Highlander Folk School was established in 1932 by southerners Myles Horton and Don West in Monteagle, Tennessee. Initially the school educated union workers showing promise as labor leaders. In the 1940’s Highlander began including African Americans into its programs and shifting emphasis to aiding southern rural people. This was a change that fostered suspicion among conservative groups and lead ultimately to a raid on the school in 1959; after lengthy legal proceedings, the state of Tennessee revoked the school’s charter and confiscated its Monteagle property in the early 1960’s. Highlander chose to move to a new location in the Knoxville area and continue its work under a new charter with a new name, the Highlander Research and Education Center. Highlander works today providing support and education to “…people struggling against oppression, supporting their effort to take collective action to shape their own destiny. It creates educational experiences that empower people to take democratic leadership towards fundamental change.” Quote is from Highlanders web page: http://www.highlandercenter.org/a-mission.asp

Classification numbers for materials available at the Paul Meek Library follow the entries in bold type; journals that are available in microfilm are arranged alphabetically by title they are marked Media Services to designate where they are located. Other items may be requested through Interlibrary Loan. Many of the resources available here are housed in the West Tennessee Heritage Study Room and are for use in the library only. Please report errors or omissions to: ejmoore@utm.edu.

What is too big for one person to handle can be figured out by all of us together. We will have a new kind of school—not a school for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, but a school for problems. — Myles Horton in Tjerandsen

Primary Source Material


FBI file, Highlander Folk School [microform]. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, [1990]. Like many other populist movements, the FBI maintained an investigation file on Highlander School between 1936 and 1972. This file, acquired under the Freedom of Information Act and published on microfilm, is a rich source of material. The file covers forty years of the school’s history and includes many school-produced materials as well as local newspaper clippings. Microfilm 1550; guide: LC5301.M65 F32 1990 Library use only.

These discs were copied from original tapes made at Highlander during its last eight years as a Folk School and its first two years as a Research and Education Center.


**Secondary Literature: Books, Theses, and Reports**


Bibliography includes both primary and secondary sources.


**Secondary Literature: Articles and Book Chapters**


This is an extensive ten page review essay covering five books; four of the titles are specifically related to the Highlander Folk School, its philosophy, personnel, and programs. As the article’s authors point out organizations such as Highlander “…encourage, support, and facilitate collective action, but typically are not the organizational vehicles of that action.”


Horton, Myles. “It’s a Miracle—I Still Don’t Believe It.” *Phi Delta Kappan* 47, no. 9 (May 1966): 490-497. LJ121. P4


Murphy, Troy A. “Civil Society, the Highlander Folk School, and the Cultivation of Rhetorical Invention.” *Communication Review* 6, no. 1 (Jan/March 2003): 1-22.


Theme issue is titled “Activism in Appalachia: Dedicated to the Memory of Myles Horton, 1905-1990.”


**Video and Electronic Sources**


Bill Moyers interviews southern educator and founder of the Highlander School Myles Horton in this two hour video.

Highlander Folk School web site


*You Got to Move* [videorecording]: *Stories of Change in the South*, by Cumberland Mountain Educational Cooperative, Inc. New York: First Run; Icarus Films, distributors, 1985. 87 min. 
[VIDEO 4169](https://video.utoronto.ca/nr/entertainment_polaris/4169)

Discusses the civil rights education projects of the Highlander Education and Research Center as well as citizen’s actions against toxic waste dumping and strip mining in Kentucky and Tennessee.

International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame