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Storytelling and Self in Public Broadcast:
A Visual Ethnography of Rocky Mountain PBS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Emily Baker
June 2019
Advisor: Esteban Gómez

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Author: Emily Baker

Title: Storytelling and Self in Public Broadcast: A Visual Ethnography of Rocky Mountain PBS

Advisor: Esteban Gómez

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Abstract

Embodied storytelling in Denver's public broadcast media establishes how the intersectional identities of storytellers influence narrative practices in Denver's public sphere. Five approaches to communicating identity informed my theoretical background: embodiment, visual anthropology, the public sphere, practice theory, and phenomenology. Rocky Mountain PBS, a 60-year-old broadcast institution, served as my research site during the summer of 2018. In my thesis, I overviewed the history of RMPBS and observations of production activities performed by the creators of the show *Colorado Memories*. Using a phenomenological methodology, the research design and data collection included filmed participant observations, semi-structured interviews guided by a survey, and secondary analysis of Denver media. After completing qualitative analysis, I organized findings into six topics complementary to the filmed narratives: acquiring identity, learning storytelling, professional goals, (dis)comfort within storytelling, favorite stories, and future storytelling goals. The visual ethnography I made from my findings illustrates embodied storytelling through visual anthropology.

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Chapter One: Introduction

But I think this industry, like TV and film traditionally, was a very male industry. And so, there's challenges around that. However, nonprofits are very female, so PBS is an interesting space because there's a lot of females in our content department who are producers. So, I felt – and these are my people basically is what I'm saying.

– *Zoe, Senior Producer, September 20, 2018*

At the onset of this research, I questioned where people performed identity in public spaces, specifically in Denver. I'm a visual anthropologist by trade having previously earned a degree in social documentation (history/communications double major). Visual anthropologists apply ethnographic methods through multimedia projects about people. I used video and written media in this case. I collaborate with the local communities I film to develop content best representing the cultural performances they agree for me to document. For this project, I developed a nonfiction written and video narrative with the creators of Denver stories: local public broadcast producers. Denver's public broadcast producers at Rocky Mountain PBS (RMPBS) craft an exact visual narrative dealing with local history and identity on channels where everyone has access to the content. Having fundraised for them previously with an independent nonprofit, I was able to get connected with the leaders of a handful of locally made programs. I utilized the medium in which these producers perform identity: storytelling.

Zoe, quoted above, created the broadcast television show I'm calling *Colorado Memories* in 2013. It is one of a few programs produced at RMPBS currently. I renamed the show and my participants so as to respect their confidentiality. Zoe funded a portion of the series through a grant from the History Colorado Center's Historic Preservation Fund to explore Colorado history in visual storytelling. The crew of *Colorado Memories* is a team of trained broadcast TV producers, editors, videographers, researchers, and interns. First meeting in April 2018, I asked Zoe if her team would be open to participating in a filmed research project following their everyday activities in storytelling. Zoe was intrigued by my exploration of storytelling because it differed from the historical accounts her broadcast team utilized. I designed the film's narrative around individual narratives in the present. The timing was good for *Colorado Memories* because they made for their sixth season over the summer of 2018, my intended research period. RMPBS was also evaluating how their programming related to their Colorado audiences. It was a serendipitous moment to study storytelling with *Colorado Memories*.

One could ask why I was so intent on researching a TV show on a public broadcast station. The pace of modern media broadcasting has quickened in recent years, global entertainment companies able to make well-funded programming accessible with the right subscriptions to streaming services (Srinivasan 2017). This also depends on a community's access to digital media, but I'm positioning this discussion from the perspective of Denver. While RMPBS adapted to this digital market, it required a large financial and digital overhaul to create their own digital program library (Hilmes 2011: 408). RMPBS's revenue budget in 2017 totaled less than \$17,000,000. They spent less

than their revenue in the total costs for that year, just shy of \$16,000,000 (*Fiscal Year 2017 Community Report 2017*). Large film budgets aren't the only ways to attract audiences for local programming. While they receive about 11% of their budget from the federally funded Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 89% of their budget comes from community donations with 67% coming from individual donors (*Fiscal Year 2017 Community Report 2017*; "A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS" 2006). RMPBS has a viewership spanning back over 60 years, *Colorado Memories* receiving positive reviews in its six years on air. The show has, "...Won six Heartland Regional Emmy Awards and five Colorado Broadcaster Association awards since its inception" (Rocky Mountain PBS 2018). The low-budget, extensively researched programs coming out of RMPBS are significant to viewers because they tell stories featuring the people and places the know. The organic and well-planned narratives I sought to explore at RMPBS are what I like to call embodied stories. Embodied storytelling animates the sensory and social memories of the teller to share with others.

This research sought to explore how the embodied identities of Denver storytellers at *Colorado Memories* influence the narrative practices utilized to produce and release content. What pieces of their identities are the most salient on a day-to-day basis? What are the processes RMPBS storytellers employ to capture these stories shared with their public audience? Lastly, how can I as a visual anthropologist capture these lived experiences of storytelling and identity? This was assuming Denver storytellers possessed "salient identities" which they brought into *Colorado Memories*' public spaces, recognizing people's experiences of oppression and celebrating that diversity of

perspective in Denver. To answer these questions, I employed qualitative research focused on capturing the lived experiences of producers creating stories at RMPBS.

I situated my theoretical background in five schools of thought generated by social scientists and experienced performers (or both). Embodiment functioned as a description for the social experiences captured by the consciousness of a body. Visual anthropology sources prioritized the active use of visual storytelling when practicing ethnography as genuine method of cultural communication. The public sphere was the space in which collective discourse occurred in equitable standing about a shared topic, something I believe exists at RMPBS. Practice theory provided language for the action of performing one's identity in practiced narratives. Lastly, phenomenology informed both my theoretical and methodological approach as the study of lived experiences translated into human-to-human communication.

This phenomenological methodology came in a multi-part research design: filmed participant observations, filmed semi-structured interviews, and written secondary analysis of media made in Denver. The filmed participant observations took place at the studio, in the production office, during station tours, at shoots, and in the everyday work of *Colorado Memories* storytellers. The filmed semi-structured interviews asked a series of questions organized chronologically, progressing from past to present storytelling and then the future. Secondary analysis of two Denver-made media, a photo series collected from the Station's Archived Memories (SAM) and a high school student-made documentary ("North to Me" 2018), mimicked the visual methods I used when examining people and places throughout time in my own footage. Data collection took

place on camera, in a survey borrowed from a local Denver nonprofit (Creative Strategies for Change 2019), and in 12 semi-structured interview questions. Visual record collected verbatim the narratives and story arcs captured on camera. The survey called an identity wheel asked for the intersectional identities participants felt they identified with like age, race, gender, and others. From this survey, they chose their most salient identities out of the categories available (or one they made up themselves). Participants and I used these identities to inform the semi-structured interview which explored their lives through the lens of that intersectional identity.

Qualitative data analysis illuminated my findings including 350 video clips, a code book, proximity matrices of video code sequences, and transcripts of the filmed interviews. Structuring my findings like a video story arc, I paired phenomenological discussions of the storyteller's experiences with descriptions of the video observations captured in the process of making an episode. I first explored what storytellers chose as their salient identities and why, followed by a description of the production spaces which contribute to the pre-production efforts of an episode of *Colorado Memories*. I then went over the places and people educating storytellers about identity and storytelling when they were young, succeeded by a guide to the organization of shoots and interviews when researching a topic. Stories about braving their chosen storytelling fields were mirrored by a narration of the participant observations I gathered during the crew's shoot at the Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG). We then delved into participants' confidence in their narratives, accompanied by a description of the technology and skills used while editing an episode in post-production. Participants' favorite stories were compared to the stories

collected and maintained by SAM, the station's volunteer-led archival division. Lastly, expectations for future storytelling developments were contrasted with narratives about discourses shared between the creators and their audiences.

By the time I wrote this thesis, I also completed the visual ethnography made from the visual research I conducted. It was about 45 minutes, structured to be potentially shortened depending on the platform it would be shown. You can find the visual ethnography here: https://youtu.be/Eb_vhbbQ4hY.

Before visual content was released in certain contexts, I got the approval of participants. The reflexivity required for visual anthropology helped me maintain the relationships I had with RMPBS. Their excitement when seeing the final product is what made this worth completing. Visual storytelling is only as meaningful as the perceived value in the eyes of the viewer. This visual ethnography about public broadcast involved the complex narratives and positionalities of Denver's *Colorado Memories* crew. I find meaning in the everyday nature of a film like this because it tells Denver residents exactly what's happening at their local PBS station.

Chapter Two: Background Theory and History

I've no idea what '[being] a woman' feels like. I never did feel like a girl or a woman; rather, it was my unmistakable conviction that I was not a boy or a man.

-*Kate Bornstein, Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us (1994: 24)*

I define embodied storytelling as a lived experience animated into a shared narrative. At RMPBS, and specifically with the show *Colorado Memories*, I wanted to explore through my own filmed content how embodied stories are created, by whom, and for whom. Who are the storytellers unseen in episodes of *Colorado Memories*, but have the majority of creative agency in deciding what their audience sees? In order to escape this labyrinth, I structured my own understanding of storytelling in terms of performance. Looking at the applied folklore approach, Michael Owen Jones wrote in *Putting Folklore to Use*:

A "story," for example, is not a "text," as in literature. Rather, it is the entire performance, including linguistic as well as paralinguistic and nonverbal behavior, with "digressions," "asides," and feedback; and it is a product of an interaction between the narrator and the auditors who assume particular social roles and identities during the storytelling event (Jones 1994: 3).

Jones' approach as an applied folklore studies scholar bridged the gap between the theoretical and the public broadcast space where stories are performed. As a system to gather the most culturally specific knowledge, applied folklore allows the researcher to engage with storytellers about the ultimate structure of ethnographic narratives. Stories as performances possess the thoughts and practices of the teller. This enables agency on the

part of the teller to direct how the audience experiences a narrative. Narrative agency in the public sphere allows for more voices in the conversation. While applied folklore isn't my specific approach to this thesis, Jones created context for how narrative-focused researchers study everyday traditions as a celebration of experience (Jones 1994). The following subsections will cover the background research completed before field research commenced. This starts with an illustration of the theoretical lenses I used to orient this research. Those lenses focus on five theories: embodiment, visual anthropology, the public sphere, practice theory, and phenomenology. Embodiment relates the experiences of a body to the identity the body occupies culturally (Cassell 1998; Wainwright & Turner 2004; Watson 2016). Visual anthropology applies anthropology in visual studies and narratives (Guindi 2004; Pink 2007a; Pink 2007b; Pink 2015). The public sphere represents the spaces in which equitably recognized people gather, focused on the same subject (Arendt 1998; Habermas 2006; Habermas et al. 1974). Practice theory examines the repetitive everyday actions of an individual or community in terms of the practice's utility to the continuation of the culture (Bourdieu 1984; 1990; 2009). Phenomenology provides a route for narrative research following the embodied and lived experiences of an individual (Borren 2010; Butler 1988). Incorporating my literature review, I will set the context of my own positionality as a researcher filming embodied storytelling in public spaces. I will then go over the history of Rocky Mountain Public Media (RMPM)'s network of Colorado public broadcast stations, specifically KRMA, the headquarters currently known as RMPBS/Channel Six in downtown Denver. This provides the setting in which *Colorado Memories* produced content. Embodied

storytelling isn't uncommon, but the cultural palette of *Colorado Memories* during the summer 2018 storytelling season was unique because of the people temporarily gathered in their own public sphere. In fact, we will never see it exactly like this again.

2.1. Theoretical Background

Visual anthropology is not confined to the visible or the material. Cultural and social relations can be visually manifested, and invisible domains, including underlying rules and hidden premises, are part of [any] visual anthropology project.

Fadwa El Guindi, Visual Anthropology: Essential Method and Theory (2004: 17)

The ways writers, performers, and researchers frame embodied storytelling in the sources I consulted were complex to say the least, putting them through a variety of theoretical lenses. As a cultural anthropologist with a specialty in visual ethnographies, I use a physical video lens in addition to written media to understand people's storytelling. Our current communication technology climate further complicates the ways in which stories can be made, shared, and interpreted. Ramesh Srinivisan's book *Whose Global Village?* (2017) examined the ways in which communication between globally connected digital communities both helps and hinders virtual and physical representation of marginalized voices. Locally managed media can, "...Support grassroots community voices... While global audiences can learn from specific place-based stories, it is important to recognize that storytelling has long been a means of supporting local communities" (Srinivasan 2017: 47). Local media is a vessel for expression both for the people watching and the people making it. It is a practice in consciously identifying with

a place's ideas and sharing them with others. In order to better understand local media, I delved into the interdisciplinary writings about embodied identity and how we sense experiences through our bodies.

2.1.1. Embodiment

I learned the term embodiment in Dr. Joan Cassell's *Woman in the Surgeon's Body* (1998). Cassell defined embodiment as "...The way in which people experience and inhabit their bodies, and the way in which these bodies incorporate and express social information" (1998: 12). The medical communities Cassell observed during her ethnographic field research did not view American female surgeons as capable in a male-dominated profession. However, Cassell's examination of these women revealed complex identities through the stories they told about medicine, care, and long-term life choices affected by conflicting cultural identities. From Cassell's work as well as other sources on embodiment (Davis & Moreton 2013; Wainwright & Turner 2004), I developed the following definition of embodied identity: the inherited and earned cultural experiences we incorporate into how bodies live in their worlds.

Quoting pop culture scholar Stuart Hall, "Modern societies are therefore by definition societies of constant, rapid, and permanent change. This is the principal distinction between 'traditional' and 'modern' societies" (Hall 1996: 599). Although one could question the postmodern tendency to tear apart a previously whole understanding of self, Hall saw intersectional identity more frequently in academia as we diversified our

understanding of who we can be (e.g., black and queer man, white and cisgender woman, etc.). According to Thomas Csordas, individuals experience identity first and foremost through the internal communication of the body. Our experiences, our memories, and our culture are filtered through our bodily senses and reactions (Csordas 1999). My understanding of identity is intersectional in nature, emphasizing a plural approach to the self which can be both contradictory and complementary in relation to its own parts (Abdul Khabeer 2016; Blackwell 2005). The “traditional” static definitions of identity didn’t leave room for personal change through lived experience. Contemporary understandings of identity respect intersections of the places a body has been culturally (Hall 1996). Rather than the combination of experiences leading to an unchanging self, our sense of self in this body is frequently amended for current context. Embodied identity adapts to the world our bodies live in.

Using this concept of embodied identity, I began researching how identity appears in recorded visuals or performances. For example, self-declared gender outlaw Kate Bornstein and author of the quote of the beginning of this subsection wrote a book with the same title, *Gender Outlaw* (1996). As a gender “outlaw”, Bornstein didn’t connect with either the masculine or feminine binary identities of traditional gender from as early as she could remember. She ended up transitioning from a masculine to a feminine-presenting body, also opting to use feminine pronouns to simplify here social interactions. However, Bornstein continued to float in the vague space between genders. To embrace the gender void, she wrote and performed her experiences in multiple acting pieces. Bornstein took the brief time she had with the audience to dismantle the presence

of cisgender heteronormative understandings of gender for others (Bornstein 1996).

Applying a similar gauge to subsequent sources, visual anthropology provided theoretical tools to use when capturing embodied identity through images.

2.1.2. Visual Anthropology

Scholar and visual ethnographer Fadwa El Guindi's method and theory book specified,

The term "visual anthropology" was coined after World War II... and gradually became associated with conceptualizations and research activities integrated with the use of visual tools to make records about culture and to study social systems using the ethnographic method of description and comparison (Guindi 2004: 23).

Well-documented anthropologists Margaret Mead and Jean Rouch used film as a source for the ethnographic record if not actively practicing visual ethnography in the African, Papuan, and other cultures they spent their time studying (Guindi 2004: 61; Stoller 1992). While not calling themselves visual anthropologists, Margaret Mead's visual records of the cultures she studied are still deconstructed to this day.

Anthropologist Paul Stoller's biography about Jean Rouch said the communities in Africa Rouch frequented assumed Stoller would use cameras in their interactions like his predecessor (Stoller 1992). Visual anthropology expands beyond simply recording behavior.

Recall the quote at the beginning of this section where Guindi emphasized visual anthropology isn't only seen or physically felt; it is crafted through intentional elicitations of meaning through the visual (Guindi 2004: 17). People create culture through visual

cues and compositions as often as they breathe. The three types of visual anthropological data - ethnographic film, research film, and visual ethnography - have diverse applications in anthropology as well as in interdisciplinary storytelling (Guindi 2004: 89). For example, the content made in *Colorado Memories* could be considered ethnographic film because the narrative created by non-anthropologists captures culture being practiced. Research film is media recorded specifically with the intention of teaching an anthropological concept later in an educational setting, such as those collected by Mead later analyzed by her mentees (Guindi 2004). The footage captured for this research would be considered a visual ethnography because it was filmed as social science research. All three works capture people's sense of self in a particular space.

Architecture anthropologist Roxana Waters used a processual approach to discovering lived environments in both physical and cultural landscapes to better understand people's narratives about their present in relation to the past: "...Architectures, far from being merely inert physical structures that passively reflect cultural or symbolic concerns, actively help to constitute social life, cosmology, and the transitions of personal biographical experience" (Waters 2011: 90). Similarly, the architecture of a visual ethnographer's work isn't simply cinematic. It uncovers culture through a process of visual capture and narrative guidance determined by the path of its subject (Guindi 2004: 225). Lived environment is mapped out in a filmed sequence of cultural memories and locations. Following the production activity of a show focused primarily on place meant I would circle the same place-based narratives as my participants. Knowing the history of

the places they filmed was integral for me to understand the importance of their stories about Colorado.

Visual anthropology and ethnography recently emerged as one of many applied research fields, using the documented narrative of experiences and the subsequent media to collaborate with a community. Sarah Pink is one of the most prolific visual ethnographers in publication having written a series of books and edited anthologies about the power of the visual ethnographer. It is applied because, “[Visual anthropological projects] reveal how in fact practices of scripting can become collaborative knowledge-producing techniques in themselves” (Pink 2007: 15). Like embodied identity, the content of applied visual ethnography changes based on what the researcher can visually represent. Depending on the access participants grant to the researcher and the degree of collaboration with the community, the people who choose to be filmed construct what they show you and what they don’t relative to the identity they want to elicit on camera. However, this doesn’t necessarily prevent the researcher from presenting ethnographic material. When you develop rapport with participants, they can open up in spite of the camera in front of them. While the presence of the camera can’t be erased from the relationship, the trust between the visual ethnographer and the community creates whole illustrations of the voices crafting the visuals. They develop a relationship *around* the camera.

In one of the edited anthologies organized by Pink and her peers, section authors Victoriano Camas Baena et al. discussed the relationship the cinematographer has with characters on screen in nonfiction versus fiction narratives: “In a documentary, characters

are themselves before, during and after the film is made. In fictional films character have no real life beyond the studio” (Baena et al. 2004: 139). The lives of participants in visual research, rather than limiting what actually ends up on camera, can be an attractive addition to a nonfiction piece. Successful projects seek to represent, “...How people experience certain dimensions of their everyday worlds and to create platforms on which people can represent their experiences, views or culture” (Pink 2007: 17). Applied visual anthropology doesn’t end when the fieldwork is over (Baena et al. 2004). The deconstruction of a certain place on camera involves many variables depending on the context. That context is majorly provided by the people who share the space.

2.1.3. The Public Sphere

Hannah Arendt’s discussions of the public sphere first entered my theoretical bookshelf during a journalism class at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, UK. Her work as a theorist analyzing political and social power structures developed a following in the last couple decades of the 20th century, especially in regards to Nazi-era anti-Semitism. Arendt’s explanation of the public sphere as a setting for addressing social power structures helped my Strathclyde classmates and me position Scottish news media within the environment of UK journalism. As a result, I used Arendt as a primary source on the public sphere. Members of a public strategically alter the spaces they share with their community for the betterment of the group.

In her work “The Public Realm: The Common,” Arendt emphasized, “To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time” (Arendt 1998: 52). Communities require that table or a commonality to participate in and identify with collectively to function as a public. Publics are in shared spaces evoking collective action rather than individual and private (a distinction made by the presence of the table), common without being negated by difference, and defined through contextual space-based memory rather than a random aggregation of experiences (Arendt 1996: 58). From this framework, I define the public sphere as a common space, subject, or “table” to gather around. Public participation is totally exposed, and public sharing is encouraged because it lubricates further discourse. Publics can be physical spaces like plazas or imagined/abstract social spaces that still share a feeling of belonging (Low 2000; Srinivasan 2017).

Similarly, Jürgen Habermas et al. defined the public sphere as, “...A realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed” (Habermas et al. 1974: 49). When private individuals assemble as one public group – equal access to participation guaranteed for all – they form public opinions benefitting both the state and their interactions with it (Habermas 2006; Habermas et al. 1974). The public sphere hasn’t always existed, Western feudal lords and church authorities the only influential voices in collaborative political decisions before the Renaissance. Even with the advent of a *bourgeois* middle class, it took centuries of industrialization, state

formation/disintegration, and urbanization to extend authority over public narratives to those not in political or economic leadership (Habermas et al. 1974).

It was the presence of a public which allowed intersubjective, shared traditions to emerge after nationalist wars fragmented longstanding cultures in the 20th century. Identity itself, previously held as a static ego, splintered in post-modern public places home to increasingly shared belonging (Habermas 1988: 9). Habermas saw “media power” as the authority mass communications possess to change or enforce a political movement. Choices about information, format, presentation styles, and distribution in media manifest a medium’s power over narrative. While these media bodies can be “self-regulating,” their reputation among their audience changes based on what is considered “normal” media coverage (Habermas 2006: 419). Even public broadcast caters to an audience, a (partially) state-funded institution adapting its entertainment to the market of private media. Ultimately, no one idea or identity can occupy the entirety of a public sphere. By definition, people are plural.

In Marieke Borren’s dissertation titled *Amor Mundi: Hannah Arendt's Political Phenomenology of the World* (2010) for the University of Amsterdam, she spent over 300 pages deconstructing Arendt’s work in the public sphere and phenomenology (discussed in an upcoming background subsection). Getting into the importance of plural/diverse ideas in the public sphere, Borren found,

Plurality is not just a description of human reality, but it... also has normative meaning. At issue in the public sphere is first of all the protection and preservation of the diversity of people. Plurality is crucial in Arendt’s intersubjective anthropology, her account of human being-together-in-the-world (Borren 2010: 66).

Using this approach to public spheres, “being-together-in-the-world” can both embody the individual’s experience and represent the places where collective meeting is derived. Environments which change based on the people present in it - encouraging any voice to be present - allow memories to form both in the space and about the space in positive ways. In today’s network of global spheres, identifying with a table specific to one’s experience can both take one beyond the local and create a personally valid position in the world.

Returning to Hall’s explanation of popular culture,

“Globalization” refers to those processes, operating on a global scale, which cut across national boundaries, integrating and connecting communities and organizations in new space-time combinations, making the world in reality and in experience more interconnected (Hall 1996: 619).

Public spheres existing on a global scale both strengthen our connections and lessen the power of local knowledge. For example, a family can be proud of its spread-out residents over many generations. But the knowledge of a specific space connects family members to the “table” of family living when physically distant. Lived environments are formed as a way to combat our distanced networks, a way to remember origins when the original holder of the lived memory is long gone.

Going back to Waters’ discussion of lived environments, maintaining a place’s metaphorical location in interpersonal memories is a cultural impulse:

...The remembering of important origin houses, and the branch houses associated by descendants who spread out to establish themselves in new locations, creates a genealogy of the houses themselves, their life spans surpassing those of any of their individual inhabitants (Waters 2011: 75).

Visualizing narratives about a place better connects former and future occupants of the space to their common ground. In the fourth chapter of his book *Mapping Cultures: Place, Practice, Performance*, Les Roberts used what he called cinematic cartography to describe how film can trace the importance of a place (2012). Using a typology focused on 1) films depicting maps, 2) maps depicting film production, 3) film production as a site of tourism, 4) cognitive mapping of film settings, and 5) film as a way to critique space, the author saw cinematic cartography as a way to gain, "...Greater understandings of the relationship between space, place and moving image cultures" (Roberts 2012: 80). In an increasingly small world of known film locations, past and present, the value of visual content goes up when collected at the site of original filming.

Similar to Waters' location-based genealogy, Roberts' writing demonstrated how public broadcast as a media production entity in a place tethers its creators to a regional identity. A public, while not necessarily in a physical space, creates the same feeling of shared engagement as historically significant homes in a family's ancestry or a production space of a beloved film (Waters 2011; Roberts 2012). Seeing a place on film (e.g. Rocky Mountain PBS), viewers who walked those same halls will be able to elicit their memories of a certain place/moment in time. Following in the steps of the people making *Colorado Memories* allowed me to stand at the table with them as they created those spatially based memories. Recalling Jones' definition of storytelling (Jones 1994), creating memories of a place is a process. In order to capture the stories of Rocky Mountain PBS at this time, I needed a way in which to analyze processes. Bourdieu's

application of practice theory helped me understand storytelling and performance as a repetitive system of identity, memory, and expression.

2.1.4. Practice Theory

I studied when embodied identity becomes a regular cultural practice for the cultural participant, specifically in the public sphere. Like the public sphere, I had a primary theorist informing my understanding of practice theory. Pierre Bourdieu's definition of *habitus* pushes his own processual approach to practice theory: "... [It is] a product of history, produces individual and collective practices - more history - in accordance with the schemes generated by history" (Bourdieu 1990: 54). One expresses their *habitus* through the practice and ritualization of culturally influenced actions. One develops a *habitus* through a continuous process of performing identity necessary for subjective cultural survival. It could be any practice memorized and repeated by its practitioners, fulfilling a certain role through performance. How one learns to tell a story is a process practiced through the teller's learned *habitus*.

In *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu asserted that,

...Inevitably inscribed within the dispositions of the *habitus* is the whole structure of the system of conditions, as it presents itself in the experience of a life-condition occupying a particular position within that structure. The most fundamental oppositions in the structure (high/low, rich/poor etc.) tend to establish themselves as the fundamental structuring principles of practices and the perception of practices (Bourdieu 1984: 172).

For example, Bourdieu used the example of how north African Berber families structured the character of a home's spaces around physical and cultural opposites:

warm/cold, day/night, inside/outside, or masculine/feminine (2009: 411). When there are binary classes such as these, there's an inherent hierarchy among the practices because cultures value certain cultural classes over others. In other words, oppression is built into the *habitus* originating from marginalized gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and every other intersectional embodied identity. Without acknowledging tension between inequitable cultural positions, dialogue would cease to be practiced. The flow of cultural performances goes better when the script is known and changed by all.

Access to power in a system of certain practices comes from a relationship with what is possible and impossible for the people practicing culture from the same place:

The relation to what is possible is a relation to power; and the sense of the probable future is constituted in the prolonged relationship with a world structures according to the categories of the possible (for us) and the impossible (for us), of what is appropriated in advance by and for others and what one can reasonably expect for oneself (Bourdieu 1990: 64).

Knowledge is a power practiced between people who haven't necessarily developed rapport, but utilize it to expand what is possible and who knows it further. The structural dispositions inherent in the *habitus* can be better understood and evaluated through the lens of storytelling which translates "...a stylized repetition of acts" into the vocalized public representation of one's lived experience (Butler 1988). When shared with others in a public space, stories get constantly repeated and altered by socialization much like the identities they originate from. In other words, stories are an accessible medium of embodied identity because identities develop through cultural exposure and experience.

2.1.5. Phenomenology

I understand phenomenology as the emic documentation of experiences based on the phenomena a person experiences in their life (e.g., senses, patterns, memory). It addresses the embodied and lived experience-based recall at the narrative level. It is emic because the interpretation of such narratives takes place within the language developed by the storyteller. Phenomenology is the methodology I used for my research (discussed in detail in the next chapter) because it allowed for me to capture people remembering specific sensory remnants of a time and place. I use this background section to discuss the theory behind my phenomenological approach. Previous phenomenological sources promoted the authenticity of the voices of their participants because their bodies recorded contextual lived experiences.

Judith Butler's article "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" used feminist theory and phenomenology to illustrate how gender performance is something created and perpetuated by the context of women's' bodies:

To be female is, according to that distinction, a facticity which has no meaning, but to be a woman is to have become a woman, to compel the body to conform to an historical idea of "woman," to induce the body to become a cultural sign, to materialize oneself in obedience to an historically delimited possibility, and to do this as a sustained and repeated corporeal project (Butler 1988: 522).

Phenomenology uses embodiment and applies it as research methodology. The use of phenomenological constructions in other contexts (e.g., feminist theory, visual anthropology) expands the narrative of a particular identity enacted in certain contexts (Butler 1988: 525). It pairs nicely with practice theory because it can chronicle the progress of a culturally constructed and maintained identity (Butler 1988: 530; Bourdieu

1984, 1990). It also focuses on the cultural and political nature of a story, much like public sphere and visual anthropological theories.

Returning to Borren's dissertation *Amur Mundi*, she speculated how stories disclose both political and individual motives as a result of the outcome of actions:

Stories have the potential to be faithful to the phenomenological nature of the political, i.e. its character of appearance and disclosure. More exactly, stories are "the outcome of action" [citing Arendt's *Human Condition* pg. 164]. Histories relate of acting people and their words and deeds, in the process doing justice to the outside, the surface of the political, instead of hidden motives, for example; and second, to individual experience (Borren 2010: 69).

The political, or the public sphere contains heterogeneous individual experiences which exist in the public concurrently with the individual's presence. Arendt's use of phenomenology was hermeneutic, interpreting the cycle of understanding and engagement when embodying an experience (Borren 2010: 92). Exploring storytelling requires a subjective approach when deconstructing the storyteller's contextual methods and reasons for expression. Borren made it clear phenomenological observations address who people are (lived experiences) rather than what (static identity) (Borren 2010: 67). Furthermore, public phenomenological narratives require plurality - diverse, overlapping, and informed by point of view - or else isolated and homogenous narratives prevail (Borren 2010: 87).

The "outcome of actions" in the public sphere imprint meaning into the stories which manage to survive in storyteller's memories. Using visual ethnography as a tool for both record and interpretation allowed me to reach back into the filmed narratives in interviews and during tours. Focusing on individual narratives and the locality of Denver

allowed for the known history of RMPBS to both contextualize my observations and visualize a “table” where the diverse perspectives of *Colorado Memories* storytellers sit.

2.1.6. Literature Review

Each time I perform this poem, I feel a mix of relief and apprehension. Relief that almost 40 minutes of solo performance is nearly complete and apprehension in anticipation of the audience’s response—did they get it? I use performance ethnography as form of ethnographic representation designed to disrupt hegemonic narratives about US Muslims as being pathological and perpetually foreign.

- *Su’ad Abdul Khabeer, “Performing the Muslim: Method and Risk for the Public” (2016: 865)*

While diverse in location, genre, medium, topic, and application, there were four commonalities between the literary sources informing my research. First, many authors discussing identity explored how performances provide space for contextual expression. Second, the sources using phenomenology established a clear trend of lived experiences leading to greater understanding of a culture’s past, present, and future narratives. Third, authors discussing the practice and performance of identity acknowledged a system of hierarchy and oppression which placed their subjects in subjective power dynamics with others. Lastly, sources about the public sphere emphasized the cultural character of a platform shaping the outcoming stories. With these previous case studies in mind, I set the scene for the context of my research at RMPBS.

Performances seemed like an appropriate setting to gauge similarly embodied identities. Quoted at the beginning of this subsection, Su’ad Abdul Khabeer created a

complex picture of black Muslim Americans in her performance ethnography titled *Sampled: Beats of Muslim Life* (2016). According to Abdul Khabeer and her sources, performance ethnography creates ethnographic theater which, “...Multiplies the ways in which anthropologists can engage performance—not only as a subject of inquiry but as a method, a means to generate theory, and a medium of representation” (Abdul Khabeer 2016: 866). Abdul Khabeer interviewed black American Muslims, creating written poetry, monologues, and performances with their communities. Narratives about music, religion, fashion, and many other Muslim-specific experiences appear in written and visual form. For example, a participant named Fatima was seen in a photo break-dancing in a hijab onstage (Abdul Khabeer 2016: 871). Abdul Khabeer’s knowledge of her participants’ narratives related to their race and religion allowed for performed narratives to briefly envelop people in what it’s like being black and Muslim in America.

Previously mentioned gender outlaw Kate Bornstein questioned severe definitions of gender in her combined memoir and performative script (1994). Bornstein brought readers on stage with her. She layered her own performance scripts - monologues about experiencing gender dysphoria, imagined conversations with loved ones, and strangers questioning her gender-queerness - with her own written autobiographical memoirs. The quote at the beginning of this section was written in an autobiographical section of Bornstein’s book (1994: 24). This internal narrative provided context for her stage performance. If her performance lacked her rejection of the binary, it wouldn’t be Kate Bornstein on stage shouting at a room of mainly cisgender individuals that gender is

simply an outfit to try on (Bornstein 1994). And the stage was one of the main places Bornstein felt comfortable performing her embodied gender-queerness.

Stephen Wainwright and Bryan Turner discussed the beauty of ballet which was embodied and destroyed through bodily injury (2004). By analyzing their performances and dance-related health narratives ethnographically, they measured cultural variables based on the embodied lived experiences of injured ballerinas. Wainwright and Turner's interviews and observations with ballet professionals covered the impact of individual injuries and, "...The ways in which dance injuries are presented by, and negotiated between individuals and the institution of the ballet company" (Wainwright & Turner 204: 51). While a ballerina's preferred cultural identity took place on stage for the Royal Ballet in London, injury barred them from performances and forced them to focus on healing with all of the energy they usually put towards dance. Great shame came from injuries, but ballerinas and their teachers saw it as an inevitable event in the dance business. Performance, while transformative for some, can simply state what is already there for many but not always verbalized. Using embodied, practiced identity as a gauge for the narratives of storytellers allowed me to measure the significance of everyday narratives. Phenomenology contextualized the significance of those narratives.

The sources concerning lived experiences examined the embodied and practiced experiences present in past and current narratives (Borren 2010; Butler 1988; Csordas 1999; David and Moreton 2013). Judith Butler's article combined of feminist theory and phenomenology, drawing influence from one of the original phenomenological theorists, Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Applying Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the body as a

political idea (similar to Arendt), Butler asserted a woman's body, "...Gains its meaning through a concrete and historically mediated expression in the world" (Butler 1988: 522). Not just gender, but other intersectional experiences a body gathers are preserved in memories. Embodiment as a record keeper for lived experiences not only informs how the individual presents themselves to others but of the historical and cultural record which informs how people treat them and how they're expected to act (Butler 1988). Rather than separating the body and the mind, phenomenology analyzes experiences of the body and mind as one in the same phenomenon (Csordas 1999).

Therese Davis and Romaine Moreton's review of the documentary *Whispering in Our Hearts* deconstructed the Aboriginal community-made documentary about the 1916 Mowla Bluff Massacre in Western Australia (1999). Creating phenomenological records of spoken memory in the film, the indigenous Aboriginal Australians told the spirit of a violent event in its present context rather than a static and unchanging record. *Whispering in Our Hearts* was directed by Aboriginal woman Mitch Torres who was intent on sharing the voices of her people as near to their verbatim narrative (Davis & Moreton 1999). That is one of the best advantages in phenomenology when you have a camera. While filmmakers can never eliminate bias, they have the opportunity to show others the narratives they collected. And when conducted by filmmakers like Torres, phenomenological practices applied to film place value on the information collected from the experienced voice rather than outside researchers. Granted, the article was written by outsiders, but placed Aboriginal narrative above all others in this context. To emphasize

the importance of phenomenological narratives, I wanted to enter my research with the understanding that certain narratives are valued above others.

The performance of identity, whether inherited or gained in life, places people in categories designated by the cultural space they occupy. For example, Julie Watson delved into the misogynistic culture of homeless women in her article “Gender-Based Violence and Young Homeless Women: Femininity, Embodiment and Vicarious Physical Capital” (2016). Studying women in Melbourne, Australia, Watson applied Bourdieu’s social capital theory using her own concept “vicarious physical capital” (Watson 2016: 266). The homeless women she interviewed had to rely on often abusive men to prevent further bodily harm as women exposed in public and poor spaces. Rather than going hungry and getting assaulted in public places, Melbourne homeless women sometimes chose to stay with abusers because of their vicarious access to resources and safety (Watson 2016). This understanding expanded when accompanied by practice theory. As Bourdieu pointed out, inherent hierarchies exist between different *habitus* depending on the cultural context (Bourdieu 1984). Deconstructing practices of hierarchy to explain oppression and conflict based on identity helped me better engage with storytellers.

Eve Ensler addressed the collective identity of women in New York City through her play *The Vagina Monologues* (2006). Mixed with retroactively written forwards and in-betweens about 21st century gender inequality, Ensler took readers into the scripts of performative memoirs written about women with vaginas in the late 20th century. The written performances weren’t the verbatim narratives of Ensler’s collected interviews of hundreds of New York City residents with vaginas. She compiled the narratives with

common threads and wrote them into monologues any woman performing *The Vagina Monologues* could embody and illustrate onstage. For example, the monologues covered what women called their vaginas, what their vaginas would metaphorically wear, how they treated pubic hair, and how they interacted with and felt about their vaginas. A handful of these monologues were performed at my undergraduate university Clarkson University in 2013; this was in conjunction with the nonprofit organization which formed as a result of *The Vagina Monologues*, One Billion Rising ("One Billion Rising Revolution" 2019). Using proceeds from the play and later organizational fundraising, One Billion Rising has been fighting global gender violence since 2012. They use the statistic that one in three women or about one billion people on our planet will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime currently. Using written and spoken word, Ensler attempted to address gender violence, later including more transgender narratives and narratives of color to be more intersectional. The loud and boisterous nature of the play has always been to draw more attention to the voices of women. The lived experiences of both Watson and Ensler's interviewees were acknowledged as unequal to privileged genders and classes while not implying that they were lesser. By utilizing performative action to get women talking, they created a public to enter.

Lastly, my sources involving the public sphere saw public spheres as both harbingers and erasers of identity depending on how they designed the space. Arendt specified publics aren't always physical spaces people gather in, but still constitute a metaphorical space or an imagined public. Today, we could apply imagined publics to online communities (1998). Another application of an imagined public was Sophie

Watson's chapter in a book titled "The Public City" (2008). Her chapter examined the use of public space in London as a Jewish community attempted to create an *eruv* - a sheltered outdoor walkway in city streets - allowing the Jewish community to travel outside on the Sabbath which is usually forbidden. According to Watson,

...The public is redefined as domestic by virtue of a new physical boundary. By building a perimeter or demarcating space, for the purpose of the Sabbath, that area becomes a private domain or as one community and permits those people who need to carry, to reach a synagogue on the Sabbath, and to meet with friends in neighborhood zones and to share a festive meal together to do so (Watson 2008: 58).

While they faced backlash from the non-Jewish community about inclusive public space, their public discourse about *eruv*s was an attempt to bring Jewish identity out into the public. A private pathway for Jews may have seemed exclusionary to some, but it provided more mobility for previously confined Sabbath followers (Watson 2008). The discourse questioned what truly constitutes public/private, included/excluded. Space is ultimately defined by the people who use it.

Setha Low exquisitely narrated the activity of Costa Rican publics utilizing city park spaces in her book *In the Plaza: the Politics of Public Space and Culture* (2000). She asserted, "Plazas are spatial representations of Latin American society and social hierarchy. Citizens battle over these representations because they are so critical to the definition and survival of civil society" (Low 2000: 33). She spent years sitting in a selection of Costa Rican parks, writing down what she saw and the narratives of people she interacted with. One of the most prominent findings she expressed was that a greater variety of voices involved in shaping a public space made spaces comfortable for more people. Multivocal public spaces are necessary to design and navigate spaces meant for

everyone. A diversity of voices in public spaces incorporates different points of view to exhibit more authentic methods of witnessing and vocalizing (Low 2000).

Practicing identity through performative storytelling enriches public discourse and increases exposure to diverse identities. Whether onstage (Bornstein 1994; Ensler 2006; Abdul Khabeer 2016), through photographs (Low 2000; Abdul Khabeer 2016; Srinivasan 2017), through performance (Wainwright and Turner 2004; Abdul Khabeer 2016), or through anthropological analysis (Watson 1990; Low 2000; Wainwright and Turner 2004), the social scientists, writers, and performers whose work I consulted expressed embodied identity through their discourse. Some discussed narrative as a lived, phenomenological experience. While these embodied identities inherently created conflict through oppression, the communities that my sources represented took advantage of the agency they had to further their community's cultural expression and security. It is through strong narratives about identity that storytelling can be accurately interpreted.

Levels of oppression, resources, and cultural content translate into embodied media differently depending on the storyteller. While a single participant's creations are an expression of that individual storyteller, the methods of a collectively constructed story will have diverse reasoning based on the lived experiences of those storytellers. Even with the amount of background research I entered my fieldwork with, the actual TV station has changed rapidly in recent years with a 63-year history. I crafted a short history of the station before finally delving into methodology.

2.2. Denver, Rocky Mountain PBS, and Colorado Memories

Denver began as a temporary mining town in 1859. It was previously the Native American homeland of the Ute, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Navajo before it was colonized as a part of the Spanish colonial territories in North and Central America. After the United States colonized more of the western United States, it was declared part of the Kansas Territory (Leonard & Thomas 1990). Settled between Cherry Creek and the Platte River on the Plains, it was one of the last places to stop for westward pioneers before the treacherous Rocky Mountains. Georgian prospectors familiar with the California Gold Rush in the late 1840's found gold in Ralston Creek in present-day Arvada, Colorado. Word slowly spread east, thousands more prospectors building a settlement and bringing businesses with them (Leonard & Thomas 1990). The Colorado Territory was named after the Colorado River in 1861. It was in 1864 when Colorado territory governor John Evans (and the founder of the University of Denver) ordered Colorado's Third Cavalry to indiscriminately kill hundreds of Cheyenne Native American elders, women, and children at the Sand Creek Massacre 160 miles southeast of Denver (Leonard & Thomas 1990: 13-14). It was under these controversial conditions on which Denver was declared the Colorado state capitol in 1876. The state became the 38th ratified state in the United States, about a decade after the end of the Civil War.

While Denver has a history of diverse neighborhoods and cultural movements associated with class, ability, and ethnic diversity brought by industrial labor markets (Leonard & Thomas 1990: 180), there were strict class, race, nationality, and gender-driven divisions we still see today. Denver was the first major city in the world to ban

voting discrimination based on gender in 1893 (Leonard & Thomas 1990: 1). The nearly half a billion dollars of gold mined in Colorado between 1900 and 1920 was only a portion of the commerce brought by mining (e.g., banking, liquor, prostitution). Dozens of inventors and business owners developed buildings and commercial operations across town (Leonard & Thomas 1990: 116-119). However, these riches and rights were limited to affluent Denver residents. The growing European and Asian immigrant, Latino, female, and youth populations growing in a former mining town weren't provided the same opportunities as the white men around them.

When Denver residents and companies began developing neighborhoods around the turn of the 20th century, redlining practices unregulated in real estate classified lower income (and often communities of color) as unstable investments for home loans to force them into cheaper housing (“New in WH&G: 1938 ‘Redlining’ Map of Denver” 2017). On a Denver map produced by the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation in 1938, one can see four colors laid over Denver neighborhoods. There were four classifications of neighborhoods - first through fourth grade - based on the “stability” of their inhabitants. This segregated residents into certain regions based on perceived social or economic deficiencies (Home Owners’ Loan Corporation 1938). This map also showed me where the original RMPBS station was in relation to perceived “stable” populations. The commercial district just west of the State Capitol held the first RMPBS station, sandwiched between the third-grade Capitol Hill and fourth-grade West Denver neighborhoods (Home Owners’ Loan Corporation 1938). From the beginning, RMPBS was made in the heart of a racially and income-diverse region of Denver.

The National Educational Television Center (NET) was the first national exchange center for public media created in 1952, meant for grassroots stations to begin sharing their content nationally in a relatively new medium, free of charge to viewers (“Master RMPM Timeline” 2018: 2). There were 242 channels set aside for educational television nationally (Hilmes 2011: 183). Meetings took place between the Denver Public School system, the Denver Public Library, the Denver Adult Education Council, the University of Denver, and the Rocky Mountain Radio Council of Denver to create a grassroots educational television channel in Denver in the 1950’s (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006: S4; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018 1-2). The leaders of this effort filed for the channel six frequency officially with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Then, they set up broadcast equipment in a well-lit auto body parking lot on the Emily Griffith Opportunity School campus. The all-male Board of Education in Denver elected Henry H. Mamet as the first station manager of what was called the Council for Educational Television, Channel 6 Inc, incorporated with the Council for Public Television. According to the minutes of a council meeting, Mamet explained,

The station would come on the air from 4:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., with programs for children. It would be on the air again from 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with programs for adults. During the hour and 45-minute interval, the station would present dinner music on the audio portion and run promotional slides and announcements on the video portion (“Master RMPM Timeline” 2018: 8).

KRMA-TV or Channel Six first went on the air January 30, 1956 as, “...the instructional TV station licensed to Denver Public Schools. It broadcast for only two hours that first day from a temporary studio in the Emily Griffith Opportunity School in

downtown Denver” (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006: S4). While Mamet resigned soon after, replaced by Jim Case, the station developed a positive reputation by the 1960’s. KRMA stood for Knowledge in the Rocky Mountain Area, named by DPS superintendent Dr. Kenneth Oberholzer. It was the first public broadcast station in Colorado, the fifth TV station in Denver (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). Tom Morrissey, the station’s first consulting engineer, designed the first permanent studio spaces on the intersection of Glenarm and 13th Street in Denver where the staff moved into about a year after they began broadcasting. The station received a gifted Ampex Video Tape Recorder in 1959 which allowed them to record live shows made right in their station (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006: S7). By 1960, they had an annual budget of \$194,000 and nearly \$500,000 in capital expenditures for equipment, land, and more (“Master RMPM Timeline” 2018: 19).

The 1960’s were a pivotal time for KRMA, including school-credited programming, the start of televised pledge drives and auctions, and the eventual colorizing of their programs by 1969 (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). However, it was the national public broadcast scene which changed dramatically in the 1960’s. The Public Broadcasting Act was signed into law by former United States President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1967, creating the nonprofit Corporation for Public Broadcast (CPB) in 1968. The CPB controlled 150 local public broadcast stations across the country, giving each \$150,000 in collaboration with the Ford Foundation (“History Timeline” 2015). Common among public service federal

budgets, the funding for national public broadcast has (nor has it ever been) guaranteed. While the Carnegie Commission of Educational Television recommended taxes on TV sets to provide insulated funding for national public broadcast, Congress omitted this from their budget regulations on the CPB and forced them to go through biannual budget approvals (Hilmes 2011: 263).

The budget was already on the chopping block by 1968 when Fred Rogers' show *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* began broadcasting on KRMA ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018). In an impassioned speech to the Senate Subcommittee on Communications in 1969, Mr. Rogers attempted to defend the \$20,000,000 annual CPB budget from being cut in half for the next year. Mr. Rogers' show was running out of Pittsburgh on about \$6,000 annually when he gave this speech. When Senator John Pastore (D-RI) began questioning Mr. Rogers' justification for educational television, Mr. Rogers emphasized, "I feel that if we in public television can only make it clear that feelings are mentionable and manageable, we will have done a great service for mental health" (Deibler 2015). After less than seven minutes of testimony, Pastore granted the full budget, creating a federal precedence for funding public broadcast. While former President Nixon and many other public officials would attempt to lessen the budget, they continue to maintain funding for affiliated stations (Hilmes 2011: 264). The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) became the national public broadcasting headquarters in Washington, D.C., absorbing the National Public Radio (NPR) the following year ("History Timeline" 2015). For the purpose of this paper, when referring to PBS, I am only talking about television because NPR and PBS are separately run organizations in Denver.

Without being an “official” PBS station until the 1980’s, KRMA produced thousands of individual and multi-part local programs from the 1960’s onwards alongside content lent from other stations (e.g. WGBH in Boston). For example, after *Sesame Street* became popular, KRMA developed the first “Mrs. Bird” who was advertised as Big Bird’s mother as early as 1969 (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). Some well-known KRMA programs included *The Naturalists* (1973) created by Jim Case about American naturalists and *The State of Colorado* (1979) series produced by Don Kinney (“History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006: S7). *Super School News*, previously known as *Super Six News*, is the station’s longest running program having begun in 1980 and still producing student-created programming currently. *Spirit of Colorado* (1994), also still on air, started as a location-based landscape and culture show. The station would grow its daily air time progressively, eventually reaching a 24-hour cycle.

It was in the 1970’s when station employee and auction volunteer Trudy Fowler created a formal volunteer corps. The previously unorganized volunteer groups would help with auctions for the most part. After the governing board approved, Fowler was able to organize more than 2,500 volunteers with about 1,000 active at any time. They were involved in auctions, the televised fundraising drives, organizing *Super School News* activities, leading tours of the station, acting as administrators at the entrance of the station, and the creation and maintenance of the Station’s Archived Memories (discussed in Methodology and Findings in more detail) (“A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS” 2006: S9).

Colorado's public broadcast stations expanded, sister station KTSC/Channel 8 in Colorado Springs opening in 1971 and absorbed by KRMA about thirty years later. Because of dwindling funding from DPS, KRMA became a CPB-affiliated station in 1987 after officially severing ties with DPS. Retired station manager Don Johnson who had his position for nearly 30 years nominated James N. Morgese as his successor. Morgese was station manager when KRMA moved to their new station location, the former headquarters for NBC's Channel 9 in Denver on the corner of 11th and Bannock Street. Morgese also officially renamed KRMA as Rocky Mountain PBS in 1996 and the Council for Public Television as Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting, Inc. ("A History of KRMA and Rocky Mountain PBS" 2006; "Master RMPM Timeline" 2018).

1996 was the same year KRMJ/Channel 18 opened in Grand Junction, Colorado on the front range. A 1998 FCC mandate required any future broadcast towers built by public broadcast stations to be entirely digital, meaning analog broadcast systems could not support stations in the future. As a result, they built the broadcast station in Durango entirely digital in 1999 ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018: 90). KUVU Jazz station 89.3, a Latin jazz radio station, merged with what was then renamed Rocky Mountain Public Media in 2012 ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018: 121). The most recent expansion for RMPBS was the acquisition of a station in Steamboat Springs KRMZ and another radio station extending into the mountains (Rocky Mountain PBS 2018).

Today, Rocky Mountain Public Media possesses five TV stations, the two radio stations, and the Tim Gill Center for Public Media in Colorado Springs meant for the public to create media ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018: 120). RMPBS, formerly

KRMA, was moving locations again to 21st and Arapahoe Street in downtown Denver when I was doing my research. It is farther north than the last two locations, still in the commercial district next to Capitol Hill but closer to Five Points and North Denver (Home Owners' Loan Corporation 1938). Called the Buell Public Media Center in Arapahoe Square, they broke ground on the new location in November 2018 (Rubino 2018). The general manager/vice president of journalism is now Laura Frank, the more recently established position of CEO filled by Amanda Mountain since 2016. Out of the 12 RMPM managers in Colorado, seven of them are women ("Management" 2019).

One of those managers is Zoe, the creator of *Colorado Memories*. *Colorado Memories* started in 2013 as a show funded by the History Colorado Center to "illuminate and celebrate Colorado's rich history" ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018: 121). Their sixth season finished its scheduled episodes while I was writing my research in spring 2019. In those six seasons, their episodes included Colorado dinosaurs, the Dust Bowl in Colorado, the downtown Denver Brown Palace Hotel, Denver Mountain Parks, Denver LGBT rights, Denver disability rights, the KKK in Colorado, the Sand Creek Massacre, and many more. I personally had the opportunity to observe the episodes "Auraria" and "Denver Botanic Gardens" being made. Auraria is an historically diverse residential neighborhood east of RMPBS which was demolished and rebuilt as a multi-school college campus. The Denver Botanic Gardens in in south Denver, a reserve of plant life in arid Colorado built in the middle of the 20th century. Both episodes are about historical places changed over time, embodying the stories of Denver residents connected

to a locality. I filmed the people creating the narratives in these places later seen on the screens of *Colorado Memories* viewers.

For some brief moments, I was allowed to see the narratives of these places coming together from the perspectives of both RMPBS and the people impassioned with Denver culture and history. My methodology would have to embrace the lives of *Colorado Memories* storytellers, absorbing their lived experiences translated into stories. I required methods which would employ visual methods for my research design and data collection. Ultimately, the narratives of the people behind the camera would inform the picture of the physical and metaphorical localities in which they existed. While not all of my participants were long-term Denver residents, they experienced the beauty of their Denver-related subject matter for one short summer along with the camera-toting visual anthropologist trailing behind them.

Chapter Three: Methodology

I mean, the whole question of gender identity, gender assignment, I think I grew up in a time when there was male and female. My daughter who's now 15 – the gender issue is part of the culture today. I mean, there were no “trans” – I mean, of course there were transgendered individuals. It just wasn't – people weren't out [of the closet].

- Zoe, *Senior Producer, September 20, 2018*

I went into my research aware of the complications involved with being a visual researcher. Although visuals can be understood across cultures, the context of human practice gets lost without some interpretation of intention and action by the parties involved. In this case, I sought context on film in the minds and memories of my participants. For example, another quote from Zoe's filmed interview (2018) above addressed her gender identity as a prominent part of her life, static compared to her daughter raised in the 21st century. I structured my methodology phenomenologically in order to capture more narratives like this. Stories embody sensory memory, cultural knowledge, and lived experiences (see previous phenomenology subsection for review of theory). A camera can respectfully capture these stories, but it requires guidance.

I developed research goals, assumptions, and a thesis statement with the intention of gathering the complex narratives of *Colorado Memories* producers involving storytelling and self. Since I gauged where embodied storytelling as practiced identity appeared in the public sphere, I developed the following research questions:

- What are the most salient identities of Denver storytellers and why?
How do storytellers imagine and develop stories for the public audiences of *Colorado Memories*?
- How can visual anthropology, specifically visual ethnographies, effectively demonstrate and record embodied storytelling?

My goal was to answer these three questions via lived experiences and the subsequent narratives I captured on film with RMPBS storytellers. Furthering the phenomenological research environment, I made certain research assumptions based on these questions and my background research:

- The practice of storytelling maintains embodied identity in every story and storyteller.
- Public media at RMPBS is both a physical and imagined public where the members are focused on storytelling.
- Understanding systems of oppression betters this public's dialogues about diverse identity narratives.

Combining these elements together, this thesis statement ultimately motivated my research: embodied storytelling through public broadcast in Denver demonstrates how the identities of Denver storytellers influence the content of stories they share in the public sphere. The research project was structured in a way to absorb locally colored emic narratives of producers on the show *Colorado Memories* through recorded video. I designed the methods to collect large quantities of qualitatively valuable footage.

Although I planned some structure for the content I was seeking, the spirit of the footage I collected was visually colored by the activities and dialogue of storytellers.

The filmed research design included participant observations at shoots and during work hours, semi-structured interviews, and secondary analysis. Participant observations were meant to capture the physical and creative practices implored when developing, shooting, and editing *Colorado Memories* content. The semi-structured interviews provided a loosely guided series of prompts to capture filmed narratives with participants. Secondary analysis of media made in Denver translated into person-focused analysis of my own footage as primary phenomenological sources. The media comprised of a high school student-based video project called This is My Denver/TIMD (“North to Me” 2018) and archived photographs of past storytellers generously lent to me by the Station’s Archived Memories (SAM). My tools for data collection were 12 semi-structured interview questions combined with a survey called an identity wheel created by Denver nonprofit Creative Strategies for Change (2019). Together, this methodology guided me through four narrative-heavy months of research.

3.1. Methods

While securing my research site, Zoe and I discussed my timeline and expectations of her team. She wanted to check in with her colleagues to make sure they would be comfortable with a camera following them around. While researchers use public broadcast stations frequently, it’s uncommon for TV producers to *be* filmed. In addition, I it would have been inappropriate if my presence would interfere with their

filming. Since their subject matter was mainly nonfiction and non-confidential, Zoe saw no reason why there couldn't be another camera on-scene. She would just have to verify with their own filming sites if it was okay for me to be recording during their shoots.

Because this was behavioral research, I narrowed my conditions for inclusion and exclusion. Conditions of including participants in the research came down to the shows they worked producing. Senior producers of the two other programs produced in the same office space - the news hour and the visual arts showcase - chose not to participate because of scheduling conflicts and the confidentiality of their own subjects. As a result, my population was narrowed to the contributors of *Colorado Memories*. I also included outside consultants, archivists, and executives as members of this specific public because of their direct and indirect stakes in the show. They were focused on the same goal in their public of telling and preserving the stories made under the banner of *Colorado Memories*. Potential participants had titles such as producer, editor, director, intern, researcher, volunteer archivist, or managers/executives of operations related to the show. Zoe agreed to let me conduct my research over the course of summer 2018, concluding the research at the end of September. I filmed storytellers who agreed to participate between June 1 and September 30 2018, the official research window for any video I collected.

Colorado Memories set a schedule for a handful of episodes that began before I started filming and concluded months after my research ended. Storytellers scheduled a large portion of the episode scenery shoots as well as interviews during the summer, making it a fruitful time to follow storytellers in their element. An episode had a lifespan

of months to nearly a year, concluding officially when it was broadcast. Every episode had someone working as a producer, a director, and an editor to guarantee supervision throughout the lifespan of story creation. This would often be the same person, making some episodes/topics the domain of that particular storyteller. I would ask certain episode leads what events they had scheduled in the near future to plan my own shoot. Based on the information and dates the staff gave me, I would ask to come along to certain content shoots with my own camera as they did their work.

I had everyone who consented to participate sign a video release form to be on camera and an informed consent form to be featured in this paper. While I couldn't guarantee anonymity on camera, pseudonyms kept personal data confidential, and participants could opt out of either video or written consent depending on their preferences. They could also specify on their consent forms if there was information they didn't want included, even after research concluded in order to maintain confidence between participants and myself. Anyone who ended up on camera but didn't sign a release form was blurred out in the final cut using video editing software and not discussed in the findings.

I assigned participants pseudonyms. Then, I compiled their titles and years active in *Colorado Memories* or RMPBS seen in Table 1. There were 10 participants who agreed to be observed, interviewed, or both (N=10). I also specified if they were interviewed, a total of six interviews with the same questions and one for the archives. There were three interns, one volunteer, one researcher, three producers at various levels of management, a contract videographer, and a CEO.

Table 1: List of participants who agreed to be filmed for participant observations/station information (N=10).

| Pseudonym | Position at RMPBS | Years at RMPBS | Interviewed (Y/N) |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Ramona | Intern | 2018 (summer) | Y |
| Taylor | Intern | 2018 (summer) | N |
| Rebecca | Intern | 2018 (summer) | N |
| Eleanor | Volunteer (SAM) | 1986-present | Y |
| Betty | Historical Researcher | 2018-present | N |
| Danielle | Associate Producer | 2018-present | Y |
| Oliver | Producer | 2018-present | Y |
| Chelsea | Contract Videographer | 2004-2016; 2016-present (contract) | Y |
| Zoe | Senior Producer | 2011-present | Y |
| Amanda Mountain* | President and CEO | 2010-present | Y |

*Amanda Mountain chose to represent the station with her real name because she is the only woman to have ever held her position in the station's history

The research design originated from a handful of sources at RMPBS. I made all events I was present at a filmed event. This was an extension of my eyes and a record of events functioning as part of my notes (in addition to written notes). The video clips functioned as my main source of data since the narratives I sought were recorded in those seconds. I brought a single camera to record filmed participant observations and

interviews. And this way, the majority of my interactions with storytellers would have a camera involved in our relationship automatically. The three components of the research design were consequently visual.

First, filmed participant observations took place to visually document the practiced actions of storytelling for *Colorado Memories*. From start to finish, this encompassed observations of pre-production scheduling in the office, photo and fact research, script and storyboard production, interviews with experts or executives involved with an organization or topic, shooting B-roll (secondary footage without audio) of visuals mentioned in the interview narratives, “dumping” the video footage from a camera’s storage onto the external hard drives connected to office computers, processing footage with the Adobe video editing software, any post-production quality checks, and subsequent broadcast activity before the archiving process in SAM. During participant observations, I would take notes when the camera was sitting on its tripod and film when being given a tour of storytelling spaces. Depending on what the participants were working on, I would ask questions about what they were doing at appropriate times (and stay silent with everyone else if they were filming something). I prompted available employees and volunteers to give me tours of the spaces they worked in, sprinkling questions to capture narratives in their lived environments. As I explained to curious observers seeing me tailing a crew, I was “filming people filming people.”

Second, I decided semi-structured interviews followed the phenomenological focus of narrative and memory. This way, I could structure vague guidelines for the characteristics the participants chose ahead of time as the subject informing my

questions. RMPBS employees and volunteers are constantly busy, so we usually agreed to a single interview unless I required more information. We scheduled these interviews ahead of time. At the beginning of the interview, I would have them fill out the survey to get information about their lives on the spot. I didn't do research before each interview because I wanted their interview to be the first time I was hearing the information. I would later ask them to illuminate any acronyms or locations left unexplained in the interview through email conversations. We typically met in the news conference room at times when there weren't production meetings for 45 minutes to an hour and a half of filmed interview time. Combining the interview footage with observation footage of a single person, I required tools to trace a narrative through visually recorded time and space. This is where secondary analysis of Denver media came in.

Secondary analysis of other visual sources made in Denver functioned as a standard for how I deconstructed and analyzed my own videos. I chose two sources: digitally archived photos collected during the tours of SAM's archival spaces and a similar video project titled "North to Me: Multigenerational High School Memories in a Changing City" made at North High School in Denver with TIMD (2018). You will see later in section 3.2 the secondary analysis of these visual media based on visuals of practice, technology, and storytelling combined with the identification of certain narrative processes in video sources.

Data collection took place in two forms. First, I conducted a survey. Creative Strategies for Change (2019), a nonprofit focused on reflexive art accessibility in the Denver neighborhood Five Points, designed the "identity wheel" recreated by me in

Figure 1 for uses in narrative facilitation workshops. They had attendees of the workshop (including me in September 2017) fill out each section to identify their cultural intersections and privilege. Categorizing certain aspects of one's identity was meant to help individuals understand their cultural positionality more thoroughly. The facilitators at the workshop told participants we could use their survey in our own project as long as Creative Strategies for Change was cited.

For my research, the open-ended instructions in the survey would allow for nominal data responses not confined to a list of specific options. The categories included: gender identity (self-identified), gender assignment (decided at birth), sexual orientation, biological sex, age, first language, national origin, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, and class. Then, the survey asked for the most and least salient identities from those sections. By salient, this means the strongest aspect of one's identity which the person experiences on a regular basis. For example, I chose my gender identity as the most salient because I am both reminded by and reminding my surroundings that I am a cisgender woman in the information translated through how I act and dress. The least salient would be an aspect rarely brought to the forefront of that person's experiences. I chose race because my whiteness doesn't alter my everyday life compared to what people of color experience.

The identity wheel helped encourage participants to complete the survey entirely because they defined and wrote down the word(s) that best suited them. For example, I would tell unsure survey participants they could write something like "young adult" or "elder" for age rather than a number so as to encourage verbal description of how they viewed their age. I also encouraged participants to skip identity components they didn't

understand or felt uncomfortable pursuing. With these pieces of their identity laid out in a circle, they would select the most and least salient identities. I also collected some life information about survey participants including their birthplaces, regions they've lived, title(s) at RMPBS, and preferred medium for storytelling (e.g., video, writing).

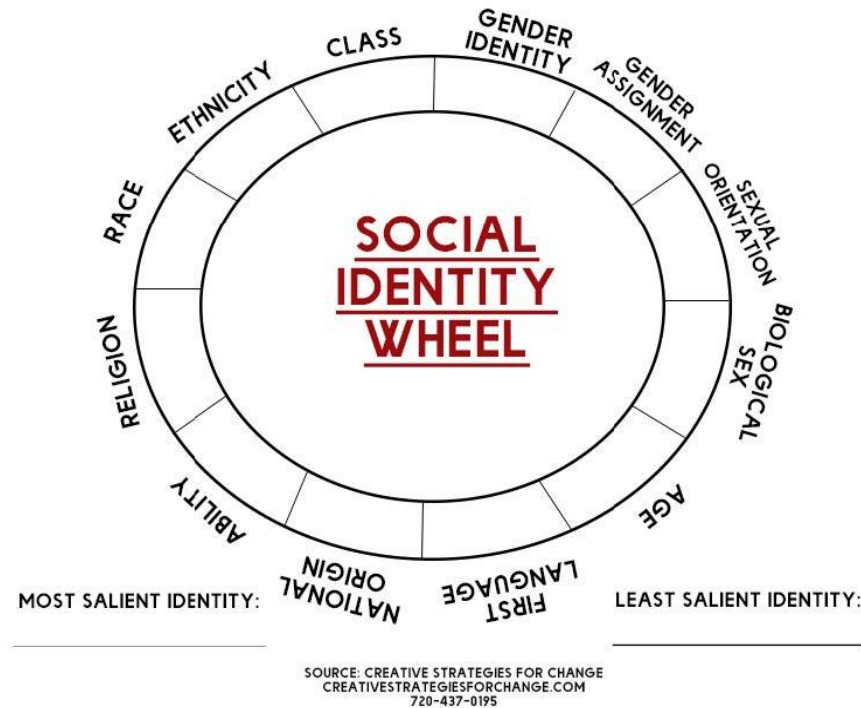


Figure 1: The survey titled “identity wheel” (Creative Strategies for Change 2019)

Second, in order to perform filmed interviews more specific to the participant, their most salient identities would inform the semi-structured questions brought to every interview (except some questions asked on a tour with a SAM volunteer; see Appendix D for those questions). I vaguely structured my interview protocol based on their responses and a chronological series of prompts about their lives as storytellers. I lightly prompted with follow-up questions so as not to heavily interrupt the flow of their narrative. I had a

total of 12 questions (see Appendix A). Their most salient identity provided them a lens from which they could view their experiences through as I asked them questions.

I structured the focus of the questions to progress chronologically so as to enhance the feeling of their narratives transforming into stories. The interviewees started with identifying the reasons they chose their most/least salient identity as well as early identity learning and influences. Going into education and work, we examined influences, resources, and role models at past and present public settings. What technology, media, and people were available while they learned how to tell stories? Based on their childhood and later career goals, how did they get into their field? Towards the middle of the interview, questions shifted towards the spaces where storytelling happened organically (or not) to gauge in what contexts their stories would flourish. They discussed how their identity helped/hindered how they tell stories in order to measure their awareness of the identity in their *habitus*. They then described their favorite stories told publicly by them or others. I wanted to understand what each storyteller considered a “good” story and what they expected from audiences based on their memories of public showcases. The last question focused on the future of public storytelling and how it would change in the coming years. This helped me see where they saw themselves going in their roles as storytellers. I started and stopped my video record at the end of every question so as to have an individual video for each question in later processing.

After any filming, I would load video footage onto a four-terabyte external hard drive and put footage in a folder labeled with the day it was taken. The photos from SAM and the “North to Me” (2018) video project were also collected during the research

window. Once my research window ended, I began processing video. I made a spreadsheet to account for every video I captured. I then labeled, described, and coded each video for analysis with characteristics described later in the findings. I transcribed the interviews using Adobe Premiere video editing software, marking the times in which the participant or I was talking for later video editing in the visual ethnography. I created a written transcript for each interview as well as an audio file of the compiled interview audio. Each transcript noted in time where the video and audio files were at the beginning, throughout the document, and at where they ended. This way, future analysis and video editing could happen without searching through the recording. But before analysis commenced, the secondary analysis provided methods for visual deconstruction.

3.2. Secondary Analysis

According to Fadwa El Guindi, the purpose of anthropology film projects,

...Is the construction of a visual anthropology. There is nonlinearity in the process. Data gathering and analysis formulation inform filming, and the process of filming becomes part of a phase in which film theory (or structure) is articulated, revealing a structuring process that in turn informs shooting choices and subsequently editing decisions during the final film construction (Guindi 2004: 218).

These are secondary media, already processed and released by the creators. For secondary analysis, I gathered visual media which could function as similar case studies to my own research. Not many people are producing written work, let alone visual ethnographies about narrative construction as an embodied practice of identity in the public sphere. However, TIMD is co-run by my advisor Dr. Esteban Gómez, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, and Zoe Tobier with the Writing Program from the

University of Denver. This made it straightforward to connect with fellow video researchers creating content in Denver. I gained access to the final videos produced by collaborating students in the project (“North to Me” 2018). My tour of SAM included learning how to search for archival artifacts such as photos, memorabilia, oral histories, station documents, and productions stored at the station. Using their accession number system, I was able to find a handful of photos of previous producers at the station. Although my own film was stylistically different than “North to Me” and the SAM archive photos, I used these as test media for the purpose of informing my analysis as a Denver visual anthropologist.

3.2.1. This is My Denver

This is my Denver arrived at North High School in 2017 after the researchers received the DU Grand Challenges Scholars Fund. Dr. Esteban Gómez and Zoe Tobier arranged for the University of Denver (DU) student mentors to facilitate learning and engagement with high school students in the art of storytelling. Multimodality was their methodological approach, focusing on the importance of diverse media in learning approaches (Blum-Ross 2003). Tobier’s background provided methods of free writing and brainstorming through written description while Gómez encouraged self-ethnographic documentation of their lives as North Denver residents. Student mentors from DU moderated group meetings about spoken, written, and filmed expressions on the topic of gentrification in the neighborhood where the high school was located. This was

something changing their school and personal lives often negatively (Blum-Ross 2013). Multimodality encouraged a variety of media used to construct these narratives.

“North to Me: Multigenerational High School Memories in a Changing City” (2018) is about six minutes in length. It was one of the final projects put together by the collaborative team of North High School students and DU student mentors. “North to Me” began with a slideshow of old pictures of North High School while the echoing voice of a man described the impacts a newly renovated school facility had on the North Denver community. Other voices took over, talking about periods of North High school life as two students walk forward in front of the camera through the school hallways. Then, filmed interviews began with a librarian named Sarah who went to North in the past. You heard from other alumni, some who came back to work as administrators. Current students were interviewed in a loud library, talking about their families and friends who went to/go to North. You learned about different spaces they spent their time, such as clubs, the library, the cafeteria, and the surrounding neighborhood. Different perspectives emerged about the demographic changes at North. An alumna who works as a scholarship advisor, Zulema, talked about their new principal, Mr. Wolf, showing initiative in keeping kids on track for graduation. Previous principals during her years were rarely there for long or the same race/class as the students. Mr. Wolf (a younger white man) suddenly appeared on screen in a hallway lined with lockers, describing his goals of making every student feel supported. The video ended with credits fading in and out of view. The names “Amber and Alix” from North High School were mentioned as

producers with a DU student mentioned as the editor. They thanked teachers and organizations before the screen faded to black.

I compiled descriptions of the visuals in the shots chosen for this piece. They panned over views of the school's exterior from multiple angles. Photos from the Denver Public Library Digital Collections flashed to show progressive construction of the building of the current North High facilities. The shaky footage felt student-made but active as it followed the pair of students (perhaps Amber and Alix?) walking without facing the camera in the B-roll. The interview backgrounds mainly consisted of blurred bookshelves surrounding the talking head of the interviewee. Alternatively, Mr. Wolf's interview was in a locker-lined hallway as if it was taken on the go rather than scheduled. Two interviewees, Joe and Zulema, had B-roll covering the audio of their interviews. B-roll is used to quicken the pace of interviews rather than subjecting viewers to the single shot of the talking head. We saw locations like the library, the main entrance, the cafeteria, and hallways inside of the school. Graphics included a consistent sans-serif font providing titles, subtitles, and credits on top of the film.

Visuals paired with the audio content well, audio often describing what was flashing across the screen. Some of the audio was of lower quality requiring the use of subtitles. You could hear echoes on the walls as well as the commotion of the school. To absorb what they were saying, this is a drawback. But to absorb this sensory ethnographic environment, chatter was an addition welcome to the keen ear. Through the chaos in the background, you can hear students conversing as well as hundreds of footsteps. The interview audio, while not always clearly distinguished, complemented the high school's

commotion. Joe and Zulema's interview audio had no visual counterparts (B-roll visuals entirely), making me wonder if their interviews were only recorded in audio. There are two quiet songs heard throughout the piece, both without lyrics and cited at the end of the video.

The interviews varied in their narrative timeline and content, often narrating conflicting perceptions of the same subjects. Zulema covered the perceived dangers of going to a "gang" school in the late 20th century, citing her worry of wearing certain colors in fear of retribution or violence. Students talked about both old and new perceptions of their school, a young woman named Sarah telling the unseen interviewer about her grandmother's sharpshooting skills in high school that went ignored because of her gender. While Zulema felt under-stimulated in non-honors classes, a young Sean described how involved he got with the newly organized audio production class. Librarian Sarah discussed her own interactions in school as an active student who participated in many extracurricular activities. The audio of Joe described the ethnicities he perceived to be present at North in the 1960's (Italian, Hispanic, Jewish, Eastern/Northern European, etc.). Current student Sarah said her school was getting whiter. She was a young white woman aware of her previous status as a demographic minority in a city school in North Denver. It then cut to Zulema's praise of Mr. Wolf and Mr. Wolf telling the camera how the future of the school is bright. You were left feeling like this colorful school has a complicated path ahead in the face of neighborhood changes.

The cultural codes in this video were subtle, popping up as matter-of-fact interview audio or visuals of a palettería on a sunny street. The range of narrative timelines provided a multigenerational point of view of this school built in 1911. By paying attention to what visuals/audio were used and when, I could infer this previously misunderstood school in North Denver had a reputation for gang activity. The sunny neighborhood footage showed mixed architecture on the street near the school. As a Denver resident, I have seen the neighborhood North Denver. New Denver residents renamed it Highlands and built dozens of affluent food and shopping establishments next to affluently populated neighborhoods. Meanwhile, residents who can't afford the rising living costs increasingly abandoned their homes for cheaper residences. Individuals or construction companies bought up old Denver houses, demolished them, and built modern blocky townhouses. As a result, students at North High School were diverse in economic background as a public school being made progressively whiter like their neighborhood.

This video was just six minutes. I had access to all of my own raw footage I took as well as editing software capable of producing a similar but longer visual ethnography. While my video project had different goals, the actual footage in "North to Me" (2018) had similar structure to my footage. Interviews were on the left or right third of the screen. Active movement by the subject pulled the filmmaker into active shots. Interview narratives weren't necessarily chronological, but the editing created a logic the viewer could follow. I emulated the editing styles I appreciated and excluded what didn't fit with this project.

I did not apply multimodality as my main methodology. Storytelling at Rocky Mountain PBS is multimodal in nature. They write, read, draw, take video, and edit video to enrich the content they provide their audience automatically. Phenomenology strengthens the narrative description of subjects who have been making media for years if not decades. As a visual anthropologist, the edited film was made to capture the lived experiences of public storytellers. But first, I followed the visual narratives of KRMA/RMPBS producers from the past and present with photos stored in SAM's digital photo archive.

3.2.2. Station's Archived Memories (SAM)

In my correspondence with Rocky Mountain PBS, I learned more about the Station's Archived Memories (SAM). Their collection now includes photos, production materials, memorabilia, oral histories, and documents. I at first hoped to get copies of past production materials, cite them, and use them, but copyright laws would have made that complicated and expensive. Although still and moving images are housed in RMPBS, they're ultimately owned by their creators. Instead, working with SAM creator Laura Sampson, I got a brief tour of the archives including the spaces they use as well as the database they maintain as they digitize thousands of RMPBS artifacts. With the assistance of SAM volunteers, I collected a handful of photos based on names of producers, directors, and hosts of past content made at RMPBS. And since they are again not mine to share, I deconstructed the images through written analysis in order to track

the practices of RMPBS storytellers through photos. This way, I could compare past and present storytelling methods as well as illustrate the connected themes one can find in images (Clark-Ibanez 2007).

In order to narrow down my search of thousands of digitized photos, I focused on photos which featured a producer, director, or host from past material. Sampson shared a complete locally recorded programming list going back to the founding in 1956 as well as a milestone timeline of Rocky Mountain Public Media (all Colorado PBS stations) since its first mention in 1950 (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). Microsoft Word allowed me to search through the text for every time a producer, director, or host was mentioned. Next to these search terms, I located the names of past and present RMPBS storytellers. I decided to use six names (one a pseudonym) so as to focus my search: Jim Case, Mario Alvarez, George Sandoval, Don Kinney, Susan Kinney, and my participant, Zoe.

Sampson and her collection of volunteers have been digitizing SAM materials since their inception in the early 2000’s. So, rather than rooting through archive boxes and folders, I was able to sit down in their office and begin searching for materials with their digital database. They taught me how to read their system of accession numbers (see Figure 2) and locate materials based on keywords. I searched the list of names I generated to find photos featuring Case, Alvarez, Sandoval, the Kinney’s (a married couple according to a volunteer), and Zoe. SAM graciously allowed me to take digital copies with me. I ended up with 30 noteworthy photos, though I assume my brief glimpse

limited my discovery of many more noteworthy photos. Then, going through the pictures, I began gathering data for secondary analysis.



Figure 2: Accession number system used by SAM archive volunteers. Category refers to the TV stations across Colorado owned by Rocky Mountain Public Media. The committee deals with which volunteer committee. The year is when it was made/acquired depending on what information they have on hand. The record number refers to the assigned record number.

I collected 10 photos of Jim Case, former station manager working at KRMA/Channel Six as it was known at the time. His first mention in the timelines of productions and events was when he succeeded the first station manager Henry Mamet in 1957 (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). The oldest photo I collected was in 1957 (SAM 001.10.1957.092). Case is pictured in a headset on a roof with a fake dog in a large toy rocket. The production timeline is somewhat limited because they couldn’t account for some educational programming in the 1950’s. However, considering their primary content was oriented towards either adults or children, I could infer this was most likely for a childhood educational program. The oldest mention of Case in the timeline was in 1973 (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018: 13).

Mario Alvarez and George Sandoval appeared in program entries for the same Latino cultural series *Este Semana* (1972). Their exposure seemed to be somewhat limited in written references but more fruitful in images. Alvarez was referenced once as the producer of the show, Sandoval in the event marking the premiere of the show in

1972 (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018: 13). A handful of photos before and after the show’s recorded content showed these crew members conducting the set-up and break-down of a production. For example, Alvarez was captured obscured by a multiformat broadcast camera, directing a handful of crew members in a 1970 photo (SAM 001.10.1970.307). Sandoval appeared in *Este Semana* photos until 1976, the most iconic showing Sandoval kneeling and holding a microphone to the face of a young boy part of a sombrero-clad mariachi band (001.10.1976.444). RMPBS has produced or collaborated in the production of content about Colorado Latino perspectives historically. The Denver Latin jazz radio station KUVO was absorbed by RMPM in 2012 (“An Exciting Partnership for the Colorado Community” 2019). And while this wasn’t constant across all RMPBS shows, they were in the practice of hiring storytellers from (or related to) the communities they represented in their content.

The written documentation about the Kinney’s was skewed more towards Don Kinney in frequency and tenure of appearance. His referenced productions (including *State of Colorado*) extended into 1995 while Susan Kinney was last referenced as a contributor to content in 1987 (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018: 21). However, there was a photo taken from behind Susan’s head as she was interviewing former Colorado governor Richard Lamm (SAM 001.10.1981.272). This corresponds with an entry in the production timeline of a special episode of *State of Colorado* (“1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018: 15). Don Kinney was mentioned in a sprinkling of roles including producing and directing, Susan Kinney’s programs focusing on law and city issues which made me think she was a reporter as well as a producer (“1956-2010 Local

Productions” 2018). There was a trend for more program credits and photos of Don than Susan. SAM could still be in the process of cataloguing Kinney photos, or perhaps I missed some of Susan’s photos based on the key words I was using. Either way, it was an enlightening comparison of the Kinney’s perceived footprint on RMPBS storytelling.

This brings us to a final storyteller who already has her own archival documents filed at SAM: Zoe. I will not cite specific content to maintain confidentiality. However, I will be referencing information I gathered from the two SAM timelines as well as a handful of SAM photographs digitized and catalogued in their online photos database (SAM 001.10; “1956-2010 Local Productions” 2018; “Master RMPM Timeline” 2018). I decided to include Zoe in my searches because *Colorado Memories* is an active program. While they are still making current episodes, SAM has already begun documenting *Colorado Memories* and Zoe. For example, Zoe and additional storytellers I have interviewed were recorded in the master timeline (2018) as having received awards for their 2017 season of episodes. Zoe was photographed in multiple pictures interviewing people, the lights and cameras arranged similarly to those in interview photos I saw from 40 years ago. However, Zoe’s cameras were much newer. The equipment looked less bulky, and the locations varied more. While her predecessors were photographed frequently in the studio, Zoe was seen in the workspaces of interviewees. I can gather visual data by comparing these photos taken throughout the decades of different storytellers practicing their craft.

Using similar visual tools, I constructed a story out of the narratives provided in the visual data (SAM 001.10). When searching storytellers, the photos I found often

involved RMPBS employees scattered in Denver/Colorado landscapes. The photo of Jim Case on the roof of a Denver building captured the Daniels and Fisher Tower in the distant downtown Denver skyline. Susan Kinney was photographed taking footage on a busy downtown Denver street. Case was later photographed in the front range of the Rocky Mountains with a flock of children and a camera attached by rig to his hip. Their programming took them around and often outside of the city. The locations of the photos included studios, production control rooms, sidewalks, auditoriums, the mountains, boxing rings, and again, on a roof.

Education tools (or the illusion of education tools) stood out in many photos, most notably the sets designed as classrooms. That photo of Case on a roof featured a toy rocket and dog, most likely for a kid's program. Technology progressed from bulky headsets and multiformat broadcast camera rigs which could leave the ground on studio rigs to compact, transportable camera equipment and lighting. The use of batteries and smaller microphones lessened the use of wires. The focus of RMPBS didn't seem to change: inform viewers about Colorado matters through creative narratives. But how they did it seemed to adapt to outside shooting events in the spaces of their subjects.

The actual work hasn't changed. Storytellers interviewed, directed, produced, monitored broadcast controls, hosted shows, and operated recording equipment since the preliminary programming made in that Emily Griffith auto body parking lot (see section 2.2 for history of the station). You could see the same squint in their eyes as they were photographed listening to interviewees. Camera operators' rigs reflected the role of their gaze in program capture. Stationary multiformat cameras stayed in the studio while

waist-attached camera rigs rested on the hips of storytellers following the action. The same steps of production were captured in archival photos, whether they were filming a boxing match, a governor's intimate conversation with the public, or a children's program. For example, a photo of the former production offices at the Glenarm station featured cluttered clusters of workspaces with the same collage of notes pinned on the walls as the offices of *Colorado Memories* employees (SAM 001.10.0000.524). Papers were everywhere, personal desk decorations jumping out, and a big whiteboard schedule on the wall. RMPBS has spent over 60 years developing a storytelling method, pulled in new directions with every new storyteller's contribution.

From the content of the timelines cross-referenced with the content of the photos, I can make a couple of preliminary constructions of the cultural narratives in this history. More men were likely to produce stories, often because women were volunteering for fundraising and administration. The volunteer I have renamed Eleanor referenced her time as a station volunteer precluding her time with SAM. Out of the male storytellers, not all of them were white. They collaborated with local community organizations (such as that mariachi band), making me think their producers reached out to enrich their program narrative. Susan Kinney's couple of credits were dealing with legal issues like drunk driving and the household of the governor. While KRMA was limited in the employee's diversity in its early days, this could reflect the (acceptable) population in Denver at that time. Their storytellers grew in variety and experience, creating a tradition of broadcasting these volunteers spend their time digitizing.

While SAM only started archiving artifacts in the early 2000's, their collections have grown enormously. Eleanor told me during our tour they had expected "a box or two" of materials when Sampson first proposed an archive of station memories. Now, they have multiple rooms and tens of thousands of items donated and collected by members of the RMPBS community. I will talk more about what I found out in the tour of SAM's workspaces in the findings.

I structured my findings like a story. These people's lives entered into periods of discovery, formation, and completion much like the narratives they draft. They produce, research, film, edit, release, and record their stories. Similarly, participants are born, learn, enter the public sphere, hone in their storytelling *habitus*, and begin illustrating their experiences through film. While work isn't necessarily autobiographical, I anticipated these participants seeing a little bit of themselves in everything they produced. Stories embody the context of the storytelling process along with the context of the storyteller. The images captured by them are pieces of their experiences. Like "North to Me" (2018), the research clips show the experiences of the storytellers as of September 2018. The images I captured, much like the archives at SAM, are behind the scenes. This is an exact moment in time, a somewhat vulnerable moment for storytellers I reconstructed through phenomenological narratives. Something you can't hear in the sources of my secondary analysis is the participants talking about how much they hate being on camera.

Chapter Four: Findings

Emily Baker (EB): Where does your identity, your personality, beliefs – how does that factor into your storytelling?

Chelsea (C): That’s a tricky question ‘cause it depends on the story.

EB: Okay.

C: Do you know what I mean? Like, my –

EB: Yeah.

C: The biggest part of my background is telling news – news stories. So, my beliefs don’t really – they don’t really influence it one way or the other.

— *Author interviewing Chelsea, Contract Videographer, July 20, 2018*

The process of tracing identity in a person’s memories is a collaborative effort between the person recounting and the person listening. Saliency and oppression aren’t always at the forefront of self-description depending on people’s perceptions of themselves. While Chelsea, the contract videographer I interviewed, very much identified as a storyteller, she wouldn’t pick a most or least salient identity from the survey categories (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). The data I collected had a variety of narratives as a result of both the variety of people and the strength of their storytelling. Ultimately, the largest message from the videos I collected was that no single piece of identity drives the narrative choices of these storytellers. Their intersectional identities (e.g., a young Hispanic man, an older Colorado resident with generations of family from

Colorado, etc.) were complicated. And as many survey responses showed me, it was common to identify with either more than one survey variable or none of the variables as the most salient identity. Using phenomenological data absorption techniques - questions with flexible nominal responses, prompts about memory and process, and tours designed by the participant - subjective perspectives emerged dependent on the context of the participant. Their real-time reactions to information were captured on film.

Although these responses could be seen as prompted by the presence of a camera, the people I was working with were always around cameras. Their workplace wasn't significantly changed by one more camera. But because they were used to being "on the other side" of the camera, their responses to my questions seemed earnest in the moment. I caught them behind the scenes of what they typically presented to the public. Their chatter typically isn't what makes it into *Colorado Memories*. The second title of this project was "Filming People Filming People" because I filmed the filmmakers, interviewed the interviewers, and created visual stories from the spoken stories of storytellers.

You shall see in section 4.1 the analysis process of videos. I used qualitative analysis tools such as coding, transcription, and proximity matrices to sort through the 350 clips I collected. Accounting for every possible intersection of the coded variables, I was able to see trends in what was pictured and what was discussed. I decided to organize the findings by periods of life discussed in the interviews, pairing them with the filmed observational story arcs created in the process of producing a typical *Colorado Memories* episode. Section 4.2 was dedicated to the beginnings of both identity and

storytelling, introducing the spaces where work begins on an episode. Section 4.3 contrasted cultural and individual influences during their upbringing like school and family with the pre-production research producers and researchers performed before filming commenced. Section 4.4 explored the beginnings of their careers in public storytelling (e.g., college, TV stations, production companies, internships, acting, etc.) along with a shoot I observed/filmed at the Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG). Section 4.5 addressed where storytellers find confidence and insecurity in their storytelling. They used confidence within the technological spaces at the station dedicated to video editing. Section 4.6 discussed the participants' favorite stories ever made, followed by a tour of the archival stories stored in the Station's Archived Memories (SAM). Lastly, section 4.7 coupled the best audience receptions storytellers attended with their expectations and hopes for the future of public storytelling. This was also how I organized the visual ethnography with some adaptations for a briefer video narrative.

4.1. Analysis

Qualitative methods of analysis seemed the most appropriate because they broke down nominal and visual data into shorthand code. This included compiling the participants' information and survey responses (see Table 1 in methods and Table 2 later in this section). I then developed a spreadsheet of descriptive information and qualitative code about each video. I created a proximity matrix (Appendix C) based on the frequency of intersecting codes in the 350 videos I captured. I was able to calculate which codes were the most common in the presence of another code. This included filmed interview

clips containing one or two question responses which I transcribed and coded. While this mass of data wasn't clearly related at first, the code provided patterns to the recorded narratives.

In total, there were about 10 hours of footage and 350 videos. When the official research period ended at the beginning of October, I began coding. I catalogued videos in a spreadsheet, performing an inventory of the video files stored on an external hard drive. Going through each folder of video, I would record each video's name, folder location, date filmed, location filmed, length, and which storytellers were on camera. Then, each clip was classified as footage of an interview, participant observations, the Station's Archived Memories (SAM) tour, or B-roll. I wrote a short description for each video. Finally, I coded each video. My code included the 12 survey response categories as well as nine categories I developed while watching the videos (e.g., work, family, technology, etc.). I would mark a video with the code if it was verbalized by a participant or seen on-screen. You can see Appendix B for the code book.

By the conclusion of my catalogue, I had a specific reference, description, and sequence of featured codes for each video. For example, the 32-second video MVI_4346 in the Denver Botanic Gardens folder shows Zoe instructing an interviewee how to answer interview questions with the question in their response so program viewers would know what they were answering. The video acquired the code string D-Ir-P-T, meaning the footage features visuals of Denver (D), one of my participants interviewing someone (Ir), visuals of their practice/*habitus* (P), and visuals of technology used in storytelling

(T). I copied all of the code with their corresponding folder/video to begin calculating code frequencies.

I sorted the sequences of code alphabetically and counted the frequency of all combinations present. Some videos featured the same code sequence, others only occurring once. Using the =SUM() tool in Excel on the column of frequencies, I calculated the total number of code combinations. In total, there were 80 combinations and 218 videos with a code sequence. P-T was the most common code sequence with 29 videos possessing this sequence followed by D-Ir-P-T with 26. There were 132 videos which didn't acquire a code. They were mainly B-roll meant to be used as supplementary visuals in the visual ethnography. After developing the code frequencies, I created a proximity matrix of the 21 codes compared with each other (see Appendix C).

I used the sum tool again to count the number of times one category was brought up in the same video as another category. For example, Denver (D) and family (F) were brought up in 12 videos together while Denver and sexual orientation (S) never occurred in a video together. Technology (T), practice (P), and Denver (D) were in the greatest number of videos. Practice, technology, and participants being interviewed (Ie) each individually had the most intersections with other codes, meaning they interacted with the most topics.

With these comparisons, I was able to track what codes most frequently appeared with others. For example, Denver was most likely to be discussed or seen with technology, practice, or during an interview with a participant. This information translated into Table 2. First, the data under "All" showed the frequency of codes which

were the number one code recurring in another code’s intersections. The second comparison under “Survey” is based solely on the survey responses’ intersections. This was because all of the survey code was most frequently paired with participants’ interview footage excluding gender identity and assignment (GI, GA) which had each other. By limiting this inquiry to the survey responses, I could see what identity intersections were most commonly discussed or seen together. Age (Ag) was most commonly featured in three other codes, making it the most frequently referenced survey response. This corresponded with the total number of intersections for age (281). However, race (Ra) was present in the most videos in the survey responses.

Table 2: Most Commonly Intersected Codes. “All” is the overall data and “Survey” is only between the survey responses.

| | All | | | | | Survey | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|----|----|---|---|--------|----|---|----|----|----|----|
| Code | GA | GI | Ie | P | T | Ag | Cl | E | GA | GI | NO | Ra |
| Frequency | 1 | 1 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

I applied the same coding techniques for each interview clip. While filming, I turned the recording off and on each time a participant started a new question or subject. This way, I could quickly find certain subject matter when searching for particular narratives. Before I began coding, I created an audio file for each complete interview, only exporting the audio from each file in one combined .wav file. Then, I transcribed each interview using a transcript template I developed. The transcripts listed when video clips began as well as the ongoing time on the audio recording to better trace topics.

While coding, I used Adobe Premiere Pro for video processing. This involved separating footage of me (mainly audio heard off-camera) from footage of the interviewee speaking. I would later be able to edit the visual ethnography with specific video clips selected from the transcripts and my own notes from the interview.

The presence of this code in the findings depends on what participants told me. The identity wheel responses contributed to discussions of salient identity in all aspects of life, but the code I developed for my own observations is specific to the group of people I worked with. Because the data was gathered phenomenologically, similar but contextual approaches could be applied to other institutions. At this institution, few people expected their narratives to be brought into the narratives of Rocky Mountain PBS. The participants were at varied stages of development in their careers and life. However, their narratives shared key elements surrounding their lives as storytellers. To start, the topic of salient identity catalyzed the initial conversations about identity and storytelling.

4.2. Beginnings in Identity and Storytelling

A lot of people say, “Oh wow, you’re really young to be in that position” or that type of thing. I mean, of course my family’s Hispanic, right? But I grew up around a lot of middle-aged senior citizens of white people. And that really affected the way I grew up, the way I acted, the, you know, the accent I have, everything like that.

— *Oliver, Producer, July 13, 2018*

The context in which these storytellers acquired and learned their identities was captured in depth during the first couple of interview questions (refer again to Appendix A). The questions about identity creation/influences were determined by the survey responses (see Figure 1 in methodology for the survey). I translated their responses as close to what they wrote on the sheet, accounting for repeat responses and spelling. For example, there was only one first language everyone spoke: English. However, there Their responses helped me code consistently. For example, when women were talking about their gender, I would code gender identity (GI), gender assignment (GA), and biological sex (BS). While GI (gender decided by the individual), GA (gender decided by family/doctors), and BS (chromosomal indicators of sex) are different, especially in regard to transgender or gender-nonconforming individuals, everyone I surveyed was cisgender. This meant that their GI, GA, and BS were aligned, and they identified as the gender they were assigned at birth. When the only man I interviewed discussed gender, I would only code GI and GA because it was often referencing the oppression women experience rather than his own experience of gender.

With consistent rules, I collected my results by the presence or absence of certain code combinations. After filling out the identity wheel survey, interviewees chose their most and least salient identities. I didn't require a specific answer from the survey, rather suggested from the identity wheel what identity aspects they could choose off of the top of their head.

Three women felt their gender identity was the most salient. Ramona was the youngest person surveyed. She distinctly remembered men noticing her, sometimes

Table 3: Identity wheel responses provided by survey participants.

| Gender Identity (GI) | Sexual Orientation (S) |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological Female/Female/ Woman • Cis[gender] • Male | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hetero[sexual] • Pretty much straight • Straight |
| Gender Assignment (GA) | Biological Sex (BS) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cis[gender]/Female • Man\Male | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female/F • Male |
| Age (Ag) | First Language (FL) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18/22/24/42 • Adult mother • I am healthy and happy w/ my age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English |
| National Origin (NO) | Ability (Ab) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English\Irish • Scottish, Swedish, Danish, English • U.S./USA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able-bodied • Color deficient red\greens • Physically strong, mentally sound, quick thinking |
| Religion (Re) | Race (Ra) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic/Non-practicing Catholic • None? • Spiritual, respectful of nature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hispanic • White |
| Ethnicity (E) | Class (Cl) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American • Anglo/Irish/Irish (some Swed) • Hispanic • White | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affluent\educated, traveled • Middle |
| Most Salient Identity | Least Salient Identity |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity\Age (E/Ag) • Familial Identity • Gender Identity/Gender Identity & Age (GI/Ag) • Storyteller | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity (E) • [First] Language (FL) • Gender Assignment (GA) • Race (Ra) • Religion (Re) |

accompanied by verbal harassment, from a young age. For example, Ramona and her classmate were walking to a high school business convention in the Midwest to present a project when an older man began following them and talking about their appearances in a derogatory way (Interview with author, June 29, 2018). Gender identity superseded their clothing (simple business suits) or their destination (a junior professional event). Amanda Mountain's rise to power at RMPBS was not left unnoticed; as the first woman in her position, she was battling against assumptions made about her gender since she was a child. The idea women were submissive wasn't a positive stereotype for an aspiring media manager. Zoe also mentioned her gender identity along with age. Her gender was something unchanging, but its context changed depending on what spaces she entered. She considered age to be synonymous with experience. In Zoe's line of work, the older producers automatically got more credit for their work. It was often because their accumulated knowledge solved more problems than the less experienced. The older she was, the more knowledge she possessed (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

Oliver selected both ethnicity and age as the salient identities he experienced. Because he was a young Hispanic man, his understanding of himself had grown in recent years entering adulthood. Oliver came to realize the constant progression of age as well as his Hispanic family's life in Denver were inseparable. His experience as a young Hispanic boy wasn't "stereotypical," surrounded by affluent white Denver residents. However, his family's focus on togetherness, Catholicism (Oliver is currently not practicing), and raucous, energetic storytelling followed him into adulthood. Oliver accepted Hispanic, Chicano, Latino, Mexican, and many other iterations of Latino

identity to describe his heritage because his family taught him they were one and the same (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Alternatively, two respondents didn't feel like the 12 categories represented their understandings of themselves and made up their own salient identities. Chelsea of course brought up her storytelling identity as I mentioned earlier. In the context of our interview, Chelsea felt her career most defined her storytelling on a regular basis (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). Danielle felt a familial/regional identity worked best for her. I would personally consider this an example of modern American ethnicity because her family had been in Colorado for many generations. Danielle's understanding of her family and herself were inextricably linked to the Coloradoan identity (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). Using their wording helped them better explore what they meant when they asserted certain parts of themselves as salient.

For the least salient identities, they were diverse. Oliver felt his gender assignment as a cisgender man seldom inserted itself into his life (Interview with author, July 13, 2018). Similarly, Ramona felt her race (white) was rarely an obvious determinant for her experiences (Interview with author, June 29, 2018). Amanda chose ethnicity (E) for a similar reason as a woman with mainly northwestern European ancestry. Danielle selected her first language as her least salient identity because of the English-speaking communities she grew up in. She grew up in the Washington Park neighborhood of Denver which was historically wealthy and white (Home Owners' Loan Corporation 1938; Interview with author, July 20, 2018). Zoe chose religion because her Catholic upbringing waned after she left home for college (Interview with author, September 20,

2018). Chelsea declined to answer because she felt uncomfortable singling out a piece of herself as the smallest contribution to her whole self (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Talking about when they first realized these identities, Danielle cited her family's love of reciting and adding to the family history. Her family has owned and occupied the same house for at least three generations in the Denver neighborhood Washington Park. Her first memories were inside that house sorting through her family's belongings in the basement (pool table, TV, gun cabinet, rug with a tiger on it, etc.). Photos on the walls and in boxes depicted her family for decades, remembered and narrated by older family members who could recall their initial capture. Danielle's written family history spanned back centuries, reflecting their majorly Irish roots and the migration from the North American Atlantic coast to mid-continental Colorado (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Oliver's age was omnipresent, his identity and others defining themselves by how old they were (e.g., a child saying they're six and a half, an older person lying about their age). But his ethnicity was subtler. His lighter skin color and lack of a Mexican accent made his ethnic/racial identity ambiguous for others, often being thought of as Asian or white by strangers. His ethnicity and race were both listed as Hispanic, making Oliver's understanding of his race linked to the culture he grew up in. Church attendance, highly decorated nativity scenes, traditional Mexican food, and large family gatherings at his grandparents' house were common in Oliver's memories of his childhood (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Zoe cited the enforcement of her gender identity as well, recalling both the binary of and confidence acquired in gendered learning taught by the people around her. Her father was in the military, her mother a stay-at-home mom both born in the 1950's. Their traditional nuclear familial relationship taught her certain limitations to what traditional women grow up to do. However, the lessons she witnessed with family friends provided a separate avenue of confidence in one's body. She distinctly remembered this time with the male child of her parents' family friends. They compared their physiques around age five because they learned they were different physically. And while Zoe's parents were strongly Catholic, they had a gay couple in their friends' circle. Sexuality wasn't explicitly discussed, but it was as commonly summoned to the mind confidently in the interactions Zoe witnessed. Her father taught her useful car maintenance skills she wouldn't have expected in female labor lessons. Both of Zoe's parents wanted her to be independent in spite of the world she inherited (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

A member of Zoe's generation later made Ramona question qualities of independence and leadership attributed to women. While discussing the lack of female directors in the film industry, her father gave her the impression that he didn't see it as an issue. Quoting from the transcript of her interview, "And my dad was just saying how most of the time, it's just 'cause men have stronger personalities in directing people, and they're better at managing. And I was just like, well, is that what he thinks of me?" (Interview with author, June 29, 2018) Ramona also remembered becoming an adult a year after President Donald Trump was elected in 2016, citing how powerless she felt as

a nearly grown woman unable to vote against a man who has blatantly bragged about sexually assaulting women without any repercussions. However, her mother always encouraged Ramona and her sisters to speak their minds and remain politically informed. Being a staunch feminist and business professional specializing in international affairs, Ramona's mom brought her and her sisters to their local Women's March, a political protest occurring annually in American cities. It began in 2017 the day after Trump's inauguration.

Chelsea discovered a way to possess agency over the narratives she wished to create: photograph them. From a young age, she used a skinny camera with a five-bulb flash to photograph the farm she grew up on in rural Pennsylvania. Because photography cameras were expensive and inaccessible, Chelsea had few resources at home or at her school to create creative imagery. However, she still distinctly remembered some of the photos she took. For example, she described her grandparents visiting from New Jersey in which Chelsea photographed them on her front porch with the farm's cat. She didn't see them very often, so the creation of a visual memory kept those fond memories fresh in Chelsea's memories (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). I ended up using four photos in the visual ethnography she sent me of a lighthouse, flying seagulls, her grandmother, and her nephew.

Like Chelsea, the other storytellers found empowerment through the creation of visual narratives. Their work on an episode of *Colorado Memories* began with brainstorming ideas for episodes based on what they and their stakeholders believed were significant for the Colorado community. The spaces in which they prepare for an episode

began with the newsroom office. It was shared with the other shows produced at RMPBS, littered with rows of open-plan desk stations facing each other in parallel rows. They casually displayed their regional Emmy awards on top of file cabinets in front of scheduling calendars. In this space, the producers began to put an episode together. The producer, director, and editor for an episode were often the same person, so they begin their pre-production brainstorming and scripting in the news conference rooms (see Figure 3 for a view of the newsroom from Danielle's desk). Their studios were equipped with gridded ceiling stage lights. Camera dollies and staged sitting rooms for interviews littered the edges of Studio 1 (pictured in Figure 4). With a curved blank white wall hiding the lighting control wires, it was the largest space for in-house productions.

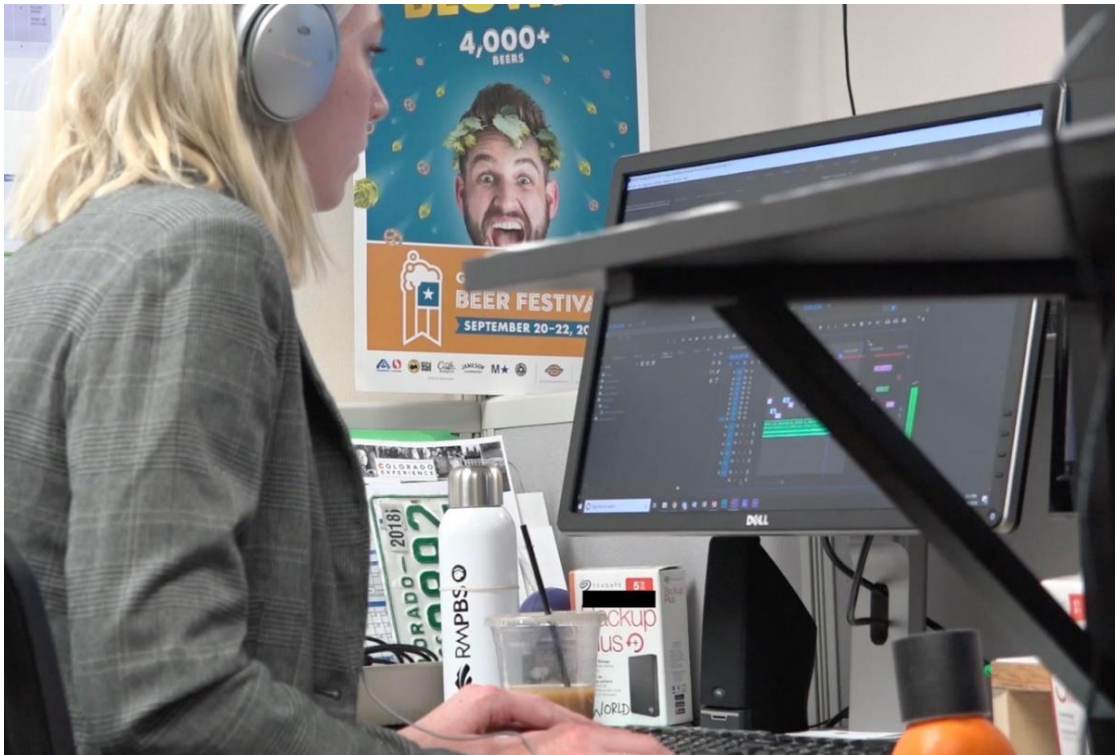


Figure 3: Danielle at her desk in the newsroom editing content on Adobe Premiere Pro. From 00005.MP4 in the SAM tour folder.

Studio 2 was slightly smaller, crowded with old props, posters, and multiple clusters of cameras meant to shoot a scene at different angles. A green screen was clamped onto the back wall behind a couple of chairs set up for a sit-down interview. A small kitchenette was connected to the studio along with an entrance to the broadcast control rooms. Oliver said *Colorado Memories* doesn't typically film in the studios because their shoots are with people/of places all around Colorado.



Figure 4: Studio 1, the larger of the two studios in RMPBS. From 00021.MTS in the station tour folder.

In these spaces, I saw layers of producers' artifacts at RMPBS mixed with the current paperwork and technology they use to begin the episode scripting process. At this point in the process, it was unsure what the future visuals would be in the episode. However, the "eye" of the producer developed over x-number of years allowed them to narrow down their priorities before production began. That visual competence was

developed at a relatively young age in the same environments storytellers learned and first began practicing identity.

4.3. Developing a Voice

I probably would say [playwrighting] was the first thing I wanted to be... When I got a little older, I went through the traditional, “I want to be a lawyer.” And then, I wanted to be a writer. And then, I wanted to be a doctor. But I came back to storytelling. That’s not what I studied, though. I studied international affairs and economics.

— *Zoe, Senior Producer, September 20, 2018*

Storytellers learned their narrative style from many disciplines and backgrounds. Their education in both storytelling and their identities began at a very young age. Both Oliver and Danielle had families with a strongly developed sense of collective identity, forged over many years in pictures and dinner table stories (Interviews with author, July 13/20 2018). But not every storyteller had that network of community members to nurture their sense of self. When Chelsea and Zoe were grade school students during the last quarter of the 20th century, the technological resources for visual storytelling alone were inaccessible in the average classroom. Combined with their intersectional positionality in the world (young white women from modestly middle-class families), storytelling through film didn’t specifically cross their minds until after college. Compare that with millennial-aged Ramona, Danielle, and Oliver who knew from a young age they enjoyed documenting their worlds with digital cameras. Asking about who and what

influenced their cultural learning, this portion of the research helped put into context past goals and the eventual outcome in the broadcast industry.

For example, Zoe wanted to be a doctor when she was applying for colleges. The local Rotary Club was governed by a man she babysat for. He offered her a Rotary Scholarship for international American students. Knowing she wanted to get far away from the town they were living in at the time (her family moved for her dad's military job), Zoe got into a school in Brussels, Belgium. Zoe was first in university when she declared a pre-medicine major. However, she was unable to keep up with her classes which were entirely in French. Consequently, she switched to the English-speaking international affairs and economics double major. She stayed in Belgium for seven years after moving, procrastinating a return to the United States by traveling with her former fiancé around Europe. After they separated, Zoe returned to the United States and decided to pursue acting ventures based on her experience in college theater productions. This would end up changing the course of her career because her acting troupe began auditioning for low-budget commercials and film. Before she knew it, Zoe was a camerawoman hanging off the edge of a cliff filming the action shots of a low-budget film. That's when Zoe found she *loved* overseeing visual narratives (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

Oliver's exposure to stories took less travel: it was to his local movie theater. He remembered going to see *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001) with his dad so many times he was memorizing the dialogue. The awe of transforming words into images made Oliver want to create his own films. Using his dad's camcorder, he would make

rudimentary narratives with fabricated sets and scripts. His family traditions enforced this passion. After visiting Costa Rica in high school, Oliver noticed more of the rituals his family practiced related to his Hispanic heritage. They maintained family through gathering, religious learning, and celebrating major family events. Past family learning was often shared in collective family narratives. Oliver's grandma recited memories to her children and then grandchildren. While instructing them in chores, she would also tell them about the dirt-floored adobe her family owned in southern Colorado. They later put glass windows and wooden floors into the adobe, Oliver's grandma scoffing at modern appliances compared to her upbringing. Chuckling in the interview, Oliver recognized how his family's lives changed in a short span of time. Using these illustrious examples of storytelling, Oliver went into college intending to study the art of cinema (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Chelsea didn't have the luxury of home camcorders and regular cinematic marvels in rural Pennsylvania. Her main goal when applying for colleges was to move to a city. While both of her parents went to college and expected their kids to do the same, they didn't push her in a particular direction. Chelsea didn't have any clear picture of her future career, no guidance counselors or teachers leading her to the best opportunities. She considered a career in the Air Force before deciding on a school. Chelsea's main goal was fulfilled when she got into a college in Pittsburgh where she subsequently moved into her own apartment. Traveling by public transportation in the city, she saw the most diverse population of her young life. A city school presented the distinct advantage of attracting people from backgrounds different than Chelsea's. She reveled in it. Her

predominantly white farming community in rural Pennsylvania didn't present the same colorful canvas of Pittsburgh students and city residents in her years as a communications/studio art double major. It wasn't until Chelsea began her first broadcast news gig in Kentucky that she experienced restraints on her storytelling/identity (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Ramona was the youngest participant, growing up with modern video editing tools as a given. Her and her friends would make nonsensical collaborative videos together in their spare time. However, her formidable teen years were somewhat stifled by the conservative Ohio town she went to high school in. Ramona and her friends joined the school's Women's Rights Club as a form of resistance towards the behavior they observed in their peers and community. Her hopes of a progressive environment were met when she started at a school in California. Ramona declared a political science major at this school before transferring to a film school in another Californian city. She wanted to be socially active, but didn't feel a passion for the organizational barriers in the field. It was when a queer college film professor encouraged her to make weird short films that she found empowerment in professional video storytelling. Ramona distinctly remembered putting together an art film about her being a lizard person disguised as a human. Her struggles to fit in and hide her true identity (as a lizard in this case) mirrored feelings of alienation in filmmaking as a woman. An Anaheim film program fulfilled Ramona's goals in college to create strong narratives with social imperative (Interview with author, June 29, 2018).

Danielle was an older member of the same generation as Ramona, but her family didn't incorporate modern media into her childhood entertainment. For example, Danielle cited her frustration with a friend who couldn't believe she never watched the Nickelodeon cartoon *SpongeBob Squarepants* (1999-present). However, Danielle and her sister were enriched by their Denver neighborhood situated near Washington Park. The flower gardens, complex pathways, and bodies of water provided endless fun during the warm evenings of her childhood. During the day, Danielle went to the Denver School of the Arts for their creative writing major. She excelled in researching and creating narratives. Danielle drew from her knowledge in history to enter the National History Day documentary competition. She didn't make it far her first year with a team, but her individual entries about historical scientific/cultural moments earned national awards in high school. During college, Danielle chose to study biology after much painstaking indecision. Her dedication to nature conservation began at a young age after watching Al Gore's climate change documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), converting to a vegetarian diet. Being involved in wildlife conservation seemed beneficiary for Danielle's desire to create impact with her work. However, many conservation jobs limited her to either laboratory or outdoor fieldwork. RMPBS provided Danielle a create outlet to research impactful work. She applied for an unpaid internship with no experience to get her feet wet (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

In the process of putting together a story, RMPBS used a system of research in order to prepare for an episode/topic. Pre-production deadlines outlined tasks such as gathering subject and interviewee research, episode outlining, and scheduling shoots.

While I was filming the team, their research took place primarily at the newsroom offices. I have footage taken after returning from a shoot with Zoe, Chelsea, and Ramona. The footage showed photo researcher Betty with intern Rebecca and Oliver discussing photo research of the Meeker sheepdog tournament in the Rocky Mountains with Ramona in the background. Their research relied on the knowledge and permission of the surrounding community organizations and individuals. Funders, historical organizations, and affected individuals alive today had a stake in the episode following a certain narrative. The researchers had a responsibility to best represent their team and the personal experiences of their own storytellers on screen. The greatest priority in telling these stories at *Colorado Memories* was to maintain the relationships with the communities who provided stories.



Figure 5: Oliver discussing photo research on the phone with an independent organization collaborating with Colorado Memories. His computer screen is blurred out for his privacy. From C0031.MP4 in the station tour folder.

For example, Danielle told me in an aside that Oliver's grandparents were displaced by the Auraria college campus project. The funding for a three-college campus

in Downtown Denver planned in the later 20th century resulted in the demolition and displacement of the historically diverse neighborhood residents of Auraria. Oliver was in charge of directing the Auraria episode. While filming an impromptu dialogue about why interviews sometimes fall through during pre-production, I asked Oliver about how he felt about the episode with the history of the Auraria campus in mind. While he spent time highlighting the good this educational renovation brought to the Denver community, he acknowledged the displacement of his grandparents in the process. This complex and earnest understanding of the campus gave Oliver a contextual advantage in a difficult cultural history.

Many members of the *Colorado Memories* production crew were interns brought on full time by Zoe. In her experience, a crew whose work she knew was the most efficient way to construct any filmed narrative. Zoe acknowledged the possibility of certain narratives not making it onto Channel Six because of the demographic underrepresentation in the typical TV crew. However, she also found a contextual advantage as a female director in a nonprofit broadcast station. Women were more likely to be attracted to nonprofit work in Zoe's experience. Because of this, her own experience as the head of a TV show advanced at a faster rate in an environment more willing to hear her ideas (Interview with author, September 20, 2018). As older participants had learned and younger participants had yet to learn, work environments don't always raise the volume of underrepresented narratives.

4.4. Getting into the Field

The only thing I could talk about would be, you know, my Colorado history, or maybe my Irish history. And I feel like a lot of other people had very [laughing] strong subjects that they wanted to talk about. I kind of found my niche by focusing on sensory imagery. I liked the peripheral ramifications of stories.

– *Danielle, Associate Producer, July 20, 2018*

The quote above was Danielle contrasting her own storytelling style with the more traditionally artistic storytellers at the Denver School of the Arts. It was Danielle's nonfiction work with National History Day that earned her an internship at RMPBS after college. Documentary work seemed appropriate because of the narratives dedicated to set places and people. Zoe eventually hired her as a full-time producer. Danielle said she looked forward to her work because she half-suspected she would run into old family photos (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). This association with place was common among *Colorado Memories* storytellers. Three of the six people I surveyed had families from Colorado spanning back generations. Getting into a storytelling field involved motivation for work worth doing. In this work, the acquisition of storytelling skills coincided with developing knowledge of a place. The people I interviewed were at varied stages of their careers, expecting different things in the future. However, brought together at this table, their focus was on Colorado experiences. No one actually expected to end up in public broadcast, but RMPBS draws in people willing to focus on a place.

Starting with the more experienced storytellers, Chelsea and Zoe had a clearer idea of how to jump into a project or organization. Zoe felt her first breath of professional

understanding in college during her first economics class. The study of human choices and transactions made sense to Zoe. After leaving Belgium, her theater troupe lead her to low budget directing jobs. Zoe signed up as an extra for a movie when the abysmally small production team needed help. Since her acting part was a short production, Zoe volunteered to run one of the cameras. After getting some experience with the technology, she felt the need to be in charge of the narrative after filming ended. First moving to Denver with her then-husband, Zoe teamed up with a former National Geographic documentarian to create her own production company. Zoe did the business work and her teammate ran the production side. When they were short-staffed or low on money during the recession in 2008, Zoe would fill in for other jobs. She learned it all - filming, editing, and directing. In the early 2010's, Zoe created the idea for *Colorado Memories* and secured funding through the History Colorado State Historical Fund. According to Zoe, her combined work in both her own company and RMPBS adds up to thousands of documentary pieces she produced (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

Conversely, Chelsea immediately went to broadcast TV at a station in Augusta, Georgia after getting her degree in Pittsburgh. With her background, Chelsea started her work with video in daily news production. First in Augusta, then in Kentucky, and then at the FOX station in Denver, Chelsea was trained as a photojournalist. She cited having exceptional narrative mentors at the stations who helped her perfect her craft. The pace of deadlines meant Chelsea couldn't work on a story too long. However, she found herself in the middle of some amazing communities. Chelsea especially enjoyed shooting content

with RMPBS when she was a videographer for *Arts District* (2012-present). However, it had its drawbacks. Chelsea's work environment in newsrooms during the 1980's and 1990's was mainly male-dominated. They didn't seem to think of their studio as an "office" environment. They broke what would later be called office harassment policies regularly. Chelsea remembered how uncomfortable she felt when the men in her studio assigned her a story at a strip club downtown. Chelsea found the desire to control the narratives she put out when she made it to RMPBS. Although she enjoyed the work, she wanted to direct the creative content she was putting out. Consequently, Chelsea quit RMPBS in 2016 and began her own production company. This included the contract video work she does for *Colorado Memories* (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Oliver's goals for narrative control flowed more into fictional storytelling. After his *Harry Potter* theater marathon with his dad, Oliver became obsessed with high-budget narratives. He wanted his work on theater screens. During college in North Carolina, Oliver studied television arts with a focus in cinema. He took advantage of every piece of rental camera equipment he could get his hands on, saying to himself there was no excuse to not improve his narrative style. Oliver's professors assigned narrative challenges such as a short film with little dialogue. It was during this degree program Oliver won a commercial production competition with a movie concession company in partnership with a famous movie theater chain. He was given a budget and a production team with the goal of making a short commercial centered around going to the movies. His first nationally viewed film project was on the cinema screens Oliver saw *Harry Potter* with his dad over 15 years ago. It was also during this college program that Oliver

interned at RMPBS during a summer at home in Denver. He would later run into his old coworkers who tipped him off for a photo researcher/producer position. While Oliver's dreams stretch farther than Denver, his entrance into fictional narrative gave him a new understanding of visual entertainment. Documentaries are Oliver's narrative for the time being (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Ramona was in the middle of her professional development which would influence her future narrative style. She heard about the opportunity at RMPBS from the professional production networks she joined in college. The internship at RMPBS was a crash course in what technology to use, how to arrange production events, assisting the director and cinematographer as they arranged their shoot, the processing that goes on during editing, and the ultimate export and broadcast of content. Ramona said it was a steep learning curve, but her understanding of a story's production expanded since her one-woman productions in school. During her internship under Zoe's leadership, she was taught in the tradition of public broadcast with the guidance of a supervisor who took it upon herself to teach Ramona. Zoe's interns would learn every step in production by the end of their time with RMPBS.

For example, one of my favorite observational shoots I attended was with Zoe, Chelsea, and Ramona at the Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG). They were there to interview two of the managing executives for information on the legacy and continued goals of DBG. Zoe was the head producer on the shoot, Chelsea contracted to do the videography, and Ramona there as an intern to assist setting up and breaking down shoots. We met very early in the morning, trying to beat the rising sun for the most

consistent light in the interview. After parking behind the Waring House, DBG's administrative offices, we had to walk around the long expanse of garden wall to enter from the main entrance. I walked behind them filming as they discussed how great it would be to fly their camera drone above DBG's grounds. Using the gate behind the building, they began hauling equipment to a small courtyard with a pond in front of the administrative offices. Once they had their primary equipment unloaded from the car, they began set-up in an outdoor garden courtyard with a glass sculpture surrounded by water in the middle.

You could see the years of practice in the way Zoe and Chelsea unloaded, set up, deconstructed, and put away their equipment. The back seats of Zoe's car were down to make room for large tripods and lighting rigs. She put everything back in the same place so she would always remember where her equipment was. Chelsea was impressive with a camera, adjusting minute variables for capture as well as its connection with an external microphone meant to guarantee good audio. They used Ramona as a person-sized guide so they could adjust the camera's focus and height to fit a standing interview. Ramona also set up wires and tripods for equipment with some instruction from Zoe. By the end, they had two cameras on tripods along with a handful of tall diffusion lights. They were adjusting the light settings on the camera (see Figure 6) when the interviewee showed up. Her office was behind their shot in the Waring House.

As they prepared for the interview, Chelsea and Ramona were working quickly on the edges of the temporary set while Zoe talked with the interviewee. As a public figure, their subject seemed amenable to makeup application as well as the general instructions

Zoe was giving her. Some advice Zoe gave was for the interviewee to answer every question with the question incorporated into their response. This was so the *Colorado Memories* editors could use only the interviewee’s audio while still clearly illustrating a topic to the audience. Zoe also recommended the subject use the full titles of people and places so as not to confuse the audience with unknown jargon.



Figure 6: Zoe (behind the camera on the left) and Chelsea (right) adjusting the camera’s light intake settings. From MVI_4353.MP4 in the DBG folder.

Lastly, Zoe had the subject “clap one time” in lieu of a clapperboard, or those plastic hinged rectangles with stripes videographers and directors use at the beginning of a scene. The purpose of “clappers” is to sync the audio so future editors know how to match up separate video and audio files. Since multiple recording devices were there capturing the interview, they started recording at different times. Because their clapper was broken, the subject clapped. This way, they avoided being forced to match up the video and audio with lipreading.

One unforeseen event was the angle at which the sun entered the courtyard. This destroyed the carefully curated lighting they created for the interview frame. Soon after shadows began creeping across the courtyard, DBG maintenance staff began loud yard work which negated their ability to capture clear audio. As if in reverse, they deconstructed almost everything and took it to the second floor of the Waring House. There, they reset their configuration of lights and cameras. Ramona had to carry a heavy C-stand, or a multipurpose stand meant to hold different suspended equipment, up the stairs still constructed because of their limited time.

But when Zoe began interviewing, the room was reverently silent besides the occasional creek of the floorboards or traffic from the nearby street. I found myself tiptoeing around Zoe and the subject talking, feeling the collective obligation to simply capture without the interference of the producing bodies. Like my semi-structured interview of her, Zoe was equipped with follow-up questions as the topics unraveled about DBG's history. They discussed Ruth Porter Waring, the donor of the house we were all standing in. When the subject's next meeting was soon approaching, she said her farewells when the owner of the office we were in arrived for his own interview.

Behind the camera, Chelsea was quietly listening with over-the-ear headphones. She would occasionally remind Zoe how much battery they had remaining in their cameras. Ramona watched the process silently, assisting with the second camera and anything Zoe couldn't get to herself as she interviewed. By the end of each interview, Zoe was laughing with each subject having gotten to know this small bit of their

experiences. She had a demeanor good for someone employed to go to other people's places of work and have them talk about themselves on camera.

Zoe has made thousands of documentary style pieces in her career. This was like any other. She used the same equipment (appropriate for the time), used the same methods of interviewing, and came back with the same large cache of footage. Chelsea had worked on *Colorado Memories* for years, using a lot of the station-owned equipment Zoe brought from their equipment storage (see next section for more about technology). Ramona was at the beginning of her internship at the time. While she knew some of the things RMPBS regularly used in their production process, she had to climb a steep learning curve to keep up with the standards the station maintained for all their content. According to Zoe, Ramona would be able to run her own shoot by the end of her internship.

After they packed up everything in the car, Zoe handed a list of dates to the DBG staff person who organized the interviews. She pointed on the sheet when the DBG episode would air, March of the next year. This intergenerational field of collaborative filmmaking continued back at the office where they began the editing process. I expand on the editing process in the next section in a discussion about confidence and video editing.

4.5. The Field

I'm, like, friends with the other interns... They all definitely tell stories to each other all the time – just about their weekends, about their days. So, I feel like you definitely need time to, like, build relationships with people and become comfortable talking about your own personal stories.

– *Ramona, Intern, June 29, 2018*

For many storytellers, their comfort in their chosen field came from the development of collective storytelling. Ramona's family had a habit of talking at the dinner table about their days, sharing the wild and mundane things they experienced. In the quote above, she applied those storytelling practices to the group of fellow interns she had befriended (Interview with author, June 29, 2018). Oliver also mentioned the vivid memories he collected with chatty family members at get-togethers. As a result, his coworkers describe him as a “ham” on and off-camera with elaborate and engaging stories. Danielle's familial history is what motivated her to research certain topics because of their historic roots in certain Rocky Mountain occupations of the nineteenth century (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). And as the creator of the show, Zoe was in her element. While certain stories were not appropriate in certain contexts, they made content worth showing.

Chelsea was even surprised I implied she would feel uncomfortable showing her own narratives because her entire career's work had been broadcast since the late twentieth century. Documentary-style news photography usually involved filming other people. When Chelsea was in charge of the camera, she actively resisted the idea that her

personal ideas would impact the bias of the story. Working in news and later *Arts District* and *Colorado Memories*, Chelsea moved quickly and got the final product edited as quickly as she could muster. Other than the strip club shoot (mentioned previously), Chelsea could think of no place she wouldn't feel comfortable showing her work. In her view, if she made it, it was meant for other eyes. However, the direction of the story could change in her favor in the case of making her own documentaries. Since Chelsea opened her own production company a couple years ago, she began mapping out her own documentaries where she would be more in control of the narrative. But in the meantime, Chelsea enjoyed filming other people's activities (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Comparatively, Ramona was pleasantly surprised by the quantity of female producers on the team she worked with during her RMPBS internship. While part of the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), her high school business club was made up of predominantly men. The obvious disparity between the represented genders wasn't talked about. But the simple presence of women was somehow disruptive because of the environment these young male business enthusiasts were used to. She became a representative for her gender by the unfortunate demographic content of the club. But the personal stories *Colorado Memories* produced were procured and sculpted by women. Ramona's supervisor was the woman who created the show. Her career going forward will always have the imprint of RMPBS's personal storytelling. With the changing climate of storytelling, personal stories were preferred over technically masterful productions (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

According to Oliver, “comfort” in one’s stories is a negotiation to answer the following: *Who am I? What do I like? What don’t I like? What am I willing to try? What am I saying I’d never try that to?* (Interview with author, July 13, 2018) Oliver’s comfort at RMPBS increased because of his relationship with his supervisor, Zoe. She ripped his ideas apart when necessary, but he felt more confidence because of their discussions and subsequent improvements. Oliver was willing to try more risky things as his time with the crew continued. Their discussions encouraged visually diverse productions with multiple sets of eyes pulling the story in different directions. Oliver recognized few barriers barricading him from the conversation. His own skills, developed over many weekends with college film equipment, were what pushed his confidence forward every day.

Conversely, Danielle appreciated it if no one knew who made her piece. Since high school at Denver School for the Arts, she resented it when teachers or bosses would highlight her work with her name attached. Danielle focused her work on mainly sensory description mixed in with visual imagery. But she was hyper-aware of outside perspectives. Would they get the same meaning Danielle intended for the piece? Trained in the sciences, Danielle preferred to capture the phenomenon rather than *be* the phenomenon. Writing and later video were her way of externalizing the things she and people in the past experienced. However, perceptions change. Danielle feared looking at a piece years in the future and noticing gaps in the narrative. Nothing was ever complete or entirely illuminating. Danielle still took up the cause of illuminating these stories from

behind the scenes because it continued to be important to her (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

RMPBS was Zoe's home for confident stories. This was where her age identity strongly benefitted her career. Zoe's exposure throughout the years of producing, organizing, filming, and editing showed in the way she directed the show she created. *Colorado Memories* has been on for six seasons and is well-received among the viewership of RMPBS. Even before she produced her own show, Zoe ran every single position for her production company in order to support their work thoroughly. So no, there were no spaces Zoe couldn't express her ideas or identity. However, Zoe also looked to the future for her own work. She had two stories in the works which motivated her to explore alternative platforms. The main barrier was money, even a self-funded documentary costing more than a public broadcast producer has regularly saved up. She planned to pursue her dreams in spite of this, continuing her work at RMPBS for the time being. Zoe planned to collaborate with people on her show and the network of industry professionals she had developed over decades while she still had the backing of RMPBS. Comfort in her decisions as a director, producer, and editor came from the thousands of documentaries Zoe has contributed to in her career (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

In the process of developing an episode, the technology and spaces storytellers used for capture and editing were spread across many rooms and both floors of the downtown station. In the two studios, Oliver mentioned the tools utilized for in-house shooting: multiformat cameras for live work, hanging lights in the apparatus of metal grid

suspended 20 feet above our heads, C-stands meant to be a steady support for hanging lights and camera equipment, a suspension rig for high-angle film work, green screens permanently clamped to the wall, wall-high matrices of wires snaking behind the curved studio wall, walls of audio and power cords, and a control booth using both old and new broadcast equipment procedures.

I have candid footage of Oliver playing with a multiformat camera stationed outside of Studio 1. Turning knobs and craning handles, Oliver explained how each function changes the angle and focus of the shot. These were used for the live broadcasts taking place in their studios. They arranged equipment in clusters, some cameras focused on the same spot of space while others were pushed up against the walls. The crane

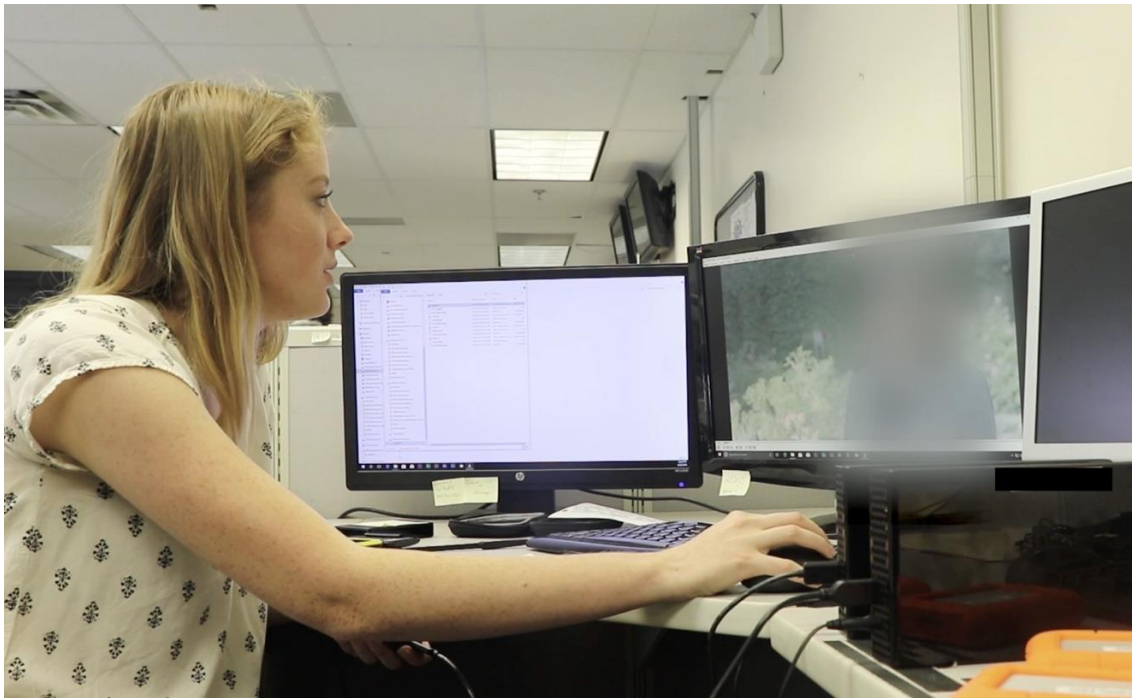


Figure 7: Ramona in the newsroom taking footage from the DBG shoot and putting it onto the *Colorado Memories* hard drives. The face of the interviewee is blurred out for their privacy. From MVI_4440.MP4 in DBG folder.

which would lift a camera operator into the air was parallel with the back wall outside of the newsroom entrance. And while this sounds crowded, both studios provided ample space for production. Even the smaller Studio 2 has plenty of walking space around the large camera rigs facing the green screen.

Behind glass doors and walls, an air-conditioned insulated room contained the station servers filtering all broadcast activity. Whizzing in and out of RMPBS, the entirely digital broadcast system adopted by the station in the 2000's moved the creative traffic of incoming and outgoing broadcasts along with the storage of important files. Oliver turned the lights on for me so I could get B-roll of the stacks of chilled servers. In the basement of the station, there was a hallway of editing bays with all of the fixings for an editor on an assignment. Computers were surrounded by panels of buttons, a voiceover microphone and recorder, multiple monitors, and connections to content stored around the station.

Watching Ramona unload interview footage for the initial editing efforts (see Figure 7), I learned the amount of work that goes into trimming content before it even makes it downstairs. Using Adobe Premiere Pro, they timecoded the footage, separated interviewee and interviewer audio, sent it out for transcription, and watched through the content for any obvious audio or video problems. Then, combined with the photo research and script work they'd done before editing, an episode was composed with the primary and secondary footage collected by camera operators and directors. They had pre-programmed Adobe After-Effects graphics which were animated by an outside company. Connected with the employees in the newsroom, editors downstairs strung

together episodes on the deadlines set months in advance of the editing process. The episode premiered for the season, in this case six months after content was collected by the producers. It was later published on their website and digital broadcast outlets. Comparatively during our tour, Oliver came across an old AVID video editing keyboard which was previously used when editors used analog tapes. It had the same symbols you would see for pause, fast-forward, and play on modern editing platforms. However, unlike the AVID keyboard, the editing process Ramona used in summer 2018 was entirely digital.

Doubling back after the tour had prematurely concluded, Oliver walked me through some spaces in the basement which contributed to the editing process. In a corner near the SAM offices, there were a couple of small rooms meant for audio recording. One room was padded with foam, a microphone standing in front of a chair. The other controlled the recording happening in the sound-dampened recording studio. Beyond the editing bays, the master control room flashed with every single program on Channel Six's many sub-channels (6.1, 6.2, etc. diversified for different topics and audiences). Panels of controls hovered over a desktop lined with desk chairs. Some of the most isolated spaces were the most interesting. Oliver showed me through where they store camera equipment including light filters, light stands, cameras, tripods, microphones, and dozens of wires and bits Oliver listed on his fingers. I saw some of the equipment Zoe, Chelsea, and Ramona used at the Botanic Gardens.

What do they decide to keep out of the footage they produce? When a story is completed, it floats around on the channel for reruns as well as in their online presences.

Those stories accumulate. This is why, in the next section, I wanted to pair the favorite stories of storytellers with the tour of SAM's archives. Does RMPBS programming have a lasting impact on both the storytellers and its audience? According to a SAM volunteer as well as my participants, it absolutely does.

4.6. Honing a Voice

I love Bollywood [films]. I like, I love, I *love* [laughing] – I'm a cheeseball. I love – I cry at Disney movies. You know, I love traditional, archetypal stories, you know, where the good triumphs over evil, you know?

– *Zoe, Senior Producer, September 20, 2018*

Once they're officially in the field, what then? What happens when a storyteller spends time creating narratives, developing and evolving their stylistic voice? Gauging from different places in their careers, it was interesting to see what genres and stories they selected as their favorite stories. I asked about what stories were their favorites, made by them or not. They gave varied responses: their favorite stories were cheesy, meaningful, complex to construct, emotional, modes of resistance, and eliciting the same feelings felt by the publics watching them. The media they chose were just as diverse: movies, research papers, short videos made in production classes, news pieces, and large-scale music performances. But their examples had two things in common: they had a clear narrative arc and were personal in nature.

For example, Zoe's quote above about Bollywood films provided strong narratives where good triumphs over evil during some good music numbers. The

Bollywood film industry is notoriously flashy, often featuring complex choreography, beautiful settings, and a large quantity of background actors and back-up dancers. The films she listed had miraculous storylines of love and farfetched reunions spanning multiple continents. Zoe craved epic films with sweeping scenery, both watching them and making them. In securing her own sweeping vistas with deeply felt stories, Zoe found a deeper love for the communities she collaborated with. While working on a *Colorado Memories* episode about the spark of the American Disabilities Act in Denver, she became good friends with communities of differently abled people who helped inform the research and interviews she presented in the episode. In 1978, the Gang of 19, an activist group fighting for disability rights in Denver, threw themselves in front of a bus and held up traffic on the intersection of Broadway and Colfax avenue in downtown Denver to protest the lack of accessibility provided by public transportation. Her episode found former activists who were part of the group protesting to interview. In an episode about the Sand Creek Massacre, Zoe had to be cognizant of the history of the event. In 1864, United States Army soldiers were dispatched by former Governor of Colorado John Evans (also the founder of the University of Denver) to land peacefully occupied by Cheyenne and Arapaho Native Americans. They killed over 150 women, children, and elderly community members. Their collective trauma is now gently guarded and passed down by current descendants of the original tribal members who survived the Massacre. Before beginning work on the episode, Zoe went out and got permission from Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal elders to make the episode. Watching the episode, most of the people she interviewed were Native American tribal members. Because the reputation of Rocky

Mountain PBS was on the line, *Colorado Memories* was made with the affected communities in mind. Zoe formed many worthwhile connections with the Colorado community, expanding her own understanding of narratives of Colorado natives (Interview with author, September 20, 2018).

Comparatively, Ramona's experiences with quality content was relegated to her favorite films and projects from school. However, they depicted certain cultural conflict she felt relevant to her life. Ramona recognized many directors in charge of her favorite movies were men (e.g. the *Dark Knight* trilogy directed by Christopher Nolan). But her kudos went to many female directors and female-driven movies which changed her perception of film. *Lost in Translation* (2003) directed by Sofia Coppola and *Wonder Woman* (2017) directed by Patty Jenkins were widely praised narratives in Hollywood for their ability to emote conflict and inequality while still having excellent writing, cinematography, directing, and editing. Ramona herself hadn't made much yet, but she cited the lizard person story (referenced in section 4.3) as a good example of visually depicting difference usually felt inside but not seen by others. Films didn't need social commentary, but Ramona believed the added element provided more conflict for the viewer to relate to (Interview with author, June 29, 2018).

Oliver's interpretation of good narratives took us to the fields of Super Bowl L in 2016 where musical artists Coldplay, Beyoncé, and Bruno Mars performed together for the halftime show. His takeaway was the power of a unified story. Quoting from the transcript of Oliver's interview,

“The concert, you know, they utilized that to say, ‘Everybody’s eyes are on us [the United States]. Everybody’s paying attention to us. The world is watching.’ And so, you know, they did such a great job of using music, and art, and dance, and, you know, technological tools that they had available to all talk about the importance of unity, and community, togetherness, support” (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

The Half-Time Show, featuring hundreds of backup dancers and fans, was a mixture of the greatest bops from Coldplay, Beyoncé, and Bruno Mars written as of early 2016. Oliver appreciated the variety of artists as well as the message of unity. The news digested the performance for multiple news cycles because of Beyoncé’s distinct references to her support of the activist group Black Lives Matter (BLM). This included the presence of all-black backup dancers for her performance of the Afro-feminist anthem “Formation” and a jacket referencing the style of the Black Panthers. BLM protested multiple fatal police shootings of unarmed black Americans (Ellen 2016). While not everyone appreciated the aftermath of the performance, it unified many for the minutes it was broadcast live. This moment in history was captured by these artists. Like the stories told during family gatherings into his adulthood, Oliver saw the beauty in a memorable narrative arch.

Danielle referenced her own documentary piece made in high school about the 1936 Nazi Olympics. It was the first internationally broadcast television event, and Danielle had a fun time developing her first research project around film. Her RMPBS work had her researching events through historical records as well as the network of resources she utilized all over Colorado (e.g. collaboration with History Colorado for

historical documents). Danielle's focus on sensory film, that which depicts place at a specific time, drew her to the raised hands of German crowds saluting their government and Nazi swastika banners hanging from the tall walls of the Olympics stadium in Berlin. It even got her third place during the National History Day competition in her junior year at Denver School for the Arts. This competition also brought Danielle to RMPBS, seemingly appropriate considering her preferred method of storytelling. Her focus in biology also gave her access to stories in the most random places; for example, research papers had their own narrative arch like the stories she created. No matter what, Danielle's knack for sensory storytelling reflected in the work she chose to do (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Chelsea also referenced her own work because she had fond memories of the stories she filmed. Her favorites were the work she did with *Arts District* before she left her job to start her own production company. Chelsea vividly remembered documenting a Denver bicycle business whose owner crafted wooden bikes from start to finish. The craft involved was complex enough, Chelsea only capturing the footage of the work once because of the creator's limited resources. He multitasked as glue dried and saws whirred. Chelsea operated a recently acquired camera, learning new technological adjustments while following the eventual completion of a handcrafted wooden bike. Another artist who worked in black linework on white paper made Chelsea rethink how she framed developed black and white photography (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). This was another form of expression translated gracefully into video stories of craft, learning, and beauty.

What made certain stories stick with Chelsea and other storytellers? For many, it was the feeling they associated with the narrative of the story. Whether it was Bollywood, the Super Bowl, a superhero movie, the Nazi Olympics, or a man making a bike, the arch of rising and falling emotion brought onto a screen made these storytellers collect memories and aspire to create more stories of the same nature. In RMPBS, they have an army of volunteers enlisted to do just that: collect memories.

I've unpacked some of SAM's archival content in the secondary analysis subsection discussed in the methodology chapter. They granted me access to their archives after many emails and training sessions with volunteers, including SAM creator Laura Sampson. She remotely helped her experienced archivists lead me through both the workspaces and actual digital archives. Meeting with a volunteer I've renamed Eleanor on a mid-September morning, we set up a camera and planned a route around the basement of the station where most of their workspaces resided. I came up with questions to prompt Eleanor as she led me through SAM's archives (see Appendix D). Eleanor felt pride for the organization she participated in, having held some committee chairs previously. She made sure the offices were cleared out before we entered rooms so as to maintain the privacy of other volunteers. Eleanor answered questions alongside the workspaces she and her fellow volunteers frequented.

The Corporation for Public Broadcast (CPB) funded SAM first in 2002 ("Master RMPM Timeline" 2018). Laura Sampson applied for a grant to both house and archive the donated artifacts related to Channel Six or any of its Rocky Mountain Public Media (RMPM) affiliates. What started out as "one or two" boxes of artifacts turned into

thousands of items the volunteer team are still sorting through 17 years later. Eleanor was a volunteer for RMPBS before SAM was an option, and she was one of the initial volunteers contributing to the vast database SAM has developed. The original archival organization included six volunteers and the photo, production, memorabilia, oral history, and documents committees before nearly 40 volunteers joined the ranks. Today, their offices are equipped with Mac desktops for volunteer research and a handful of storage spaces.

They organized committees to divide the work for certain collections material. Photo donations, albums around the station, and entire boxes of negatives contribute to the steadily digitized database of RMPM images. The production committee has their own host of challenges, many of the programming they stored still owned by RMPM, a different PBS station, or a person. But current broadcast producers still use their tape library for programming. Memorabilia caught all branded materials, toys, and collections of materials depicting media from the station. The oral history committee was an interesting element, slowly recording (audio, later film) notable producers, volunteers, executives, and general staff who could contribute their point of view to a growing collection of memories spanning back decades. Lastly, the documents committee scanned and recorded the paper records of meetings, announcements, memos, minutes or transcripts of important events, and anything else a broadcast station would think to put on paper. SAM received awards for their organizational system from the CPB, collecting training guides for other stations to help develop thorough archives.

In total, there were perhaps a half dozen spaces dedicated to SAM's storage and processing. They have rolling bookshelves in the Production Tape Library to store the ever-growing film, tape, and DVD library of RMBPS's pre and post-digital programming (see Figure 8). Production archive volunteers used the computers next to the library to enter archival information. Multiple rooms with clear tubs on racks nearly to the ceiling possessed thousands of photos, memorabilia ranging from dolls to apparel, files in folders, and even film in their metal reels and canisters. Looking at labels, materials were sorted by date, type, and any other defining characteristics used in the database interface to direct volunteers or researchers to relevant materials. Eleanor cited many long expeditions where they would have to run around blindly searching for materials before the digital days. Now, they could reference the accession number, key words, names, and many more characters to either research or locate certain materials. Not every artifact had a lot of information recorded in its entry, but their growing knowledge of topics helped them locate cross-referenced materials.

SAM's current goals included archiving station history, storing archival artifacts safely, and generating grant money for expansion of their already packed collections. SAM was the first PBS archive of its kind, earning two grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcast since 2002. Using the training they developed in-house, volunteers traveled to other PBS stations starting their own digital archives to steer them towards success. Their digital archive system was simple enough to navigate with some training and accessible to both SAM volunteers and visiting researchers such as myself. I couldn't

use their images for my own work, simply citing their collection (see references section for SAM archives).



Figure 8: SAM's Production Tape Library in the basement of the station. From C0001.MP4 in the SAM tour folder.

Their future in conserving RMPBS memories required more systems in place for identification and processing. They had no paid employees, so they were subject to the schedules of their volunteers. All of their computers hosted the same software and databases which were updated by staff regularly. Eleanor was particularly pleased about this because of the accessibility it provided for a variety of volunteers with varied computer skills. Getting more citations as well as outside researchers increased the availability of this information to those interested in public broadcast in Denver for the past 60 years. The most pressing need was in response to the new station being built

within two years of the end of my research. Their new location will require many departments to scale back their physical presence. Less available space is forcing SAM to prioritize artifacts with no digital record while loosening their hold on already digitized artifacts. They hoped exposure (like this paper) along with their continued support from the CPB would fuel a possible expansion of their archival spaces.

Going into the future, RMPBS and *Colorado Memories* will need to maintain a relationship with their audience to continue to gather these memories. In the process, storytellers will use their experiences up until this point to create the best narratives they can muster. Illuminating what their audience felt and the environment at the station, the following section addressed how audiences responded to the work of RMPBS storytellers and what they expected storytelling in the future would look like for them and others.

4.7. Past to Future Stories

I think the biggest way that storytelling has evolved is just so many more people feel empowered to participate, and tell their stories than ever before. And that's really exciting because no matter what the intentions, the historic record has primarily been written by older white men... Storytelling is a democratic platform for *everybody* to participate in...

– *Amanda Mountain, CEO, August 10, 2018*

Unfortunately, I lost the majority of Amanda Mountain's interview due to technical or human error when recording. While I took notes of her interview, I felt like discussing the primary producers of *Colorado Memories* in their full context would be

the best exploration of the data. This didn't include my conversation with Amanda Mountain. There were luckily a couple of clips still available to observe including the experience she had with her gender identity and the future of storytelling. The quote above encompassed how a lot of storytellers felt. While previous technology and platforms weren't accessible to many in the past, the setting of broadcast storytelling is changing. Both the teller and the audience are integral to the development

I grouped audience and future expectations because they are correlational according to the narratives of *Colorado Memories* producers. Their most noteworthy projects were with the communities who would most likely watch the programming. Operating as its own public, the connection between creator and audience extended beyond the initial premiere. How people's work is created, disseminated, and discussed is rapidly changing. RMPBS adapted to the new climate of TV with online streaming services including a subscription service for donating RMPBS members called Passport. This is in addition to many kid's shows, phone applications, and games available for free to parents and teachers. A lot of adult-oriented content is also available for short periods of time before returning to the paid streaming platform. And while some of the older crew members see a steep hill ahead because of their big story ideas, younger creators with more fluency in digital platforms have small ideas bursting out into small projects and plans for the future. Both experience and narrative style (non-fiction or fiction) are partial indicators of the paths of these storytellers. However, the responses to questions about audiences and the future were trending more positively. More people in the field meant more storytellers of the public being both creators and audience members.

Oliver, the longest interview I collected, went into detail about a production project he created with absolutely no dialogue. College production classes often set a certain topic (light, color, dialogue, etc.) to focus on. This particular project prompted Oliver to create a story which relied on visual cues rather than dialogue. The main character of the short film *Toast* put an unimaginable amount of effort into making the perfect piece of toast. Measuring, slicing, adjusting the toaster oven, taking notes, and frequent burns transpired as the character adjusted the toasting bread. He transferred the toast to a plate he held with a cup of coffee on a tray. But with all his dedication, his grip slipped and spilled coffee on the toast. According to Oliver, a sense of *Oh my god, no! My heart!* would overtake the audience after going through the efforts to make toast with the main character. Relating it to other feelings of anxiety about control, Oliver and his team produced a short film meant to elicit emotion with no dialogue. Oliver could only summon emotions by clearly communicated visuals (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Similarly, Oliver's expectations for future storytelling linked the individual/collective experiences of audiences with the progress of technology. Storytellers with both large and small budgets use the same new technology to capture narratives. Oliver saw individual experiences duplicated into shared experiences while watching a good story. His favorite moment during any shared viewing was when the lights dimmed and he could look back at everyone in their seats, eyes lighting up with



Figure 9: View of downtown Denver from Amanda Mountain's office. The current station sits just south of Denver's downtown area. From 00010.MTS in Amanda Mountain observation folder.

enthusiasm and the reflection of the screen. While certain storytelling methods produce good results, they can limit the storyteller. Oliver liked making *Toast*, but he challenged his creative abilities to perform under suboptimal conditions. With the freedom to create his own stories, Oliver's drive to narrate pulled him and his identity towards bigger and brighter screens. But in the meantime, the collaborative art of storytelling at PBS challenged him to pursue collective quality storytelling (Interview with author, July 13, 2018).

Chelsea got vital exposure to the audience's perception when she attended screenings of *Colorado Memories*. Thinking one thing while watching her own work,

audience members gave her new concepts and questions to reflect upon. Chelsea said she actively used their commentary to better her future work. Emotional, funny, and impactful, their reactions fueled the work she made for other people. Like Zoe, Chelsea worked with groups with disabilities to create content about their lives. In this case, Chelsea followed the narrative of this art group back in Kentucky who used alternative painting styles (laying down, brush attached to a helmet, etc.) to get art students involved in ways they were physically able to. Chelsea's feelings about audience participation embodied the rhythm of RMPBS storytelling (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Chelsea had some ideas in mind for documentaries she will produce herself. Her vested interest in the outcome would be driven by whatever motivated her to make that story. Chelsea believed every person has their own eye and approach. Her stories made *by* her and her production company would have more of her own direction in it. But the stories Chelsea made for her clients were focused on other people. She acknowledged the removal of her perspective entirely was impossible, but she did her best to tell the story from the narrative of the person she filmed. Future storytelling would be more for "the everyday sort of person" according to Chelsea. Chelsea's own skills came from dozens of classes and workshops she used to push her narrative style. Access to the internet could remotely connect storytellers for lessons and tips. The access to equipment also improved since Chelsea was first getting into storytelling. Chelsea saw the diversity in media as a good thing because there was no specific medium which was proper for everyone. She got "fired up" by good storytelling. For example, she enjoyed listening to all of the podcasts and radio stories people produced because they used diverse techniques and

storytelling through a relatively old medium. Chelsea hoped to nurture her production company's network for better storytelling. Simply good stories were her primary goal (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

Comparatively, Danielle selected museums as well as films for excellent audience receptions. Museums elicit sensory information for visitors, something Danielle knew she preferred in her own storytelling. Similarly, her favorite films were made by nature photographers using visual narrative to help address climate change. Photo and nature journalist James Balog filmed content for *Chasing Ice* (2012) and *Chasing Coral* (2017) in extreme weather climates for the sake of environmental activism. Both films addressed rapid climate change as both ice caps melted and coral reefs disappeared in the 2010's. Danielle's short internship with Balog in Boulder, Colorado inspired her through film because she was able to apply both filmmaking and biology to visual content. Having been a big fan of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), Danielle saw the power in environmentally focused films. They were able to make people aware of little-known environmental disasters in our future caused by human pollution. *Chasing Coral* inspired many people who were "late to the game" of conservation efforts (Interview with author, July 20, 2018).

According to Danielle, public storytelling has the "responsibility to unveil issues that are current, and past, and possibly in the future" which include everyone (Interview with author, July 20, 2018). For example, the Auraria campus story impacted Oliver directly, but Danielle also felt the sting of gentrified urban change. Her family's home in Washington Park was bought in the 1950's for \$3,000. Today, the same houses on her

block sold for half a million dollars. The parking, the architecture, and the leisure in her family's neighborhood has changed drastically in Danielle's relatively short life. If Oliver and Danielle noticed their changing family neighborhoods, odds are a lot of Denver residents experienced the same thing. So, by bringing in her perspective as a multi-generational Denver native, Danielle could represent the narratives of Denver with the assistance of research tools and knowledgeable subjects.

In addition to the many production "hats" she wore, Zoe performed audience polling and screenings to maintain connections with her audience after episodes premiered. Quoting from her transcript, "...Part of the outreach was to go in [the] community, and dialogue" (Interview with author, September 20, 2018). The primary example Zoe brought up was a project she was working on discussing the achievement gap between American students of color and white students. Test scores (e.g., literacy, standardized) were often used to demonstrate the gap in "achievement" between white students and students of color. The episode explored the presence of prejudicial barriers which could have affected the outcome of many students of colors' test scores. The four-part series brought Zoe into the community to gauge their exposure to the content. She remarked technology improved her ability to communicate with focus groups of up to 100. Using remote controls for surveys, audiences could answer questions about experiencing racism and gasp at the collected responses together. That collective mind drew Zoe in, encouraging her future work on projects which excited her.

In regard to Zoe's ambitions for the future, I recalled an assertion she made after listing all of the barriers between her and a film of her own: "I'm gonna do it anyway"

(Interview with author, September 20, 2018). The availability of cheap recording technology and software would only bring more into the conversation who previously didn't have a platform. The way Zoe saw her current platform staying relevant in a vast network of new voices was to go hyper-local. Again, quoting Zoe, it was her belief that public media will have the responsibility to "curate, navigate, and lead" many new storytellers entering the field (Interview with author, September 20, 2018). Anyone could watch *Downton Abbey* (2010-2015) through RMPBS's streaming service, but it was actually made by the British Broadcasting Channel (BBC) in the United Kingdom rather than by PBS. Shows which are hyper-local, focusing their access to the regions they are about/are made in, was the only way Zoe saw public broadcast adapting to the new storytelling environment. Whether they were narratives about the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail or sheep herders in the mountains (a couple of potential projects planned at the time of interview), they were relevant to people here.

While Ramona is no longer in Denver, having returned to her California film school at the end of her internship, she felt a distinct connection with the narrative style of RMPBS. Her and her fellow interns completed production tasks to learn and improve their own professional editing. Ramona brought her new skills back to a group of peers she received positive feedback from in the past. She took risks on previous assignments, trying out more experimental techniques among friends and classmates. Ramona's professor said any artist has an argument, so being able to capture art and amplify it is powerful. Films like *Wonder Woman* excited her because they took a stance about

something meaningful. Ramona hoped to channel her art in public media (Interview with author, June 29, 2018).

The future of the entertainment was in television according to Ramona. Shows accessible online with a whole season to binge and talk about with friends provided valuable social capital. Stories with diverse voices were also in demand in Ramona's view. If she could eventually have her own production company, it would feature a variety of voices from different backgrounds focused on challenging progressive art. Not just in the social sense, but pushing the boundaries of narratives. Quoting Ramona's transcript, "...From a filmmaking perspective, that you're gonna get the highest quality of work if you have the most original, different perspectives, you know?" (Interview with author, June 29, 2018) Streaming platforms were valuable because they produced diverse content people could consume. Having more shows featuring multivocal narratives drew in more viewers. And having the best storytellers in skills also improved the quality of their collective narrative.

While Ramona herself isn't the one changing RMPBS after her internship ended, their internship program as well as the younger producers who were recently employed (e.g., Oliver and Danielle) diversified the stories told by this station. Public broadcast is a uniquely open platform for storytellers to expand their ideas. Of course there are limits (mainly money) to what they can accomplish with their ideas. However, you had storytellers like Zoe, Oliver, Danielle, and Chelsea still engineering intricate narratives out of sparse resources at RMPBS. Their cameras weren't the newest models, and they didn't have a graphics department to make their interviews and credits more visually

appealing to their specifications. But they knew people, and they knew how to research a topic/person until they knew most recorded events about the subject before even getting to interviews. With funds from state and federal grants making up a small portion of their programming budget, they relied heavily on the public watching Channel Six for *Colorado Memories* to fund the half-hour and hour-long episodes. So, like Zoe emphasized, hyper-local topics about the communities and places residents see on a regular basis created motivation for the audience to contribute to their local PBS station.

Chapter Five: Discussion

And Auraria is the oldest town in Denver, but it became a predominantly minority [populated] town. And, you know, it was, like, for redevelopment. I'm working with our funder to tell the story that everybody's happy with. But, you know, my family was one of the families that was displaced. And so, I have a strong connection to the story. You have to find a mean.

– *Oliver, Producer, July 13, 2018*

The Auraria episode Oliver produced during my research period aired on March 28, 2019. I'm not citing a specific resource to respect Oliver's confidentiality. It was about half an hour, made up of historical photos, sweeping videos of a built diorama of the early Auraria neighborhood, and B-roll of the landscape Oliver collected in the fall. This footage blended with interview footage of former Auraria residents/activists and Denver historians. The narrative's exposition began with the land Auraria was built on, the Ute and Arapaho tribes possessing communities in the Platte River Valley before pioneers forced them out during the Colorado Gold Rush. The Auraria Town Company employees in the 19th century received plots of land as far west as Denver's Larimer Square separated by Larimer Bridge passing over Cherry Creek. Immigrants from Europe, Asia, and the Americas created diverse and well-connected communities in the neighborhood from the late 19th century into the 1960's and 1970's when Auraria was demolished and replaced with a school campus. Oliver included interviews with

historians who worked to preserve a small block of the Auraria neighborhood on ninth street which is now the administrative offices of the three schools on Auraria's campus. While the quote above demonstrated Oliver's accountability to the History Colorado Historic Preservation Fund, he found a compromise that both celebrated and illuminated the history of Auraria for current Denver residents.

Similarly, the Denver Botanic Gardens episode which aired on April 18, 2019, encompassed many more narratives than I expected after observing Zoe, Chelsea, and Ramona interviewing people. I recognized the places they filmed in June, the gardens and rooms they captured in interviews and in B-roll. But there was so much more. They told the history of the DBG during Denver's development, Ruth Porter Waring dedicating her time to maintaining horticultural resources in the arid lands of Colorado. The interview subjects I recognized conveyed the same content I witnessed being filmed, only trimmed during editing. There were a handful of interviews I wasn't present at which informed on the biology and history of the Gardens. In addition, they added archival footage, music, and narration in the process of constructing their story. While many of the images were familiar to me, it was a completely different experience to see their narratives strung together with historical photos and interviews. Although I am still astounded by the quality of this product, Zoe said it was one story among thousands. At any rate, she got her drone footage above the vast Denver Botanic Gardens.

This research had certain questions, assumptions, and a thesis statement to capture the subjective presence of embodied storytelling at Rocky Mountain PBS. *Colorado Memories* recently finished airing their sixth season of episodes, already renewed for a

seventh season they are preparing episodes for. In that season, were there lived experiences animated into a collective narrative? And further, if they were present, how were they incorporated into the stories *Colorado Memories* made for their public audience?

My first question asked what the salient identities of Denver storytellers were and why. The most accurate answer for that question is: anything they want it to be. Their perception of themselves, while colored by cultural events and limitations, easily adjusted for characteristics they wanted to embrace. Discussing the capture of embodied experience in interviews, Sarah Pink connected the senses to the language participants use: “Finally, when research participants use words to describe their experiences, they are placing verbal definitions on sensory embodied experiences, and in doing so allocating these experiences to culturally specific sensory categories” (Pink 215: 79). This was both validated and challenged by the alternative language some participants used to describe what they experienced. They may have felt uncomfortable about putting a label on an event, attributing an experience’s narrative to different (also valid) stimuli. Chelsea and Danielle declined to pick a salient identity from the identity wheel because the categories didn’t fit their conceptions of themselves. They created their own identities - storyteller and familial - to answer my questions. Oliver and Zoe chose more than one identity because their experiences surrounding each were inseparable.

The identity wheel itself often contradicted its own purpose of intersectional identity discourse. The selection of a salient identity to structure interview questions limited what I could ask as the researcher and what interviewees would end up

discussing. Jürgen Habermas' understanding of intersubjective public spheres would frame people's reactions as a futile attempt to compile an identity under a single heading. Similar to the formation and disintegration of nationalist identities, a single category on the identity wheel doesn't describe the diverse and constantly changing narratives going on internally and externally with RMPBS storytellers (Habermas 1988). Invoking Marcel Proust's literary practice in "involuntary memory," those studying lived experiences associated with material narratives best recognize the "rhetoric of multiplicity" authors elicit (Moll 2008: 55).

An alternative to this limitation is to provide more room for interpretation on what salient identities mean to participants. I described it as the aspect of yourself you feel most on a regular basis. This could be something beyond gender identity, race, or class. What people do and who they care about are sometimes more salient than the social intersections they may or may not possess. Intersectional and phenomenological understandings of embodied identity improved this research. As the researcher, I made every possible effort to encourage answers which didn't necessarily fit into my idea of how they experienced their lives through their bodies. One possible amendment to the survey would be to specify in the saliency questions that the 12 identity categories aren't the ultimate determinants of a whole person's identity. There is so much more contributing to their positionality in their social environment.

The reasons they picked their salient identities were mixed. Some chose based on vivid memories of negative social interactions based on their identity like Amanda and Ramona. Amanda and Ramona both had partly unsupportive households; however, it was

the presence of female role models for Ramona which brought her empowerment at a young age. Amanda had to craft her authority through trial and error in professional settings. Others found their identities strengthening as they grew older like Oliver and Zoe. Frequently, they practiced identities concurrently because their memories of pivotal self-learning involved multiple aspects of themselves. Oliver as a young Hispanic man learned more about his family and himself the older he was, increasing his pride in his Latino heritage. Zoe's age slowly negated the stigma she experienced based on her gender in the production industry; the longer her experience in the field went on, the more likely people deferred to her judgement while working. Embodiment as a tool for measuring practiced identity was useful because it was easily explained to storytellers. At varying levels, an embodied memory was a great way to store a story for later telling. Asking them about learning, practicing, and growth paired the acquisition of storytelling skills with the environment in which they enacted their *habitus*.

My first assumption about embodied storytelling maintaining identity complemented the narratives interpreted in the findings. In the fifth edition of *Doing Visual Ethnography*, Pink emphasized the bias created by cameras in her discussion of the role of video ethnographers: "Moreover, an ethnographer with a video camera is a person with a video camera, the camera becomes part of its user's identity and an aspect of the way he or she communicates with others" (2007: 99). Similarly, the context in which a storyteller creates stories is dependent on their positionality with the subject. Something which many storytellers cited was their ability to explore themselves through video narratives. Danielle looked for images of her family while doing photo research of

the 19th century industries in Colorado. Ramona used her film assignment to explore her own feelings of alienation embodied in the metaphor of being a “lizard person.” This isn’t to say every storyteller has the same relationship with their sense of self. Some, like Chelsea, even actively avoided placing their own point of view in their stories. But when it came to their own stories funded *and* directed by them, they were much more personally relevant. Zoe’s story ideas were preliminarily scripted with female leads, aiming for the enticing story arcs her favorite stories possessed but with her own narrative in play. Not every story was personally relevant in their work at *Colorado Memories*, but the storytellers had practices and experiences which inadvertently placed them in a certain positionality in relation to the story in question.

My second question asked how these Denver storytellers develop public stories for the *Colorado Memories* audience. What were the processes and ideas which determined the collective outcome of a narrative? The best answer is: they did it together. This applies to both the crew of *Colorado Memories* and to the communities they create stories about/with. The schedule set to complete the sixth season could only be completed with everyone’s participation. Although a single storyteller might have been in charge of said story, they didn’t put it together by themselves. Every story had researchers, script writers, storyboard developers, videographers capturing predetermined visuals, interview researchers, interviewers, editors, quality checkers, broadcast and streaming publishers, and archivists cataloguing the final product in the Station’s Archived Memories (SAM). Zoe, Oliver, and Ramona were staunch proponents for collective storytelling because it deliberately selected and included diverse voices to create a narrative.

This required some responsibility because *Colorado Memories* represented certain communities in their episodes. I recall Maylei Blackwell's article "Bearing Bandoleras: Transfigurative Liberation and the Iconography of La Nueva Chicana" (2005). While the imagery of the 20th century Chicano movement depicted Latino revolutionaries and leaders in a positive context, images of Chicana women were only ever of a hyper-sexual radical tending to her man or the mother of Latin America's future citizens. The women's appropriation of the classic Bandolera image of a Chicana woman standing militantly with a bullet vest allowed for them to control the narrative circulating about them (Blackwell 2005). This responsibility was something Zoe was willing to take on for her Gang of 19 and Sand Creek Massacre episodes, consulting and interviewing the people directly involved or impacted by the events she discussed. While it was the story she created on screen, it was their lives she was depicting. Chelsea's favorite stories involved collaborating with her subjects like the bike craftsman and artists with disabilities. Amanda Mountain saw their programming as an impetus for new and underrepresented narratives previously occupied by "old white men". Danielle's comments on the future reaffirmed one of the original tenants of the station she worked at: public broadcast should ultimately inform its viewers about something interesting. While they were producing entertainment, it had a responsibility to accurately educate.

My second assumption structured *Colorado Memories at RMPBS* as both an imaginary and physical public sphere with people gathered around the table of storytelling. Recall once again theories on the public sphere: a public sphere can be both local and global, equal while recognizing difference, physical and imagined, and fueled

by discourse to lessen the social distance between people (Arendt 1998; Borren 2010; Habermas 1974, 1988, & 2006). Anyone with American internet access or access to American programming can watch episodes of *Colorado Memories*. However, the people the producers catered to were their regional neighbors. Hyper-local programming like this show enticed people who live in or are impacted by Colorado history. The people who attend audience viewing parties at RMPBS got to interact directly with the creators of the shows they watched. Those who didn't attend in-person audience gatherings remotely gather around their televisions together to watch the show at its scheduled time or through RMPBS's streaming service. In this way, *Colorado Memories* is a public sphere as diverse and complex as the Colorado Memories.

The actual narrative authority fell in the laps of employees of RMPBS. While they consulted with the communities they discussed, the actual people making the stories were educated, able-bodied, cisgender, heteronormative people. They cared about the people they studied, so their media power was used for good (Habermas 1988). If it had been a different group of producers with a more static storytelling agenda, there would be little in the ethical and quality standards at RMPBS which would require them to expand their narrative diversity. When I was canvassing for RMPBS donations, my superiors discouraged us from discussing political bias in RMPBS programming with people at the door. RMPBS's brand as a "neutral" media source was seen as both reputable as well as enabling the other side depending on the positionality of the person we canvassed. Additionally, the choices Zoe and her team made about episode content compromised certain noble notions individuals possessed in favor of a more palatable narrative for the

most stakeholders. Compared to Denver's commercial media, *Colorado Memories* addressed considerably more sensitive topics. However, there is always room for further representation and collaboration with the narratives they created.

My last question inquired how visual anthropology - specifically visual ethnography - could effectively capture embodied storytelling. In the chapter in her book on visual ethnographies, Fadwa El Guindi clarified,

...According to the criteria established for visual ethnography discussed previously, contextualizing images are ritually relevant images that establish culture identity by embedding the ceremony in the large culture space and by intermittently using indigenous voices (2004: 244).

In the process of analysis and filmed narrative construction, I developed a code book (see Appendix B) and storyboard describing when and how certain topics appeared. I presented a draft of the documentary at the Society for Applied Anthropology's annual conference in Portland Oregon in March 2019. An attendee asked how my fellow presenter and I were able to structure video narratives after filming the content with no specific plan for intended visuals before entering the shoot. I could honestly answer that my code book and subsequent video analysis were the most thorough examination of filmed content I ever practiced. Seeing the content collected during observations and interviews as data allow for quick processing. The code book maintained the human content in each video, developed from the identities and activities/discussions seen on camera during research. While this written thesis filtered participants' words through my own interpretation, their actual words and actions are alive in the visual ethnography. Having another use for data besides informing written work provided both my

participants and I a visual memory of the lives they lived during the summer 2018 production season.

The frequent pairings and occurrences of certain intersections compared in the proximity matrix were interesting to evaluate (Appendix C). For example, identity topics were most commonly discussed in interviews with me. Age (Ag) was the most frequently discussed with other intersections, making sense because two survey respondents chose age along with another intersection for salient identity. Ethnicity (E) most frequently appeared alongside age, race (Ra), and religion (Re). This was most likely because Oliver saw his age and his race as both connected to ethnic family practices and partly informed by his Catholic heritage. Codes like family (F) and childhood (Ch) were discussed together frequently. Practice (P) and technology (T) were often brought up together as people constructed sets for a particular shoot. Work (W) came up in interviews as well as a topic of discussion between coworkers, appearing in about one out of every seven videos. Gender identity, assignment, and biological sex (GI, GA, and BS) were most likely to be brought up together; this was mainly because three out of the five women surveyed chose their cisgender gender identity as their salient identity. While these 350 videos are not the whole story, they tell a whole story of self, storytelling, and collective production of a show.

The act of filming these people in this specific place created power in the narrative. Discussing the strength of place-based narrative in ethnographies, Arturo Escobar specified, “The aim of these ethnographers is to underscore the cultural processes through which places are rendered meaningful by looking at local knowledge,

localized expressions, language, poetics and performance” (Escobar 2001: 151).

Compared to the global market of broadcast television, *public* broadcast doesn’t rely on the expectations of advertisers. They relied on the viewers and donors who are a part of the RMPBS public. The employees of *Colorado Memories* created Colorado narratives using visuals and voices local people knew. Their mission was to connect others to the value of the land they live on. However, they may not see the value their narratives have. SAM volunteers saw the power of these stories, progressively documenting and archiving as much of the station as they could. This visual ethnography doesn’t necessarily salvage anything in danger of being lost. However, its focus on the people of *Colorado Memories* created power in the formulation of a narrative about place. These stories took place in Denver with multiple Denver residents in the places they grew up near. They put together these stories in the halls of RMPBS with the help of their team. Those memories will be left in the old station as they move to the new Buell Public Media Center in Arapahoe Square. As public broadcast continues to change - new technology, new voices, new localities/topics to discuss - visual ethnographies such as *Storytelling and Self in Public Broadcast* will remind former and new storytellers the value of the places they stand.

Finally, I initially assumed public dialogue about identity can’t happen without understanding oppression. This was valid in people’s discussions about both their own and others’ experiences with inequality. I didn’t interview a particularly diverse set of people. Granted, there were only women or people of color in my population, but they were generally from similar backgrounds in those I interviewed or spent individual time

with. As a result, filmed performances of storytelling practices reflected the setting and discourse present in each video.

Guindi in her books chapter on filming selves cited the work of Karl Heider: “...Satisfactory ethnographic films are those revealing, ‘whole bodies, and whole people, in whole acts’ [citing pg. 76 of Heider’s book *Ethnographic Film* (1976)]” (2004: 131). The actual work *Colorado Memories* employees did was sensitive to many stakeholders and viewers. As a result, the discussions we had about identity and storytelling were informed by nuanced understanding of what it means to represent socially unequal populations and ideas. The “whole bodies, whole people, in whole acts” in this video research came with a past before they arrived at RMPBS. That past was often wrought with misunderstandings about what it meant to be part of a certain public. But they learned from those experiences, whether positively or negatively, and applied it to the stories their show produced. Their job now is to tell those stories as accurately and indigenously sourced as possible to increase people’s discourse when interacting with *Colorado Memories*.

This leads us back to my thesis statement: embodied storytelling through public broadcast in Denver demonstrates how the identities of Denver storytellers influence the content of stories they share in the public sphere. I have one amendment to this statement based on my findings thus far. Embodied storytelling through public broadcast in Denver demonstrates how the identities of Denver storytellers influence *the ways in which they make stories* they share in the public sphere. Rather than the content of public broadcast being swayed by storyteller identity, I see the actual process and practice of storytelling

shaped by the lived experiences of its storytellers. Embodied stories told in this public arrived after the prolonged learning, practice, mistakes, and eventual completion of a certain set of skills by the possessor of the narrative. How they got those skills is entirely up to the storyteller. As a result, the employees who are members of the public of *Colorado Memories* create stories in a way only they can.

Zoe, Oliver, Chelsea, Danielle, and Ramona brought distinct bodies with individual memories informing their production from beginning to end. Those memories weren't entirely driven by an identity, but their identities changed/were changed by the experiences their whole selves went through. As a consequence, the embodied storytelling coming out of RMPBS is both informing on the past of storytellers and contributing to the path of future narratives. This includes storytellers interviewed, researched, or consulted in the process of creating content. And while you can't always see them, the programs showing on Channel Six have storytellers in front of and behind the camera. So, when you watch your next local program, watch the credits. Keep an eye out for the shots they choose. A lot of thought went into the visuals seen by their audience for a couple seconds.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

It is not only our informants' understandings of media representation that should inform our work as ethnographers, but also their understandings of media production practices - in both public and domestic contexts.

Sarah Pink, Doing Visual Ethnography (2007: 101)

The combined written and video pieces completed through this research are a result of my own comprehension of Rocky Mountain PBS's (RMPBS) represented media. I sought to both expand my understanding of media representation and production processes in this station. The show *Colorado Memories*, six seasons complete since 2013, represents the narratives of prominent and marginalized Colorado narratives native to the land. Most topics covered - the Sand Creek Massacre, the Denver neighborhood Auraria, the Gang of 19 and disability rights, and the Denver Botanic Gardens - occupy relatively modern historical periods and events which took place on Native American land. In respect to this, *Colorado Memories* tells stories representing the most whole narrative of the state's residents. Their representations elaborate on vital but unheard Colorado stories. As far as *Colorado Memories*' media production practices, it took me three months and many hours of camera footage to inform my whole understanding. The theories I used examined when embodied identity is performed in public spaces. Embodiment captured the collective sensory memories of a body and translated it into an idea or characteristic palatable to the possessor (Cassell 1998; Abdul Khabeer 2016).

Visual anthropology created a medium in which identity, experience, and place can be captured with anthropological approaches to representation in mind (Guindi 2004; Pink 2007). The public sphere described a physical or imagined gathering place for people interested in publicly engaging with a concept or movement (Arendt 1998; Borren 2010; Habermas 1974). Practice theory saw social ideas learned and passed down through practiced activities called the *habitus* which ensured the continued performance of certain culturally specific necessities (Bourdieu 1984, 1990, & 2009). Tied together, the embodied practice of storytelling in the public sphere visually documented multimedia narratives about Denver storytelling. Rocky Mountain PBS, founded in 1956, has been telling stories from the insider's point of view for over 60 years with the assistance of many educators, producers, volunteers, and creative storytellers. I used phenomenological approaches to lived experience which valued the insider's perspective above all else to approach this task (Butler 1988; Borren 2010).

My phenomenological methodology helped me answer questions of salient identity, public broadcast production processes, and the use of visual anthropology in capturing embodied identity. I assumed the embodied stories being told in the public sphere of *Colorado Memories* were in respect to notions of oppression. To find where Denver storytellers sourced their skills for content in their own embodied memories, my methods focused on capturing as much narrative as possible. The research design included filmed participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and secondary analysis of Denver nonfiction media ("North to Me" 2018; SAM 01.10). Data collection

took place on camera, in the survey/identity wheel, and through semi-structured interview questions with volunteering participants. My written secondary analysis of photos recovered from the Station's Archived Memories (SAM) and a video about gentrification produced in Denver ("North to Me") followed the representations of certain people and events through visual media. I then applied this same system to the 350 videos I collected, using codes, transcripts, and proximity matrices to gather what topics were discussed when.

My findings followed the story arc of both the lives of *Colorado Memories* contributors and the process of making a story at RMPBS. The beginnings of their lives were quickly colored by the identities they acquired by birth and experience, similar to the initial pre-production tasks happening in the station in an effort to research a topic. Storytellers learned to tell stories alongside identity with mentors, technology, and a thirst to create narrative; they brought this same thirst into the planning that went into organizing episodes' shoots. Coming into a storytelling field from another career was common, much like the shoot at the Denver Botanic Gardens I observed which was completed with grace in spite of complications. Accepting one's stories heard publicly by certain audiences was an acquired skill, much like the technological processes which went into the editing of an episode's filmed content. The favorite stories of *Colorado Memories* storytellers had sensory, emotional narratives these producers tried to bring into their own work; SAM's favorite stories were the ones told at RMPBS which they documented in a vast archive. The future of storytelling for these public broadcasters and

those like them is hyper-local and accessible to everyone. Many former audience members of their shows and the other programs available to them now possess the ability to create technologically good and simple stories with a device as common as a cell phone. Paraphrasing RMPBS CEO Amanda Mountain, future storytelling is no longer made by and for “old white men”. It is made for everyone in your local area.

In all of my research about embodied storytelling in the public sphere, it was rare to see more than two of the theories I consulted in the same source. Embodied identity enriched discussions about *habitus* (practice theory) and lived experiences (phenomenology). The public sphere was the stage where people performed their *habitus* with others. Visual anthropology strengthened the arguments many theorists made about cultural significant public spaces. However, no sources concerned with visual anthropology analysis deconstructed place-based practices of storytelling as symptoms of a multivocal, embodied identity. Visual anthropologists performed filmed fieldwork for decades. But not all of them have been in Denver, and not all of them were with people who had their own knowledge of video production. This is an ethnography based on filmed observations with a public broadcast station in Denver.

This public broadcast station possessed many paid and unpaid skilled contributors, coming from particular personal backgrounds. I “studied up” with the managers and employees of a well-regarded local TV show, *Colorado Memories*, improving my understanding of the power dynamics they created with their viewers (Nadler 1972). I interviewed the CEO of RMPBS before the station moved to a new

location under her tenure. As a phenomenological narrative of individual and group experiences, both the written and filmed final products of this project are models for future visual ethnographers studying embodied media in the public sphere. Film was both a method of capture and a practice of identity in the context of this project. Applied visual ethnography adapts for collaboration, creating a relationship around the camera (Pink 2007). However, the projects Pink described were with people outside of the video production field. Video as both the medium and subject of these stories strengthened my relationship with video producers. Our conversations went farther because I spoke the language of video. Those in anthropology and beyond, studying communications and media, video production, postmodern social identity, and regional history would benefit from reading an ethnography like this because the medium and the topic were the same thing (video). However, the ultimate images captures were what made this research unique. This is a snapshot of a brief moment in time where Zoe, Chelsea, Oliver, Danielle, and Ramona made stories together. People can see the final film at the following URL: https://youtu.be/Eb_vhbbQ4hY.

If I could do the project over again, there are a couple changes which I believe would have improved the results. First, I would have created blank spaces on the survey for those who identified with more than the given categories in their intersectional identity. When answering the salient identity category, I would encourage participants to respond with more than one category. Hopefully, this would better their own being-in-the-world while on camera discussing intersectional identity. Second, I would have

gained permission from RMPBS to recruit audience members for focus groups.

“Studying down” while also studying up improves an ethnographer’s ability to recognize power structures (Nadler 1972). Feedback from my defense committee highlighted my limited understanding of where specific narratives come from in *Colorado Memories*. I would have liked a fully illuminated perspective of pre-production authority over episode topics. On the topic of narrative authority, there was information still unexplored in this research.

If this was my dissertation rather than thesis, there was so much more I could have analyzed. What categories would participants suggest changing on the identity wheel? What would have improved their interaction with the survey for a more intersubjective experience? Who specifically made up the *Colorado Memories* audience and why? What services can an archive like SAM provide for both the organization it’s housed in and the surrounding community? What trends are decipherable in the proximity matrix I created from qualitative coding and analysis? How do those trends fare in the context of my filmed data? While I had a chance to glance many of these topics, I didn’t have the chance to explore them as thoroughly as I hoped. Future research in media and storytelling could test these questions in the context of the field site.

When you go to tell someone about this thesis, why should the topic of storytelling at public broadcast stations matter to them? Depending on where they live, especially in the United States, there is a public broadcast station serving their area. They may or may not have the same types of programming at RMPBS, but it will be specific to that area.

National PBS programming doesn't occupy a station's broadcast 24 hours a day. Locally made programs fill a lot of gaps. This could involve marginalized communities, kids, and progressively forgotten history. PBS is a service which will always be free and funded to a certain extent by the federal government. And while it doesn't have the budget streaming programs like Netflix or Hulu have for their original content, it is available online in more accessible (free) formats. Without PBS, we wouldn't have Fred Rogers, Bob Ross, or Bill Nye teaching children about complex academic, artistic, and social issues. Public broadcast adapts to the times like any commercial station for a fraction of the price. As our world is increasingly connected via digital technology, at least we know there is a public broadcast station near us keeping content local.

My thesis statement changed based on my findings. I originally believed the embodied content/stories made in Denver reflected the practiced identities of the people making it. Now, I believe the actual content is less determined by the direct choices of *Colorado Memories* storytellers. The many stakeholders in a single season of this show complicate the direction of a narrative. However, the ways in which those storytellers actually draft and narrate stories comes from their personal, memorized, embodied storytelling practices they spend a large portion of their lives developing. Whether they find inspiration from their feminist mothers, multi-narrative Hispanic family stories, mind-expanding photography and art, the sensory stories told by family and in science, or "cheesy" Bollywood romantic story arcs, they take the world around them and show it to others. Insider stories, both their own and the stories of Colorado, are what they found to

be the most personally motivating stories. Hopefully my own visual storytelling can elicit the same response from its viewers at screenings or on a broadcast station. While I have left the table of *Colorado Memories* physically, I will continue to seek the contents of a good storyteller.

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Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

These are the questions I used as the framework for my semi-structured interviews. The prompts and notes for myself under each question were to better encourage and focus the interview. Using the survey responses interviewees gave, I crafted each question to the salient identities as well as preferred storytelling methods to make the interview more specific to each person. The questions were focused on the formation and learning of salient identities, cultural influences on their identities and storytelling, their professional experiences, ways in which storytellers feel confident/insecure, their taste in stories, and the future of public storytelling.

- What piece of your identity (refer to the survey answers) do you find to be the most salient? The least?
 - Tell the story of when you first encountered this identity.
 - Who was there, where, when, etc.?
 - *Get emic data and sensory descriptions*
- Who/what/where were the places you learned lessons about identity on a regular basis?
 - Was it positive/negative? How so?
 - *What were the cultural influences that taught you about your salient identity?*
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
 - Who, what, where, etc. influenced that?

- *What were the cultural influences of your future goals?*
- When did storytelling factor into your life?
 - What did you depict?
 - Who/what/when/where taught you how to tell stories?
 - *Get specific depending on their profession/medium of storytelling*
- Where do you feel comfortable expressing your stories? With whom?
- What spaces is/isn't this identity comfortable to express?
- When did you first learn how to use the specific medium you use for storytelling?
 - What technology did you use?
 - Who/where else was using this medium?
- What are some of the best stories you've witnessed told publicly? What are some of the best audience receptions and discussions that you've attended?
 - *Get descriptions - who, what, when, where, why*
 - *Interpretation of audience reception*
- Does how you experience your identity help or hinder how you see yourself and your stories? Why or why not?
 - Extra prompt - where does this identity come into your storytelling?
 - Extra prompt - Is there a time where you couldn't tell a story without being reminded/being influenced by that identity? Ju
- Can you give me an example of your favorite story?

- *Have them describe making that story - influences, technology, socializations*
- *Potentially get a copy of that story - music file, video, image, etc. for future analysis and incorporation into the documentary*
- What do you see as the future of public storytelling?
 - Make up a story about the future of storytelling as you see it.
 - Who is there and how are they telling and spreading stories?
 - *Extra emic data - sensory description, illustrative → maybe even draw a picture*

Appendix B: Qualitative Analysis Code Book

These are the codes I applied to my video footage. For each video, I would tag their corresponding characteristics in the code categories. Then, with each video possessing its own code, I accounted for every combination (e.g. DIeF = Denver, Interviewee, Family) in existence among the footage. Then, knowing every possible combination, I used the code to create a proximity matrix of each category. By the end, I knew the number of times each code occurred as well as appeared with another code. This allowed me to measure the intersections of both the survey categories as well as aspects of the filming process.

- D = Denver (onscreen/being talked about)
- Ie = Interviewee (participant being interviewed)
- Ir = Interviewer (participant interviewing)
- P = Practice (talking about/showing)
- T = Technology (onscreen/being talked about)
- Ed = Education
- F = Family
- W = Work (onscreen/being talked about)
- Ch = Childhood
- GI = Gender identity (chosen gender expression)
- S = Sexual orientation
- GA = Gender assignment (assigned gender expression at birth)

- BS = Biological sex (chromosomal-based definition of gender)
- FL = First language
- NO = National origin (birth country)
- Ab = Ability (of body; any disabilities)
- Re = Religion
- Ra = Race
- E = Ethnicity (cultural group membership)
- Cl = Class (economic position/occupation)

Appendix C: Proximity Matrix

This the proximity matrix developed from the 350 coded videos captured for data collection and observation. Refer to Appendix B for the code book. The intersection of two codes represents the number of times those two codes occurred in the same video. The bolded numbers crossing from top to bottom diagonally on the table are the total number of times a single code occurred in the videos. The bolded numbers at the bottom are the total number of times a code intersected with another code.

| | D | Ie | Ir | P | T | Ed | F | W | Ch | GI | S | GA | BS | Ag | FL | NO | Ab | Re | Ra | E | Cl |
|-------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| D | 111 | 34 | 29 | 84 | 88 | 20 | 12 | 26 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 7 | 14 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 9 | 17 |
| Ie | 34 | 87 | 4 | 55 | 51 | 38 | 27 | 48 | 20 | 27 | 2 | 27 | 24 | 34 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 40 | 25 | 26 |
| Ir | 29 | 4 | 36 | 36 | 34 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| P | 84 | 55 | 36 | 147 | 103 | 30 | 17 | 47 | 12 | 17 | 0 | 17 | 14 | 24 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 19 | 14 | 24 |
| T | 89 | 51 | 34 | 103 | 161 | 29 | 14 | 33 | 8 | 13 | 1 | 21 | 13 | 24 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 22 | 9 | 17 |
| Ed | 20 | 38 | 3 | 30 | 29 | 39 | 17 | 20 | 14 | 13 | 0 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 19 | 4 | 12 |
| F | 12 | 27 | 2 | 17 | 14 | 17 | 27 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 18 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 15 |
| W | 26 | 48 | 3 | 47 | 33 | 20 | 11 | 49 | 8 | 17 | 1 | 17 | 14 | 22 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 15 | 20 |
| Ch | 8 | 20 | 0 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 13 | 8 | 21 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 5 | 10 |
| GI | 9 | 27 | 2 | 17 | 16 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 10 | 27 | 1 | 27 | 22 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 11 |
| S | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| GA | 9 | 27 | 2 | 17 | 21 | 10 | 8 | 17 | 1 | 27 | 1 | 27 | 22 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 11 |
| BS | 7 | 24 | 1 | 14 | 13 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 8 | 22 | 1 | 22 | 24 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 8 |
| Ag | 14 | 34 | 2 | 24 | 24 | 9 | 18 | 22 | 9 | 11 | 1 | 11 | 8 | 34 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 21 | 22 | 12 |
| FL | 1 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| NO | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Ab | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Re | 3 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| Ra | 9 | 40 | 2 | 19 | 22 | 19 | 12 | 22 | 10 | 11 | 1 | 11 | 9 | 21 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 40 | 17 | 16 |
| E | 8 | 34 | 1 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 15 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 22 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 17 | 25 | 4 |
| Cl | 17 | 26 | 2 | 24 | 17 | 12 | 15 | 20 | 10 | 11 | 2 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 16 | 4 | 27 |
| Total | 494 | 600 | 161 | 673 | 650 | 294 | 241 | 385 | 167 | 243 | 20 | 233 | 204 | 281 | 38 | 58 | 42 | 65 | 292 | 176 | 246 |

Appendix D: SAM Interview Questions

This is the set of questions I used in my single interview with SAM volunteer Eleanor. She saw them in advance because the SAM volunteers preferred to be prepared. I asked these questions as Eleanor and I walked around the SAM workspaces for a tour.

- What is your role as a SAM volunteer?
- What is your understanding for how SAM first got started?
- How did you first get involved with either SAM or RMPBS as a volunteer?
- What were SAM's initial goals?
- In what ways has SAM developed since the beginning?
- What are the different committee titles which differentiate different departments?
- What activities do volunteers perform daily?
- What are the future goals of SAM?