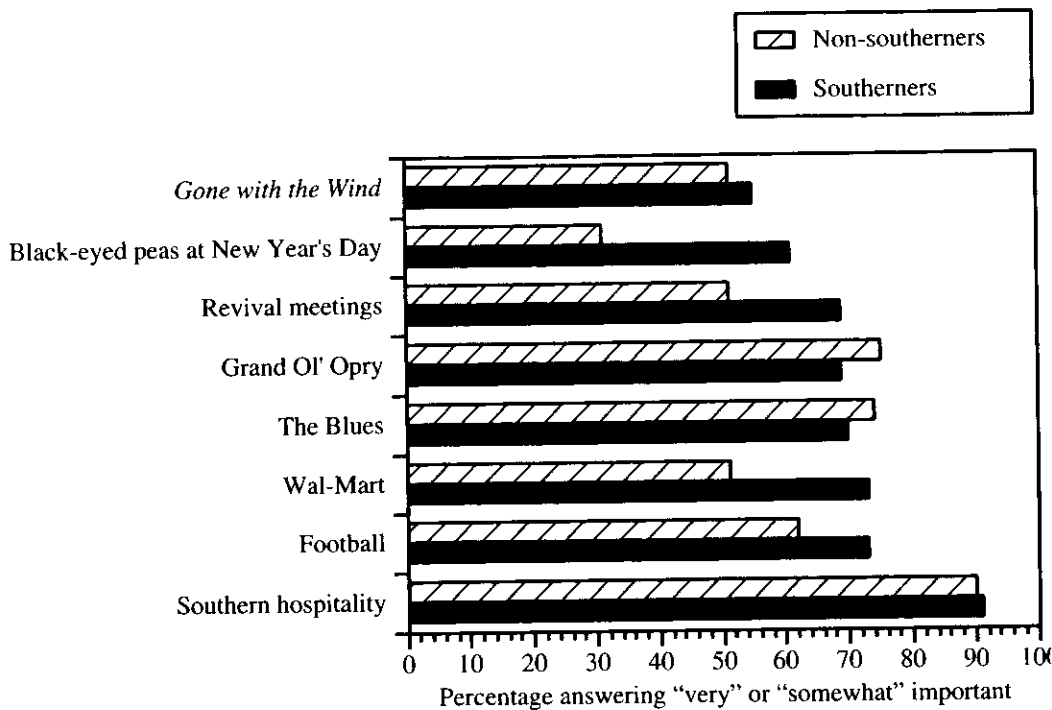


Figure 10.6 Results of a *Journal-Constitution Southern Life* poll in which 1,078 southerners and 507 non-southerners answered the question "How important are the following to your definition of today's South?"

Source: Poll conducted in February and March 1995 by the Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Margin of error  $\pm 3$  points for southerners and 5 points for non-southerners

ences does come close to identifying some of them, independent of language issues (Figure 10.6). In this second poll, the distinctions between northern and southern center primarily in those areas which are not widely advertised: the tradition of eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day, for example, is little known in the north. In contrast, perceptions differ very little in matters having to do with stereotype. One notes especially that about 50 percent of both groups find *Gone with the Wind* relevant to a definition of the south. This is a clear demonstration of the strength and durability of stereotypes in defining both self and other.

In real-life terms we see what instinctually and objectively we know to be true: there is a great deal of diversity in the south. Those southerners who are or have been most prominent in the public eye make this evident: Senators Strom Thurmon and Al Gore; writers William Styron and Dorothy Allison; journalists Dan Rather and Cokie Roberts; actors Julia Roberts and Burt Reynolds. But the southerners who seem to come most quickly to the minds of northerners are the fictional ones, and more than that, the stereotypical fictional ones: Andy Griffith and Gomer; Pa and Ellie Mae and the rest of the *Beverly Hillbillies*; the horrific backwoods-men and the banjo player from the film *Deliverance*; Jonathan Winters'



portrayal of the benighted southerner determined to go over Niagara Falls in his pickup truck instead of a barrel; Scarlett, and her Mammy.

\*One of the primary characteristics of the stereotypical southerner is ignorance, but it is a specific kind of ignorance – one disassociated from education and literacy:

\* [William Natcher, a member of the House of Representatives from Kentucky] mumbled in a Mississippi drawl nobody understands.  
(National Public Radio, March 23, 1994. Reporter: Cokie Roberts)

I got an interview with an extremely elite undergraduate college in the northeast. They conducted the first substantial part of the interview in [another language] and it went well. When they switched to a question in English, my first answer completely interrupted the interview . . . they broke out laughing for quite a while. I asked what was wrong and they said they “never would have expected” me to have such an accent. They made a big deal about me having a [prestigious accent in the second language] and such a strong Southern accent. Of course, I had been aiming for bland standard English. After that, I got a number of questions about whether I’d “be comfortable” at their institution. Subtle, but to me it was not ambiguous.

(university foreign-language professor, native of the south)

For 37 years, Charles Kuralt has shown us what network news can be – calm, thoughtful, perceptive. Beneath that deceptive North Carolina drawl, there’s a crisp intelligence.

(“Daily Guide,” *Lansing State Journal*, April 3, 1994: 1)

\*Together, these comments on the relationship between language, intelligence, and communication demonstrate the ways in which language barriers are built and rationalized. In the first case, the reporter (notably herself from New Orleans, the child of lifelong politicians and a featured speaker at an annual conference “Southern Women in Public Service”) projects to her listeners an unwillingness to understand the southern accent in question. Although she is clearly in a position to ascertain Representative Natcher’s place of origin, she is content to misrepresent this, lumping all drawling and incomprehensible southerners together into a group of non-conformers who deserve to be pointed out and ridiculed.

While the first example demonstrates an irritability which is at odds with journalistic objectivity, the second – this one anecdotal – demonstrates northern discomfort when a link is drawn between intellectual authority and the south. What is so interesting about this exchange is the fact that a person may be taken seriously *only as long as he uses a socially prestigious language*, even though it is not English. Once this person begins to speak his own language, working hard to accommodate to the linguistic expectations of his audience, he is rejected. He remains the same person, expressing the same range and quality of ideas, but his currency is

devalued by a language which links him to the anti-intellectual south. While the reporter in the first instance was irritable about the accent which she found out of place and inappropriate (and hence worthy of rejection); the search committee members in the second example have nothing to do with their discomfort but to externalize it as humor. This they find socially acceptable, regardless of the way it affected the job candidate.

In the third example, the author does not deny that a southerner has used language in a clear and perceptive way. Instead, she specifically draws attention to the way that Kuralt's language *confounds expectations*. Humor, which can be loosely defined in just this way – the reaction when reality confounds expectation – often focuses on the juxtaposition of a certain kind of intelligence with southern language:

✧ Gov. Clinton, you attended Oxford University in England and Yale Law School in the Ivy League, two of the finest institutions of learning in the world. So how come you still talk like a hillbilly?

(Mike Royko, "Opinion," *Chicago Tribune*, October 11, 1992)

✧ Federal law requires commercial airliners to carry infants trained to squall at altitudes above two hundred feet. This keeps the passengers calm, because they're all thinking, "I wish somebody would stuff a towel into that infant's mouth," which prevents them from thinking, "I am thirty-five thousand feet up in the air riding in an extremely sophisticated and complex piece of machinery controlled by a person with a southern accent." ✧

(*The Dave Barry 1995 Calendar*, Tuesday, April 4, 1995)

In contrast to the northern construction of intelligence which is closely linked to a high level of education, there is a stereotypical southern intelligence which follows from common sense and life experience. Typified by the character of Sheriff Andy Taylor in the popular television series *Mayberry RFD* and *The Andy Griffith Show*, this is the southerner whose intelligence is native rather than acquired. Many plots and comic situations in *Mayberry* depended on the construction of southern mother-wit and its contrast to the less instinctual, acquired northern intelligence.

As was the case with Disney animated stories, in this situation comedy southern accents are restricted to those who fit the stereotype: while Andy has a North Carolina accent, his son, aunt, and cousins do not. Nor do the philosophizing barber or the mild-mannered town accountant, or the teacher (a serious love interest of the main character, and – in line with the patterns noted earlier in the Disney films – a speaker of mainstream English), or the pharmacist. The only southern accents in this southern town are the deceptively clever Andy, the dimwitted but good-hearted car mechanics (Gomer and Goober), and the occasional rural characters who come into town to make music or straighten out legal problems resulting from clan feuds, illegal stills, or excessive violence (e.g. Ernest T. Bass).

There are no regularly appearing African American characters in this particular corner of the south.<sup>2</sup>

It is primarily on the basis of intellect linked to education that northerners try hardest to convince southerners that their language is deficient. In ideological terms, this is the process by which some sixty million people are supposed to accept the fact that the language they speak is naturally subordinate to its neighbors. The fact that the stereotypes which underlie this reasoning are imaginary formations is irrelevant; their power is still real, and they are effective. The process is successful when the targets of these efforts become complicit in the subordination process.

Of course, this process is not limited to the south. However, what is so particularly interesting about subordination tactics in this case is that the object of subordination is a whole nation of people, united in terms of history and culture rather than in terms of race or ethnicity – more usually the case when language is systematically attacked as a tool in mainstreaming tactics. It is fairly easy to conceive of the strategies and processes by which African Americans – 12 percent of the population living in communities through the country – are rendered susceptible to language subordination, and come to embrace and propagate a language ideology which works to their own disadvantage. But the process is a bigger challenge when the targeted group is as large and as internally diverse as the southern US. Many persons born and raised in the south have no desire to live anywhere else, and thus it would seem that threats of exclusion and gatekeeping would be less effective. To someone living in the heart of Georgia or South Carolina or Tennessee, the idea that they need to acquire an “accentless” variety of midwestern English to succeed might seem ludicrous. Nevertheless, personal anecdotes indicate that northern bias and standard language ideology have an increasingly long reach:

“It’s ironic,” says [Judith] Ivey [actor], who is from the Lone Star State, “that probably the one project that will give me the most exposure [a movie set in the south] . . . is one that requires my Texas accent. Particularly since I was told that if I didn’t get rid of it, I would have a very limited career. ✓

(Liebman 1993)

School official [X] said the [accent reduction] course began when she heard people complain that their accents interfered with business. “Instead of listening to what you’re saying, they’re passing the phone around the office saying, ‘Listen to this little honey from South Carolina.’ It’s self-defeating. It’s annoying. It’s humiliating.”

(Riddle 1993)

Soon after Atlanta was awarded the 1996 Olympics a year ago, a column appeared in the Atlanta Business Chronicle exhorting people to “get the South out of our mouth” to impress all the expected visitors. The

author, [X], a communications consultant from New Jersey, wrote: "By cleaning up our speech, maybe we can finally convince the world that we're not just a bunch of cow-tipping morons down here."

(Pearl 1991)

\* [X], a human resources worker at Southern Bell, is trying her best not to sound like a Southern belle . . . she is up for a promotion, and she is worried the decision will be made by Northerners. . . . She is also taking night speech classes at Kennesaw State College. Unless she can drop the accent, she fears, the promotion committee "might not think I'm so sharp."

(ibid.)

In all of these cases, southerners exhibit insecurity about their language and a willingness to accept responsibility for poor communication or bad language, but they do so *only when in contact with the direct criticism of the northerner*. In the third case above, the person voicing the criticism and calling for acceptance of responsibility and change toward northern norms is in fact, from New Jersey. But she still claims the right to speak for all the people in that region where she lives and works: she wants the world to see her as something other than a "cow-tipping moron" in spite of the fact that she lives in the south. It is unclear whether she rejects the "cow tipping moron" stereotype as unfair and untrue, or subscribes to it and wishes not to be included in that group. In either case, she believes that the way to accomplish such a goal is to convince the rest of the south to talk as she does. But here she takes on a Herculean task, for the south provides, more than any single ethnic, racial, or national origin group, strong resistance to language subordination.

The news media has been shown to be particularly enamored of stories having to do with accent reduction, and those reports always include a discussion of such efforts in the south. "Hush mah mouth! Some in South try to lose the drawl!" (Pearl 1991) is not an unusual headline or introductory comment in these kinds of reports. They often contain some small commentary from dissenting southerners: "Somebody was going to judge me on the way I spoke, then I would judge him as being close-minded" (ABC Evening News, December 15, 1991).<sup>\*</sup>

The news media does not often report on southern resistance to the language-mainstreaming process. In doing so, however, journalists still manage to put a decidedly ideological spin on the rejection of subordination. In a newspaper report on the death of an accent-reduction course in South Carolina owing to lack of interest, the reporter summarizes:

So why did interest die out? With tongue firmly in cheek, [the instructor] offered three possible reasons: Everybody's cured. Everybody thinks the rest of the world talks funny. Or, in a country that now

has a Southern President and vice president, maybe nobody much cares anymore.

(Riddle 1993)

Clearly it is difficult for northerners and mainstream language speakers to take seriously the idea that the south could be content with itself in terms of language. It is equally difficult to imagine, in spite of professed wishes to this effect, that southerners would somehow magically lose their accents, and could be "cured" of this disability which is so uniquely their own.

The author's final thought touches on some complex underlying issues of power and its distribution. In a new and unusual situation (both president and vice president from the south), in which the south has political dominance (at least in symbolic terms), can the illusion of northern linguistic superiority survive? The wish or compulsion to assimilate linguistically to a more dominant language necessarily presupposes a recognition of the social dominance of that language. If there is a shift in the traditional distribution of power, the traditionally subordinated may no longer be content to be complicit in a process which disadvantages them. Riddle raises this complex issue, but does not seem to be aware that she has done so, for she then dismisses it with an appeal to boredom or laziness.

Another reporter writes of a "Pro-Drawl Movement" in which the resistance is trivialized, and once again the strategy of condescension extends to the representation of southern US English in quasi-phonetic terms:

Ludlow Porch's radio talk show is at the center of Atlanta's Southern resistance. Mr. Porch, whose voice is as slow and sweet as molasses in January, gets a steady stream of female callers who call him "sweet thang" and male callers who call him "mah friend." When complimented, Mr. Porch is apt to say, "Well, ah'm tickled" or "Bless your heart."

But even Mr. Porch concedes that things are changing. He lives in a suburb where he goes for weeks without hearing a Southern accent. And he admits that, sometimes, he even catches himself "doin' silly things — like pronouncin' mah 'g's."

(Pearl 1991)

Resistance filtered through the reporter's standard language ideology and condescension is resistance stripped of much of its power. Here Mr. Porch's language, and his concern about the fate of his culture and language, are made into humorous objects. He is then made to testify against himself, in that he admits that language changes, even as he watches. The journalist's only conclusion can be that language is changing *away* from southern norms, and *toward* northern ones. Thus once again, resistance is demonstrated to be useless.

When southern voices are heard uncensored, it almost always appears within southern boundaries, as in this column from the *Dallas Morning News*:

The [Southern League] encourages Southerners in the exercise of their indefeasible right to be Southern, never mind Northern reproaches and sneers.

To this praiseworthy end, a certain James E. Kibler, Jr., of Whitmire, S.C., exhorts Southerners to speak like Southerners rather than, well, non-Southerners. He'd rather we not just blend in but stand out. . . . Brother Kibler's linguistic preferences fly in the face of drastic changes in Southern society since World War II. . . . The language of the older South is the language of the small towns in which most Southerners grew up. Gone with the wind! The culture of the towns, and sometimes the towns themselves, have disappeared.

But Brother Kibler is right: The old way of speaking has charm and value. Language is a part of being. To talk one way is to be something that people who talk differently are not. This means the lords of language sometimes meet with defiance when they mandate change. Brought up saying "ice box" rather than "refrigerator," I would not now dream of speaking otherwise. I am frozen in solidarity with the past, on this question anyway.

Particular customs also can command defiant affirmation. A well-educated Texas woman I know relates how in the old days her equally well-educated mother, whenever a black cat crossed her path, would spit and say "damn."

It's a good custom, the woman still insists – not for any theological purpose it serves but rather as a tiny, feeble thread linking generations. The more such threads we break heedlessly, the more isolated we become in a society seemingly bent on annihilating memory itself. We're not supposed to love the past, we're supposed to hate it. Modernity drums this message into us relentlessly.

(Murchison 1996)

There is no doubt that in the delineation of the nation, we use accent as a cultural shorthand to talk about bundles of properties which we would rather not mention directly. When a northerner appropriates a pan-southern accent to make a joke or a point, he or she is drawing on a strategy of condescension and trivialization that cues into those stereotypes so carefully structured and nurtured: southerners who do not assimilate to northern norms are backward but friendly, racist but polite, obsessed with the past and unenamored of the finer points of higher education. If they are women, they are sweet, pretty and not very bright.<sup>3</sup>

Focusing on language difference allows us to package the south this way, and to escape criticism for what would otherwise be seen as narrow-mindedness. Without accent, it would not be possible to draw the nation's

attention to the south's need for redemption without specifically raising those topics which make us nervous. If white southerners are not distinguishable by other ethnic markers, by characteristic physical features, or religion, language is one simple and effective way of distinguishing between self and other. Because in this case differences are historical and cultural, there is less footing for an ideology which subordinates and trivializes the language and the cultures attached to it.

Nevertheless, the process continues. Accent-reduction courses taught by northerners spring up, find some uneasy response in communities or individuals with strong northern ties, and then die away. Movies are made in which the lazy and narrow minded twang and drawl. Southern students who come north are taken aside and told that their native language phonology will be an impediment to true success. Job applicants are laughed at, and on the floor of Congress, reporters smirk and report not on the Representative's position, but on his or her language.

The south has resources to call on, ways to deflect subordination tactics, but only so long as it keeps itself intact and separate. Thus the institutions which are most responsible for the subordination process coax and wheedle toward the ultimate goal of cultural and linguistic assimilation, and are met with suspicion and defiance.