Abstract

This practice PhD explores how intuitive understanding and tacit knowledge contribute to the creation of skateboard photography and videography. Specifically, the research critically examines the roles of documentary practice, "the creative treatment of actuality" (Grierson, 1971), experience production (Gelter, 2006) and embodied knowledge (Merleau-Ponty, 2004) in the development of visual representations. It seeks to identify and analyse the cultural, social, and aesthetic forces employed by skateboard media photographers and videographers, to recognise patterns of behaviour and operations implicitly represented within the act of making. Drawing on lived experiences, the research illustrates how skateboard media photographers and videographers have honed their skills, creating distinct visual approaches facilitated through closely intertwined relationships and technological advancements.

The main research question asks: What embodied cultural, social, and aesthetic factors influence the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers? Supported by two sub-questions: What are the effective methods of data collection and analysis for understanding embodied media production methods used by skateboard media specialists? And: What visual contrasts can be realised in the way skateboarding media insiders and fashion media outsiders portray skateboarding culture to achieve an equitable representation of skateboarding? The results of this research suggest that fashion's representation of skateboarding is often insufficient, failing to capture the unique aspects of the culture. Responding to findings, the research suggests the potential for collaborative practice between skateboard and fashion media producers to inform the development of skateboard-specific media by couture fashion brands. It is theorised that this practice will create a meaningful representation of skateboarding in fashion imagery, allowing it to reflect contemporary skateboarding culture more accurately.

Named through this research, documentary as method, an interdisciplinary qualitative approach combining visual ethnography, media anthropology, and autoethnography emerged. Documentary as method seeks to examine the relationship between the

physical act of producing skateboard-specific media and the meaning applied to its production. Formed of three iterative phases over six years, forty-two participants, including thirty-nine males and three females from the United States and Northern Europe, provided detailed opinions about skateboarding media production. Recording skateboard photographers' and videographers' attitudes, behaviours, and interactions, documentary as method utilised visual recordings in the forms of photography, film, sound, and mapping. Detailed fieldwork, interviews, and analysis provided in-depth findings of how skateboard photographers' and videographers' practices are shaped by their embodied knowledge, experiences, and motivations.

The project employed 35mm cameras, super 8mm, digital cameras, sound recording equipment, pen, and paper. Through participants' illustrated accounts, this research identified and named five distinct tropes: the bonding climate, the huddle, the sequence/rollout, the fisheye/death lens, and embodied know-how. Invoking the frame of practice research and thinking-through-practice, this investigation emphasises the fluidity between experience production and embodied knowledge, illustrating how skateboard media specialists are respected guardians of their craft and culture. The research findings stress the necessity of skateboarding media professionals to be part of the construction of imagery by fashion photographers and videographers, promoting interdisciplinary aesthetical practices. The incorporation of these strategies would act to alleviate any disparities between variations in media production, potentially leading to a richer, higher-regarded representation of skateboarding by couture fashion brands.

Skateboard media production, documentary as method, tacit intuitive familiarity, embodied practice, experience production.

RCA ®

Hubbacouture

From Embodied Knowledge to Meaningful Representation: The Role of Documentary as Method to Explore Skateboard Media Production for Fashion Media Communication

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Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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Research practice is available to view at hubbacouture.uk

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Glossary

Couture: couture or high-end fashion is often associated with luxury materials, designs, and craftsmanship, representing the pinnacle of style. Its primary customers are wealthy and influential fashion connoisseurs willing to pay high prices for one-of-a-kind, handmade pieces.

Documentary: a form of nonfiction filmmaking investigating and depicting reality, providing insight into research.

Documentation: the systematic approach to gathering and interpreting data, making it easier to replicate and verify findings.

Embodiment: concerned with a variety of human experiences, all of which share the notion of 'doing without representing' (Merleau-Ponty, 2004). This research defines the embodied experience as the acquisition of tacit knowledge through the practical bodily knowledge and understanding of skills and movement within skateboarding culture. "The idea that intelligence emerges in the interaction of an organism with an environment and as a result of sensory-motor activity" (Smith, 2005).

Equitable: used to describe an approach to media production which aims to eliminate disparities between skateboard culture and fashion photography/videography. Equitable media production is the practice of creating media content that is inclusive of skateboard media specialists when adopting the look of skateboarding within fashion photography or fashion film.

Experience Production: the indigenous perspectives, observations, and origins that have evolved from aesthetically specific creative individuals or groups, providing unique insights into skateboarding media production.

Fashion Media: a form of visual storytelling that influences how audiences perceive a brand or a certain look (Titton, 2016). It goes further than simply documenting what is happening. Fashion media delves into social norms, customs, and beliefs shaping

viewers' ideas of fashion and culture (Bartlett, Cole, and Rocamora, 2013), constantly changing in accordance with the shifts in society and technology.

Insider: An 'insider' is someone who is directly involved in the skateboarding scene.

Outsider: An 'Outsider' is someone who does not accurately understand and represent the skateboard community.

Representation & Identity: representation and identity are understood to be the ways in which skateboard media is moulded by implicit and embodied knowledge, and how this demarcation is reflected in the photography and videography created by insiders. Notions of representation and identity are studied to assess the ever-evolving collection of values articulated by skateboard media experts as a highly engaging method of not just displaying life but purposefully developed for a specific audience.

Skateboard Media: seen as a specialist and being of valuable commodity to those working within or who are part of the culture, I suggest that skateboard media is not solely produced for the function of promotion and marketing, but beholden to the power of storytelling and shared experiences (O'Connor, 2019, Abulhawa, 2020, Geckle, & Shaw, 2022) made specifically for those who can truly feel and smell the image.

Tacit knowledge: knowledge that is not explicitly expressed but rather implied and inferred through experience, practice, and intuition.

To convey specialist terms and distinctive language associated with skateboarding, I considered it appropriate to supplement the main body of text with footnotes, explaining key vocabularies as they are introduced. Rather than including definitions in the glossary, this approach is seen as more efficient, as it allows readers to apply the definitions to the relevant contexts in which they are discussed.

Everything is culture and it's all appropriated

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Hubbacoture

The title 'Hubbacouture' describes the intriguing intersection between skateboarding culture and high-end fashion through the lens of media. An iconic skate spot, Hubba Hideout, renowned for its appearance in countless skateboard videos, lured skaters worldwide. Hubba Hideout transcended its physicality to become a symbol of urban creativity. The term 'hubba' became a ubiquitous descriptor for any concrete ledge adjoining a stairway in skateboarding vernacular. Meanwhile, 'couture' signifies the epitome of bespoke fashion, tailored to individual tastes. By juxtaposing these seemingly disparate worlds, the title parallels the raw and gritty nature of skateboarding and the craftsmanship of couture, shedding light on how skateboard media can serve as a catalyst for explicit artistic expression, representative of an attuned culture.

1.1.1 Research Questions and Aims

The research draws on my relationship with skateboarding, professional experience working as a fashion photographer/retoucher, and programme lead for a Fashion Media and Marketing degree. This practice PhD research contributes to scholarship in Fashion Media Communication by exploring the production methods that skateboard photographers and videographers employ to create specialist insider media. New knowledge is generated that contributes to the field of fashion media communication and seeks to consider the intricacies of capturing and producing skateboarding media.

The relationship between haute couture and skateboarding culture reveals a captivating interplay of interests and tensions. At first glance, these two realms appear worlds apart, one epitomising luxury and exclusivity while the other projects a gritty authenticity rooted in urban culture. However, delving deeper, intriguing

intersections and conflicts are exposed within the production of still and moving images. Dissecting these tensions, this research acknowledges the complex dynamics revolving around notions of identity and embodied understanding. As high-end fashion brands increasingly draw inspiration from skateboarding culture, disparities raise questions about authenticity and respect for the origins of skateboarding's countercultural roots. Moreover, there's a fundamental question about whether high-end companies genuinely seek to capture the essence of 'near reality' present in skateboarding culture or merely exploit its aesthetic for their commercial gain. The dichotomy between the perceived authenticity of skateboarding and the artifice of haute couture presents a rich field for exploration. While skateboarding culture thrives on a DIY ethos and celebrates individuality and nonconformity, haute couture often represents a realm of elitism and conformity to societal standards of beauty and luxury. By critically examining media representation, this thesis uncovers nuanced insights into the evolving dynamics of skateboard media production, shedding light on the role of tacit knowledge and representation while questioning who has the 'right' to represent skateboarding culture within media.

This is achieved by addressing the following primary research question:

- What embodied cultural, social, and aesthetic factors influence the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers?

And the following two sub-questions:

- What are the effective methods of data collection and analysis for understanding embodied media production methods used by skateboard media specialists?
- What visual contrasts can be realised in the way skateboarding media insiders and fashion media outsiders portray skateboarding culture to achieve an equitable representation of skateboarding?

This study aims to ascertain by what means shared embodied meaning is implied through the production of skateboard media and if there is potential for achieving

equitable representation of skateboarding by outsiders, in this case, fashion photographers and videographers. Interrogating debates that have taken place within ethnography, anthropology, and visual methods, the research evaluates the role of documentary as method, which is applied as an interdisciplinary, iterative approach in this study to explore the production of skateboarding media.

My practice as a documentarian presents a visual representation of the field, providing a window into skateboarding media production. By defining rituals and habits, my practice conveys insight into how skateboarder photographers and videographers interact with the environment, their apparatus, and skateboarders during the process of making.

The framework of documentary as method is centred around field observations, interviews, and analysis. Field observations consider perspectives shared by participants, comparing patterns of behaviours recorded via photography, film and sound. Taped semi-structured interviews realise how embodiment influences the documentary practices of skateboard media specialists, gaining insight into technical, aesthetic, and compositional decisions. Providing an understanding of the shared and personalised strategies of skateboard photographers and videographers, thematic analysis offers a clearer understanding of media production methods by interpreting and synthesising critical data to provide an understanding of the formal and informal approaches that frame how skateboard media is created. My practice is published via a website, revealing comprehensive outcomes through photography, video, and other visuals.

Fieldwork was primarily conducted from May to September of each year. During the six years I undertook three visits to Los Angeles, two to Bordeaux, two to Copenhagen and multiple site visits within the UK. A total of forty-two participants from within the skateboard industry were involved in the research. Seven participants were regular contributors, meaning they were involved in all three iterative stages. Of the seven, five were based in the United States and two in the United Kingdom.

Figure 2: Contributors to PhD, (those in orange are highlighted as regular participants)

The research findings revealed notable gaps in the representation of female photographers and videographers within the skateboard industry. In Chapter 5.1.3, the research recognises that further research is warranted to explore the underrepresentation of females in this field and evaluate potential gender-based differences in approaches to producing skateboarding-related media.

1.1.2 Establishing the Research

Stemming from internal curiosity and a series of conversations held between myself and members of the UK skateboard community[1] over two years, 2014 – 2015, what began with a succession of off-the-record exchanges evolved into a conversation

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[1] This research positions skateboarding as a cultural community. Regarded as a global collective, deriving from multiple ages, genders, and backgrounds, skateboarders are viewed as a varied and passionate group of people who share a common love of skateboarding. Experimentation and unconventional connections form the basis of the shared cultural lifestyle, where members bond over their mutual passion for the creative, complex, and diverse, participating in the habitual routines of skateboarding.

about the 'rules of the game' and, at times, the antagonistic presentation of skateboarding from divergent perspectives, in particular the couture fashion industry[2]. During many of my exchanges, it was implied that high-end fashion's visual translation of skateboarding derived a lack of cultural understanding. These visual transformations were noted as satirising the rich culture of skateboarding, functioning solely as a practice to sell a fashion lifestyle, with a lack of regard for the artistry involved in capturing its image. Many felt the projection of skateboarding within fashion media fell short of portraying the wild and spontaneous renderings (Glenney & Mull, 2018) of skateboarding's characteristics.

From these early conversations and subsequent scoping evolved a realisation that academia needed a more rigorous and comprehensive understanding of how the image of skateboarding is constructed from the position of insiders. Leading to a series of formularised musings, the research began to consider the distinctions between insider/outsider positioning (Sherif, 2001, Hodkinson, 2005), investigating aesthetic authority, specifically how tacit knowledge[3] (Polanyi, 2009), embodiment[4] (Toren, 1993) and experience production[5] (Gelter, 2006) form context and understanding within the construct of skateboard media.

As an insider researcher, I approached the study of skateboard media production from an emic perspective, drawing on my intimate knowledge and experience within

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[2] The couture or High-End Fashion Industry is defined as a sector of the fashion industry that focuses on producing and distributing luxury goods and services. Generally targeting affluent customers and focusing on providing quality and exclusivity, couture fashion brands often work with well-known designers, manufacturers, and suppliers to create items that are fashionable but also expensive. Marketing campaigns for couture products tend to require large amounts of money for production costs, influencer outreach, and advertising spend (Sanchez & Sanchez, 2020).

[3] Tacit knowledge refers to a philosophical concept which states that individuals possess knowledge beyond what is verbally expressed by them, and that individuals are not merely the 'objects' of their experiences but are in fact the 'subjects' of them (Polanyi, 2009).

[4] Christina Toren argues that embodiment is formed through physical engagement in the world as well as the ability to interact with each other. That cognition and living share a symbiotic relationship, and that the biological aspects of cognition and the potential for certain types of specific domains are reflections of socially situated individuals in a particular place and time. See sub-chapter 2.1.3 for further discussion.

[5] Hans Gelter's theory of experience production views the experience of a person's subjective world as the result of a complex interplay between several components. These components include a person's beliefs and expectations, their prior experiences, their motivation, their sensory environment, and their ability to cognitively process the information in their environment. This interplay results in a person producing outcomes, in this case media, which reflects their embodied knowledge by way of perceiving, interpreting, and responding to their environment. See sub-chapter 2.1.4 for further discussion.

the culture. This insider perspective allowed me to grasp the intricacies of skateboard media creation from within the community, acknowledging the diverse voices and perspectives that shape it.

Simultaneously, I recognised the importance of maintaining an etic perspective, acknowledging my position as a researcher with external analytical tools and frameworks. This outsider perspective enabled me to critically examine skateboard media production, considering its broader socio-cultural implications and industry dynamics.

Establishing a timeline for fieldwork and the development of documentary as method, the three iterations comprised two distinct outputs: a thesis and a practice portfolio. The iterations were as follows:

1. Crafting Skateboarding's Guise - Investigating Embodied Knowledge: September 2017 - August 2019 (Gain insight into how skateboard media specialists use their physical bodies and intuitive knowledge to inform outcomes)

2. Refining Knowledge - The Role of Experience Production: September 2019 – August 2021 (Investigate how skateboard media specialists use those experiences of being skateboarders to form tangible outcomes)

3. Defining Skateboard Media Production – Illustrating Unique Tropes: September 2021 – May 2023 (Realise the relationship between embodied knowledge, and experience production within the production of outcomes)

Months	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57	60	63	66	69	71	75	78
Years	Crafting Skateboarding's Guise - Investigating Embodied Knowledge September 2017 - August2019							Review Stage 1	Refining Knowledge - The Role of Experience Production September 2019 – August2021							Review Stage 2	Defining Skateboard Media Production – Illustrating Unique Tropes September 2021 – May 2023									
Annual Progress Reviews																										
Research planning and execution	Intro to Methodology	Develop Framework	Critical Thinking Development	Fieldwork: Phase One		Fieldwork: Phase One continues Analysis: Phase One		Revising Framework			Fieldwork: Phase Two		Fieldwork: Phase Two Continues Analysis: Phase Two & Phase One			Fieldwork: Phase Three			Analysis: Phase Three Three Phases			Analysis: All				
Advanced skills and knowledge		Develop skills in qualitative / quantitative research methodology		Develop skills in data analysis		Developing knowledge of framework development			Developing skills in writing																	
Research planning and execution		Develop tools		Fieldwork: Phase one							Fieldwork: Phase two					Fieldwork: Phase three										
Ethics	Confirm IP	Complete ethical applications	Complete any H&S			Ethics analysis: Phase one		Ethics development: Phase two			Ethics review															
Project management / academic writing	Communication with research partners	Introduction write up		Develop literature review & methodology			Explore thesis writing		Write up data analysis one	Digital writing retreat		Continue to develop literature review & Methodology		Write up data analysis two				Final Thesis Write up								
Conferences / scholar dissemination		Conference Exploration	Explore conference writing	Exhibition Exploration				Website Development						Website Development				Complete Website								
Research Process																										
Literature Review																										
Methodology																										
Resourcing																										
Developing Skills																										
Fieldwork																										
Analysis of results																										
Ethics																										
Thesis Writing																										
Title and Abstract																										
Introduction																										
Literature Review																										
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Implications																										
Intended Development																										
Legal																										
Intellectual Property																										
Health and Safety																										
Outputs																										
Website																										
Conference Papers																										
Presentations																										
Symposiums																										
Exhibitions																										

Figure 3: Revised timeline of research, 2021

With each planned iteration approximately twenty-two months in length, participants were selected and approached in two ways, primarily through pre-existing relationships and via initial research into the contributions each had made to the evolution of skateboard media production.

This research offers insight into how tacit embodied knowledge, the knowledge acquired through physical acts based on the body's mental capacity to learn through the senses, and into experience production, the storage of knowledge produced through the interpretation of experiences and stored in a tangible form that can be shared with others, are intertwined within the creation of skateboard photographs and videos. The iterations sought to inhabit participants' lives, surveying their opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. Captured in media-rich ethnographies, these outcomes are presented and discussed as a series of observable and unobservable visual analogies[6] (Dove & Guarini, 2011) exploring tangible production methods alongside intangible tacit reflection, such characteristics not so easily sensed or measured physically.

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[6] Visual analogies refer to a form of visual thinking where a problem or concept is represented in a visual way to form a comparison to a research question (Dove, & Guarini, 2011).

Witnessing the creation of materiality[7] (Askins & Pain, 2011) by skateboard media specialists, comparable methods and tools were used to record research outcomes. A 35mm camera, a super 8mm, a variety of digital cameras and sound recording equipment, captured interviews along with skateboarding media specialists' modes of making. Inhabiting the offices, homes, and locations where images and films were crafted, practice research exposed participants' motivations, tools and the methods employed to capture skateboarding's aesthetic.

As illustrated in Figure 4 and Figure 5, several digital and analogue technologies used by skateboard media experts to create still and moving images served as a guide when selecting modes of making for this practice.

Figure 4: Documenting Mike Manzoori's video camera used to shoot skateboarding, Los Angeles, 2022

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[7] Materiality refers to the tangible and intangible properties of media production that can filter through embodied experiences, affecting producers' techniques and more subtle elements that cannot so easily be consciously perceived. Materiality offers space in which interactions take place, highlighting the intricate interplay between research, participant, materials, and environment, "thinking beyond moments of encounter." (Askins & Pain, 2011)

Figure 5: Documenting Tobin Yelland's cameras used to shoot skateboarding, Los Angeles, 2018

Documentary as method, but also the practice of observing, making (with individual experts), coding, and analysing interviews, was realised. Supported by reflexive observations and autoethnographic considerations, five shared comprehensive tropes inherent in all participants' practices were revealed, highlighting a collective approach to media creation within the culture of skateboarding media production. These five findings identified as tropes are:

1. The Bonding Climate: Defined as the moments where the photographer, videographer, and skateboarder come together, the bonding climate is understood to be vital for capturing the trick. Effective communication helps the photographer/videographer to understand the skater's ambition better and decide the best approach to capturing a still image or film. The exchange of verbal and nonverbal signals permits a build-up of trust and understanding, enhancing both the photograph and video.

2. The Huddle: The huddle gathers participants and media specialists around the camera's LCD to view and discuss the trick in skateboarding, which can contribute to the bonding climate. It provides an opportunity to exchange opinions, offer insight, and refine the photo or video. It strengthens the relationship between photographers, videographers, and skateboarders, adding an additional layer to capturing an image.

Figure 7: Documenting the huddle, Cornwall, 2018

3. The sequence, the rollout: The sequence/rollout in photography and film highlights the trick's creative potential. It portrays the skateboarder's progression, location, self-expression, and expertise, reflected through the momentum and flow of the line they take in and out of the trick and the trick itself.

Figure 8: Mike Manzoori capturing the rollout during filming, 2018. © Rights Mike Manzoori, all rights reserved.

Figure 9: Leo Sharp capturing a sequence, circa the early 2000's. © Rights Leo Sharp, all rights reserved.

4. The fisheye lens/the wide-angle[8] lens: The fisheye/wide-angle lens offers an immersive perspective capturing large portions of the skater within the environment. These lenses accentuate the acceleration of the skater's motion and reveal much of the space while allowing items such as rails and stairs to dominate the frame. The lenses add to the narrative by compressing the background while exaggerating the size of the skater's body, capturing extreme close-up shots. Giving filmmakers and photographers the flexibility to capture the skateboarder's movement and performance, media specialists embody physical movement when filming alongside the skateboarder, working in tandem to capture the footage.

Figure 10: Grant Brittain shooting with fisheye, Los Angeles, 2022

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[8] A wide-angle lens, sometimes referred to as a death lens, is often used by skateboard videographers to capture expansive shots and gain a better view of the action. By using a wide-angle lens, the videographers can achieve a more immersive feel by showing a wider field of view and being extremely close to the action. As well, the depth of field and angle of the shots often helps to emphasise the scale of the environment and add an extra element of intensity and excitement to the shot. While there are many versions of wide-angle lenses, the death lens refers to the Century Optics 0.3X Ultra Fisheye MKII 37mm lens, specifically used with the Sony VX1000 camcorder.
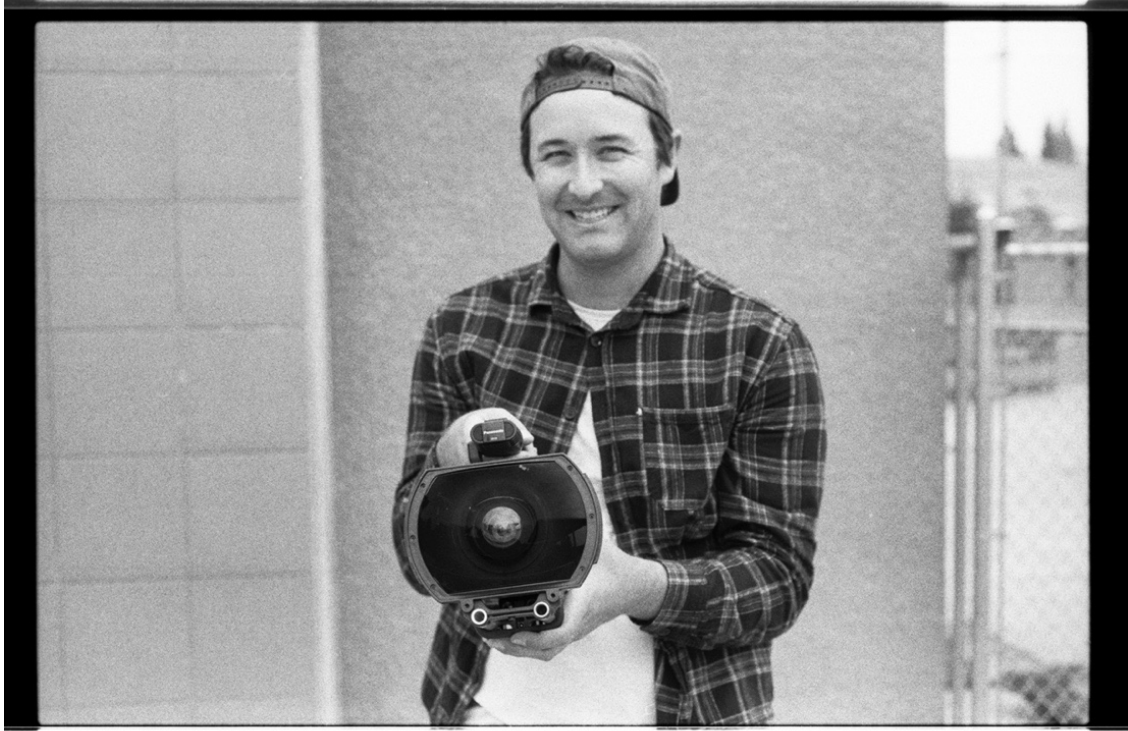
Figure 11: Matt Bublitz filming with wide angle lens, Los Angeles, 2022

5. Embodied know-how and tacit understanding, as well as nonverbal cues, such as body language, facial expressions, gestures, and verbal cues, via coaching, can help the skateboarder and photographer understand each other's expectations and intentions without having to exchange words.

Figure 12: Ewan Bowman seen nonverbally mimicking a landing, Los Angeles, 2018

This thesis presents these findings and extensive practice on the website Hubbacourture.uk.

1.1.3 The Unexpected Thread: Documentary as Method
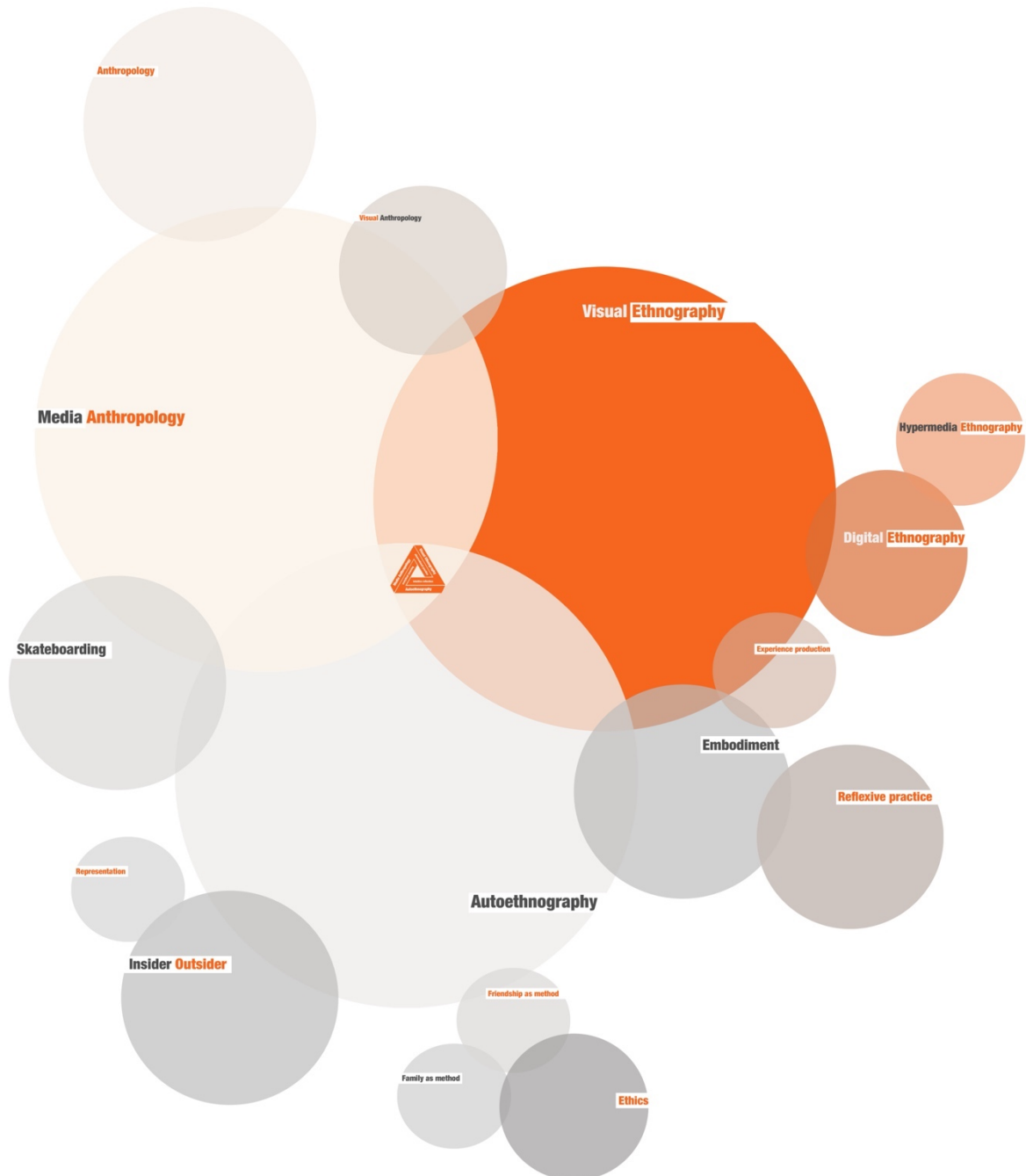
Figure 13: Mapping the three fields which form the interdisciplinary approach, documentary as method, 2021

Documentary Research is a dynamic field continuously evolving with new insights and contributions. In this vein, this research seeks to make a significant contribution

by exploring the intricate relationship between tacit embodied knowledge and experience production within skateboard photography and videography. By delving into how individuals acquire knowledge through physical engagement and how this knowledge is translated into tangible experiences and media representations, my work sheds light on the nuanced interplay between perception, action, and expression. Through iterative methods that immerse participants in their lived experiences, this study aimed to capture not only their overt opinions and behaviours but also the subtle, tacit reflections that underpin their interactions, presenting a multifaceted understanding of production methods and tacit reflections, enriching the discourse within the field of Documentary Research.

While the research initially aimed to focus solely on the production of skateboard media, a second thread unconsciously surfaced as part of the PhD practice. During the early stages of developing a qualitative methodological framework, the research sought to implement a visual ethnographic approach. Recognising debates within visual communication, particularly the views of visual ethnographer Sarah Pink and social anthropologist Tim Ingold, a realisation emerged that, when used alone, visual ethnography could not adequately capture the finer intricacies and depth of the research questions. Tim Ingold argues that solely basing research on visual evidence limits the understanding of everyday lives, including the "context, texture and dynamics" (Ingold, 2008) to mere speculation.

Providing a comprehensive approach to documenting skateboard media production, documentary as method is triangulated within visual ethnography, media anthropology, and autoethnography. Informed by Gillian Rose's approach to visual materials as "essential properties for representation" (Rose, 2016), Sarah Pink's visual inquiry (Pink, 2001), Tim Ingold's "Movements of Making" (Ingold, 2011), Elisenda Ardèvol's "meaning and media practises" (Ardèvol, 2018) and Heewon Chang's approach to "collaborative autoethnography as method" (Chang, 2013) the interdisciplinary framework formed a collaborative process of inquiry, focusing on

visual methods of data collection and textual[9] and discourse[10] analysis, alongside autoethnographic inquiry, ensuring "context, texture and dynamics" (Ingold, 2008) are fully described.

Examining participants' and my own embodied expertise within the field of media, documentary as a method is a means of understanding the interconnectedness of researcher and participant. It offers the potential to receive discourse generated through various modes of visual representation, interviews, and analysis alongside the researchers' autoethnographic native sensitivities and insights.

1.1.4 Forming Practice Research

In a report for The UK Council for Graduate Education (1994), Christopher Frayling defined practice-based research, as:

> "The practice-based doctorate advances knowledge partly by means of practice. An original/creative piece of work is included in the submission for examination. It is distinct in that significant aspects of the claim for doctoral characteristics of originality, mastery and contribution to the field are held to be demonstrated through the original creative work" (Frayling, 2007).

In 2003 Anke Coumans defined practice-led research in Higher Arts Education as:

> "Within practice-led research, it is the design process moving from problem to solution that is the point of departure for the rhetoric research direction of the thesis" (Coumans, 2003).

As a maker-practitioner, deciding which camp to conduct my research has been challenging. By Frayling's definition, practice in practice-based research gains new knowledge by means of abundant creative outcomes created for their own sake to produce and process understanding. In contrast, practice in practice-led research is the operational exploration significant to the making of artefacts, focusing on the knowledge involved in the creation of the work (Mäkelä, 2007).

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[9] Textual analysis is the process of examining and interpreting the texts of media artefacts, such as films, television programs, music, and other cultural artefacts, to better understand how these texts both shape and are shaped by the broader culture, society, and media environment of which they are a part.

[10] Discourse analysis is a method used to examine how language is used in different contexts and how language is used to convey and construct meaning. It is concerned with identifying and analysing social practices, beliefs and values that emerge through language and communication.

In practice-based research, research is conducted by practitioners in a particular field and is based on their own experiences and observations. The role of practice is more dominant than the role of researcher, emphasising the knowledge located in making. This type of research can be subjective, with the practitioner-researcher carrying out their research solely based on their understanding of practice, wishing to develop knowledge of their practice through practice (Candy, 2006). In practice-led research, research is still based on their experiences and observations. However, it is also informed by existing research and theory and is used to develop new theories and approaches. The primary focus is not on developing the researcher's knowledge by making but on advancing knowledge by understanding the process (Sullivan, 2009).

Describing a research journey which ebbed and flowed between practice-based and practice-led, this study oscillated depending on the context of where the research was set. At times the research could even be doing both simultaneously. In California 2018, while undertaking a series of interviews, one main aim was to advance my knowledge of practitioners' practice. At the same time, I was mindful of the new knowledge I was acquiring, partly by means of directing the location where the interview would take place, setting up cameras and sound, and taking photographs of the locations, studio spaces and participants within them. Slipping in and out of roles, at one point I would be deeply involved with questioning participants, shifting next to documenting, and filming ethnographic spaces. Next, I might sit with the person in the field, observing through practice while responding to and advancing theoretical knowledge through a line of questioning. These indistinguishable roles make it difficult to position this research as practice-based or practice-led. Therefore, I choose to define the context of my research as neither based nor led, but simply practice.

Adopting the term practice, it is also necessary to clearly distinguish between practice and pure practice. As Stephen Scrivener argues, "There is a critical difference between practise and pure practise; you have to examine why the works are being created" (Scrivener 2002). He goes on to define research practice as,

> "Research aimed at generating culturally novel apprehensions that are not just novel to the creator or individual observers of an artefact; it is this that distinguishes the researcher from the practitioner." (Scrivener 2002)

In research, practice is positioned to address the research questions. The practice is not general but directed, undertaken within an ethical and well-devised framework. It has defined objectives and outputs that enhance knowledge as practice.

1.1.5 Thinking-Through-Practice

Figure 14: Thinking-through-practice model, 2023

Thinking-through-practice is situated within documentary as method (Figure 14). Drawing on Mark Johnson's theory of 'mean-making'[11] (Johnson, 2010) and Sally

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[11] Mark Johnson explores how linguistic pragmatism has sparked an ongoing debate concerning whether philosophy should focus on language or experience. Johnson argues how to comprehend and improve

Gardner's inquiry into 'what does it mean to really practice?' (Gardner, 2012), this research applies the concept of thinking-through-practice, to foster a nuanced understanding of the interconnections between experience and forms of practice. Exploring three distinct roles - that of the researcher, the expert, and the moments where we collaborate, this thesis proposes that these perspectives offer valuable insights to help refine our knowledge of experience production within skateboard media.

Thinking-through-practice seeks to critically understand the complexities of relationships between the three different practices. Approaches to both participants' and my practices highlight how thinking-through-practice helped uncover the many layers of meaning embedded in each production process. In Chapter 4, I continue to discuss how thinking-through-practice provided an opportunity to take a step back and gain a deeper understanding of the various approaches, considering the critical, socio-political, cultural, and economic implications of each practice, which in turn helped to inform decisions when choosing tools to document participants.

1.2.1 Contribution

This submission represents a contribution to knowledge in two ways:

The research focuses on an area of study warranting more consideration –exploring skateboarding media production. This research locates gaps in scholarly literature examining experience production and embodied knowledge, specifically the media practices of skateboard photographers and videographers to construct still and moving images. Recent academic literature within skateboarding studies tends to focus on research including skateboarding's relationship to gender, (Beal, 1996, Abulhawa, 2020), race (Williams, 2021, McDuie-Ra, 2023), and class (Atencio, Beal, & Wilson, 2009, Howell, 2014), as well as cultural significance within use of architectural spaces (Borden, Rendell, Kerr, & Pivaro, 2001) and health benefits (Corwin, Williams, Maruco, & Romero-Morales, 2019). My work addresses the gap in literature in the field relating to skateboard media through photography and

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meaningful experience, the importance of meaning that transcends language has to be acknowledged. Meaning, understanding, thinking, and valuing are all processes which are enabled physically. Even when language is used to analyse something, experience of meaning must still be present - meaning it is not possible to avoid experience in philosophical procedures.

videography. The findings of this research contribute to an emerging academic discourse in the field of fashion media communication (See Chapter 2).

The second contribution resides in practice. My practice portfolio and thesis present documentary as method within an interdisciplinary methodology. Addressing the approaches that have facilitated data collection and analysis, stakeholders can gain an enhanced perception of visual inquiry to intellectualise visual and media communication theory further. Consequently, this acts as a springboard for additional exploration within the domain of communication theory, with particular significance for research surrounding skateboard media production, experience production, and embodied knowledge.

During this research, two papers[12] that were presented at conferences and three exhibitions[13] provided avenues to share findings with academic and non-academic audiences. Feedback was used to inform and refine this study.

1.2.2 Stakeholders

This research is directed at three distinct stakeholder groups, within the discipline and practice of media communication theory:

Firstly, individuals involved with skateboarding or those interested in skateboarding-related media production, including photographers, videographers, editors, and producers. Examining the creative process and the value of embodied knowledge formed by individuals involved in skateboarding media production, the roles of makers and editors are explored to understand the impact skateboard media has had and continues to have on the skateboarding narrative and culture.

The second stakeholder group consists of an increasing number of critical figures examining skateboarding's impact from an academic perspective. Through a practice-focused approach, this study outlines the unique procedures and unspoken

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[12] International Foundation of Fashion Technology Institutes, Manchester, 2019. Eleventh International Conference on The Image, Sydney, 2020 (Online).

[13] London Design Festival, Royal College of Art, London, 2018. Innoskate, Smithsonian Institute, The Bartlett School of Architecture, London, 2019. No Comply, Somerset House, London, 2021.

knowledge used to develop insider expertise via experience production. It offers alternative views to the limited current scholarly material focusing on skateboarding media by providing new insight.

The third group of stakeholders in this research includes academics, industry professionals, and students interested in Fashion Media Communication Theory. The research prompts conversations about the representation and identity of skateboarding when presented in fashion photography and videography and consequently invites professionals to reflect on the implications of incorporating skateboarding into fashion concepts through collaborative media production. Doing so provides a valuable learning experience for the future generation of experts in this field.

Finally, this thesis has the potential to benefit a broad spectrum of stakeholders not affiliated with the field but who may find the information contained a helpful resource, ranging from professional and amateur skateboarders to devotees of skateboarding culture and undergraduate researchers studying skateboarding media. Hence, this study is a source of information for those parties and could be used further in future research.

1.2.3 Limitations of Research

As an early career researcher and a female writing about skateboarding, there were many directions my research might have taken. Admiring the work of feminist scholars who are critiquing the role and position of women in skateboarding, including Becky Beal (1996), Alana Young (2004), and Dani Abulhawa (2008), my research notes that their formal theories are not overtly mentioned. While the research seeks to give voice to female protagonists within the iterations, it recognises the magnitude of such a specific conversation. It raises awareness of the need for more female media specialists in skateboarding. The research acknowledges that further discussions about the role of females in the production of skateboarding media are needed. This doctoral thesis aims to form the critical groundwork from which to begin addressing these conversations in the future.

Exploring Western perspectives, the research recognises the creative and substantial contributions of photographers and videographers in other areas of the world. Drawing on participants from California and Northern Europe, these individuals represent a fragment of skateboarding's narrative, providing rich insights from the birth of skateboarding to the present day. While the research examines practice, it does not give an overview of the historical context. It focuses on media production methods and looks at techniques within a non-linear timeline. Furthermore, the research does not account for the alternative methods by which skateboarding has been captured. These include representation in Hollywood movies, self-recorded home movies and sponsorship edits.

The research draws attention to the works of Arthur Elgort for *Vogue*, Juergen Teller for *Celine*, and the moving image campaign Allure Homme for *Chanel*, exploring how each approach has employed the image of skateboarding (Figure 15) within the frames of promotional material. While these examples attest to fashion's current preoccupation with skateboarding, they do not address the widespread portrayal of fashion's depiction of skateboarding within the wider fashion environment. These limitations highlight the need for further research in skateboarding and fashion media within an academic context.

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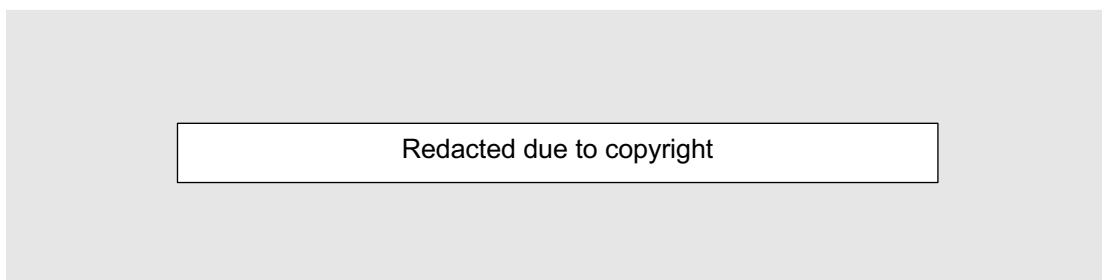
Figure 15: Arthur Elgort for Vogue, Juergen Teller for Celine, Allure Homme for Chanel

Lastly, during the fourth and fifth years of study, the research was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In May and August of 2020, three papers were due to be presented at conferences exploring autoethnographic reflexivity and documentary as method, along with further collaborative fieldwork—how I planned to conduct interviews changed as lockdown meant moving online. Planned research trips to America and France were placed on hold until travel was permitted again. Limited fieldwork concerning government guidelines was undertaken in the UK, where

possible. Miraculously, the research did not grind to a halt. Other approaches to documenting practice, including moving interviews online and limiting the geographical capturing of data to within the Cornish borders, generated a new ethics approval sought in line with RCA processes. Hypermedia and online environments played a key role in driving the practice of research forward, enabling its continued progress.

1.3.1 Researchers' Perspective, A Privileged Position

Stepping onto my first skateboard in 1991, I am unsure if it was the sense of speed or unwavering fear, but a feeling of something truly amazing swept over my body. Immersed in four wheels, two trucks, and a piece of wood, I rode that board until it was no longer fit for purpose. Bruised and battered from bombing hills and attempting to ollie, when the board died, so did my initial passion for skateboarding.

Some years later, while at university, I met an aspiring journalist, Leo Sharp. Already setting out on a journey to establish himself as one of the UK's foremost skateboard photographers, I was easily swayed back into the culture. Leo bought me a professional set-up, and soon, the local supermarket kerb was home to a motley crew of reprobates.

On graduation, we moved to Manchester. Leo and I could travel north and south on weekends from this critical relocation to shoot and skateboard. Leo's portfolio grew, as did his reputation. Soon, an offer of a retainer was followed by full-time employment at *Sidewalk Surfer* magazine. Tours in the UK and abroad became regular occurrences. Visiting professionals from Europe and the United States were plentiful, and we were there to witness skateboarding's evolution from its anti-social outcast roots to mainstream activity.

During this same period, I worked with brands and several fashion magazines. While sportswear was my passion, mainstream fashion houses and publications began to request my portfolio for consideration. I regularly shot fashion weeks in Milan, London, and Paris, as well as lookbooks and editorial content alongside briefs for

smaller brands. Pursuing a career for over fifteen years led to my position as programme lead for Fashion Communication.

Starting from this privileged position, the research recognises my autobiographical standing immersed in skateboarding and fashion. Both the fashion and skateboard industries have fundamentally influenced my practice. These epistemological connections have inescapably shaped and formed my understanding of culture, society, and aspects of human experience. Immersed in the fashion industry for two decades and with an intimate connection to skateboarding for almost three, I have been afforded both knowledge and experience from within.

Figure 16: Touring with an American skateboard team in the UK, 2008. © Rights Leo Sharp, all rights reserved.

Writing from the position of an insider, the blurring lines between participant and researcher raised initial concerns. Highlighting several ethical complexities, the research needed to address my position in designing and conducting fieldwork. The research recognised the significance of interrogating and understanding my journey by implementing an autoethnographic approach during the collection and analysis of findings.

Unpacking the approaches, friendship as method (Tillmann-Healy, 2003) and family as method (Irwin, 2006), the research identified ways to mitigate criticism when working with those participants with whom I had personal relationships. Intimate methods were exposed, and through the observation of autoethnographic perspectives of self-narrative and autobiographical inquiry (Ellis & Bochner, 2011), the study addressed safeguarding participants, including my partner and daughter, within the construct of fieldwork. Processes of reflexive self-questioning, self-analysis, and a rolling program of expositions presented opportunities to explore reflexivity and research impartiality regarding the rigorous standards the RCA's ethics committee set.

1.4.1 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2, the literature review, explores the current scarcity of scholarly studies examining skateboarding and media production. Key texts address where scholars have written about skateboarding and media as part of a critical conversation within the broader scope of skateboarding culture. Further critique examines the ontological principles underlying visual and media communication, addressing the role of documentary as a method within this research.

In Chapter 3, methodology, the act of thinking-through-practice and "the products of making" (Mäkelä, 2010) are explored as framed within documentary as method. Here, it is observed that using images, audio, and text can provide analytical responses and actively explain, illustrate, and provide contextual information. Examining the role of intuitive tacit knowledge, how beliefs, justification, transparency, and rigours of findings relate to each other and are refined in the research process, Chapter 3 also analyses the ethical implications addressed throughout the project design.

Chapter 4 investigates how the aesthetic of skateboarding has been translated into fashion films and photography and explores how skateboard media specialists employ their bodies and intrinsic understanding to form media. Through fieldwork, this chapter examines the unique practices of skateboard media specialists and how they use their experiences of skateboarding to bring about specific creative outcomes.

In Chapter 5, the implications of the findings are discussed, and reflections on the research process are made. Additionally, recommendations are provided, and implications for future research are highlighted.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW
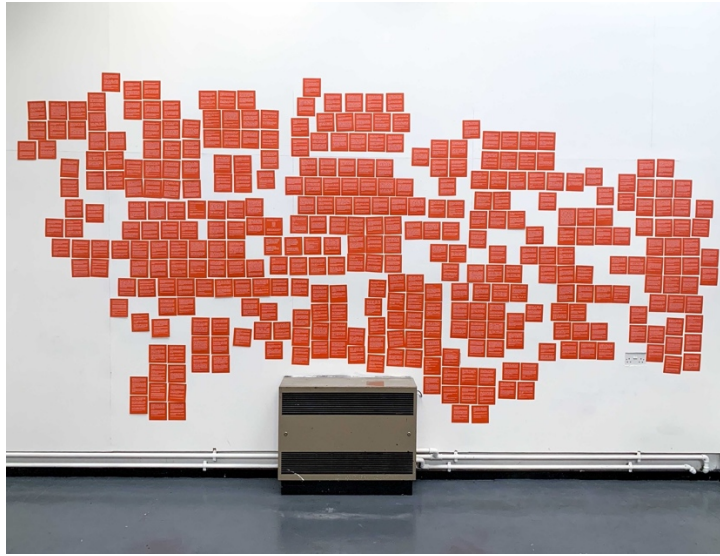
Figure 17: Mind mapping epistemological theories and patterns within the literature review, 2018

2.1 Introduction

While there is limited academic inquiry focusing on the topic of skateboard media production, there is nonetheless a recognition of the role of media in skateboarding (Brayton, 2005, Donnelly, 2008, Yochim, 2010, MacKay, & Dallaire, 2013, Borden, 2015 O'Connor, 2016, Wheaton, & Thorpe, 2018, Dupont, 2020, Thurnell-Read, 2022). Highlighting these key authors identifies the gaps in current research regarding the crafting of skateboard photography and film, which my research addresses.

Evaluating the interrelated processes of production, representation, and identity within media, the literature review expands on the work of Stuart Hall and Hans Gelter by building on their ideas in relation to this research into skateboarding media production. Shedding light on how communities construct and represent their experiences and identities via images and film, I debate Anna Munster's (2011) and Angela Leung's and Dov Cohen's (2007) critical works in media embodiment to elucidate further the role of tacit knowledge examining how understanding is created and shared within communities (Merleau-Ponty Smith,1962, Sherif, 2001, Cohen & Hoshino-Browne 2007), alongside notions of reinforcing collective visions through photography and film (Smith & Campbell, 2017).

To conclude, attention is given to Sarah Pink's work in visual ethnography, Tim Ingold's theories of making, and his stance on the dependability of visual ethnography as a method for accumulating and comprehending complex knowledge. Media anthropology and Elisenda Ardèvol's work within meaning and media practices, and Gillian Rose's fundamentals of visual methodologies, the belief that the visual can uncover hidden perspectives and reveal deeper meanings, are reviewed alongside the work of critical scholars Carolyn Ellis and Heewon Chang, examining approaches to autoethnographic study, intuition, cultural identity and the intersect of power within research practices.

Figure 18: Mapping critical theorists and online sites to identify gaps or tensions in current research, 2019

2.1.1 A Diagraphical Literature Review

Examining current literature review structures from the position of practice exposed a need for more discourse concerning visual approaches.

> "A review should identify critical knowledge gaps and thus motivate researchers to close this breach. That is, writing a review not only requires an examination of past research, but means making a chart for future research." (Webster, & Watson, 2002)

Key academics Jane Webster and Richard Watson have written extensively on constructing a literature review in their book *'Analyzing the Past to Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review'* (2002). I found their works guided this review alongside further significant contributors from scholars Mark Petticrew, Helen Roberts, and Britta Brugman Amber Boeynaems. Still, I was critical of the lack of mention of alternative approaches, such as using visuals to present a taxonomy of subsequent study. Consequently, I was struck by the thought that, as a practitioner studying for a practice PhD, what might a literature review from a visual perspective look like? And how might it add to knowledge and understanding?

Webster and Watson (2002) propose that a review can be used to identify and assess knowledge gaps and spur researchers to close them. Thus, the writing of reviews necessitates an in-depth analysis of previous research to guide future studies. By focusing on a written literature review, this study proposes that media communication scholars may be limiting the efficacy of their analysis in displaying and recognising critical knowledge. I argue that a diagraphical response to the material being reviewed, in addition to the written form, may provide further comprehensive insights.

In response, a diagraphical literature review was conducted during the initial stages of the literature review. Implementing a diagraphical literature review was a crucial initial step in proposing an innovative method for disseminating the lack of current scholarship on skateboard media production. This approach stemmed from recognising that a traditional written literature review found limited data, particularly when addressing non-academic sources within skateboard media production.

Incorporating visual representations of scholarly and non-scholarly outputs, the diagraphical literature review emphasised the importance of identifying and addressing gaps in knowledge via the dissemination of eight visual timelines and eighteen graphic collages.
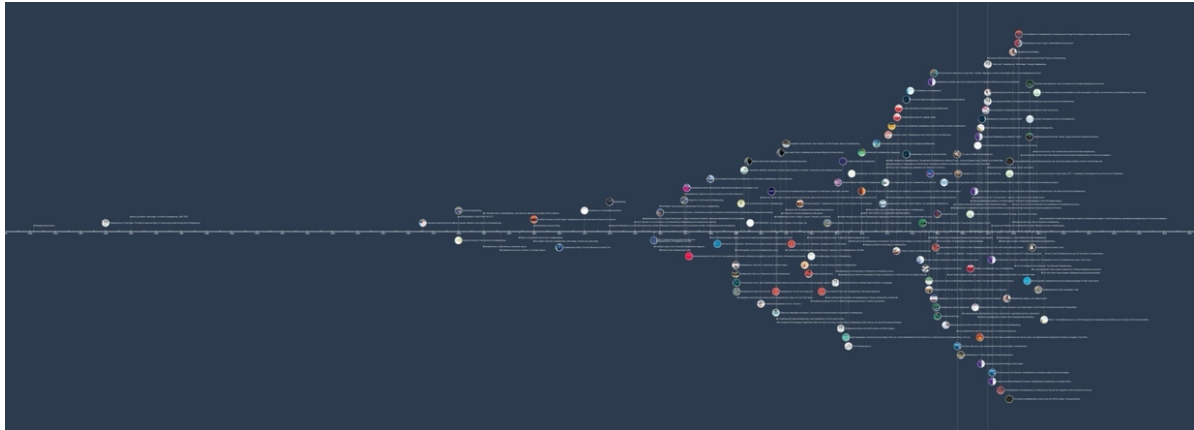
Figure 19: Mapping journal articles containing references to skateboarding upon till 2020

Through visualising and identifying key themes, trends, historical developments, and technological advancements within skateboard media production, the diagraphical review shed light on the evolving styles and techniques skateboard photographers and videographers employed over time. Providing invaluable insights, notably, a lack of scholarly dialogue on production approaches in skateboard media, the visual mapping of skateboard media's genealogy informed the development of research questions and interview practices. Facilitating a deeper understanding of the cultural and aesthetic factors influencing documentary practices, the diagraphical review enhanced understanding of the culture's development, providing a nuanced backdrop for investigating the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers.

Advancements in technology have made processes such as these increasingly accessible, with progressively user-friendly websites and software programs

including timeline mapping[14] and web scraping[15]. In this study, I used web scrape techniques and Google Scholar charting academic and non-academic sources to analyse a broader range of material. Using the search terms skateboarding, skateboarding media, and skateboard media and fashion, I presented my findings using the software Timegraphics[16]. The analysis of this web scraping demonstrated a lack of scholarly dialogue concerning skateboarding media production approaches while simultaneously revealing areas to which the study is being applied, noting trends in research topics, for example, a sizable focus on gender and skateboarding.

Figure 20: Mapping UK press articles featuring skateboarding until 2020

Figures19-22 illustrate how the diagraphical literature review visually mapped journal articles, press articles, fashion films and fashion editorials. Employed as a filtration technique, this enabled the tailored research to identify the recurring themes, trends, and debates by plotting key historical findings and demonstrating relevant details.

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[14] Timeline mapping software lets users create, organise, and maintain timelines they construct to build. a visual flow of information. a graphical representation of a project, timelines can indicate dates, milestones, activities, and other information that needs to be tracked by a researcher.

[15] Web scraping is a technique used to extract data from a website. It involves the use of computer coding software to fetch data from the web, and automatically extracts structured information from it. While web scraping is a useful tool for the gathering of data, it does take training to undertake such a task and can take considerable time input that information into third party software.

[16] https://time.graphics/ Timeline graphics provides the 'reader' with knowledge available on a topic based on the information inputted into the software. The analysis of trends requires additional coding, using terms or phrases added when placed onto the timeline. This information can be continually updated during and after its creation. Timelines can be downloaded, ensuring they do not vanish from the web.

Figure 21: Mapping fashion films featuring skateboarding until 2020
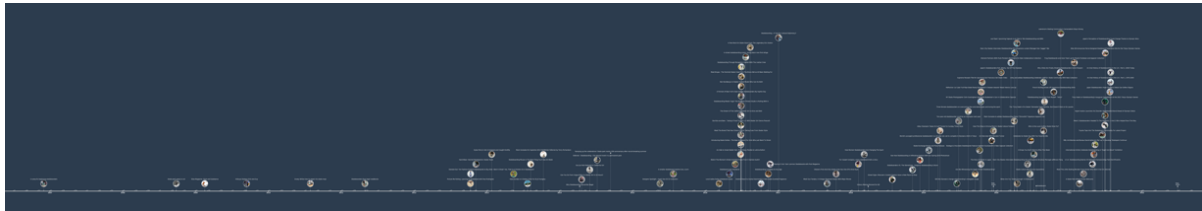
Figure 22: Mapping fashion editorials featuring skateboarding 2020

As Figures 21-22 highlight, the growing number of fashion films and editorials featuring skateboards can be seen in the rise of productions over time, particularly since 2010. Increasing over time, key topics covered by fashion magazines about skateboarding are highlighted in the diagraphical mapping of literature in Figure 20. As fashion photographers and videographers began exploring skateboarding in media, so did fashion magazines, which focused more on styles within skateboarding.
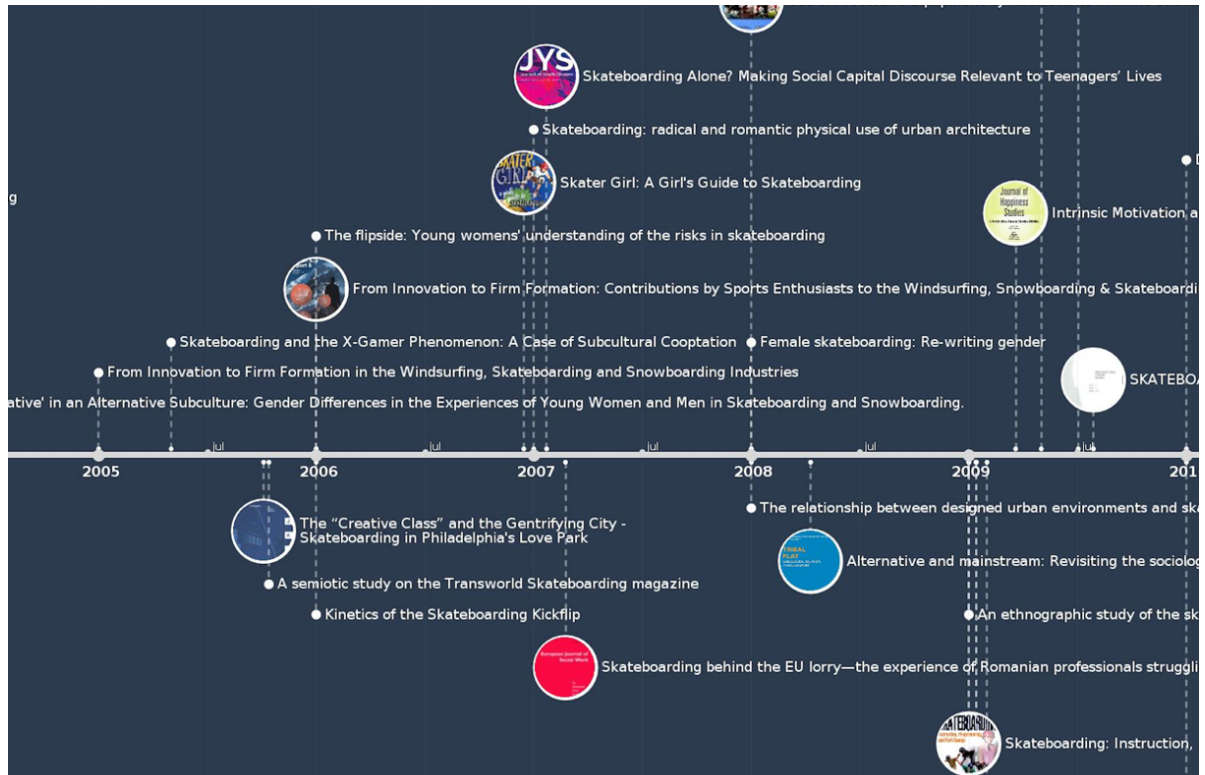
Figure 23: Details mapping journal articles featuring skateboarding, 2019

Figure 24: Details of mapping UK press articles featuring skateboarding, 2019
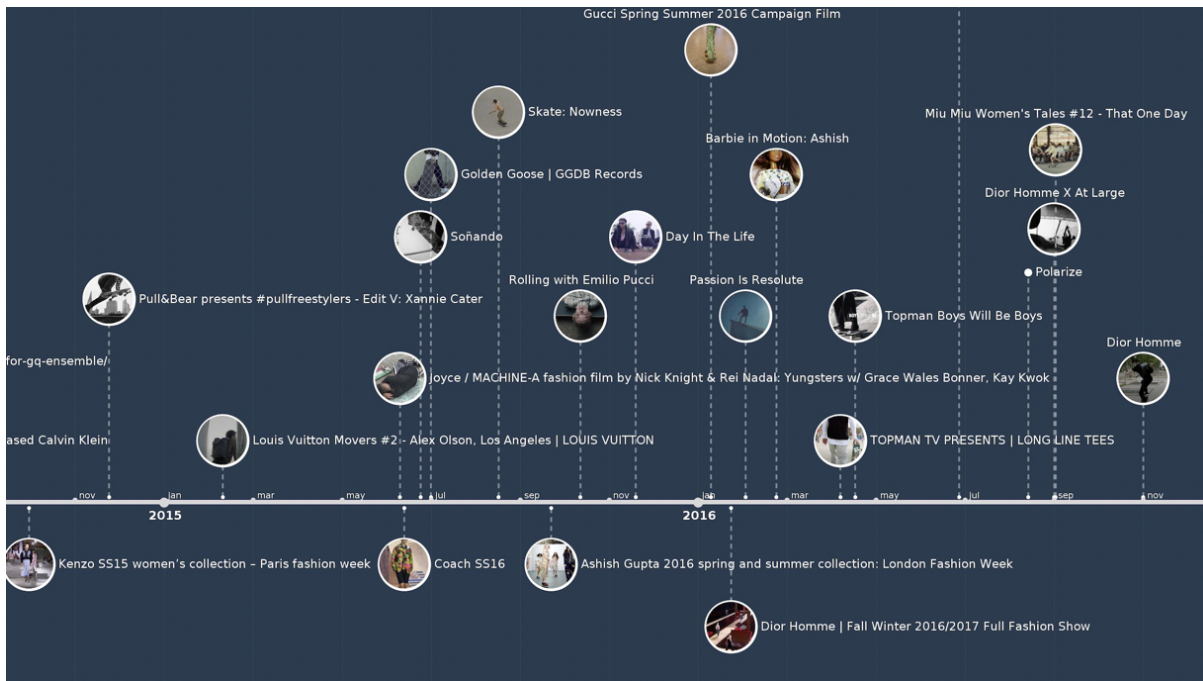
Figure 25: Details mapping fashion films featuring skateboarding, 2019
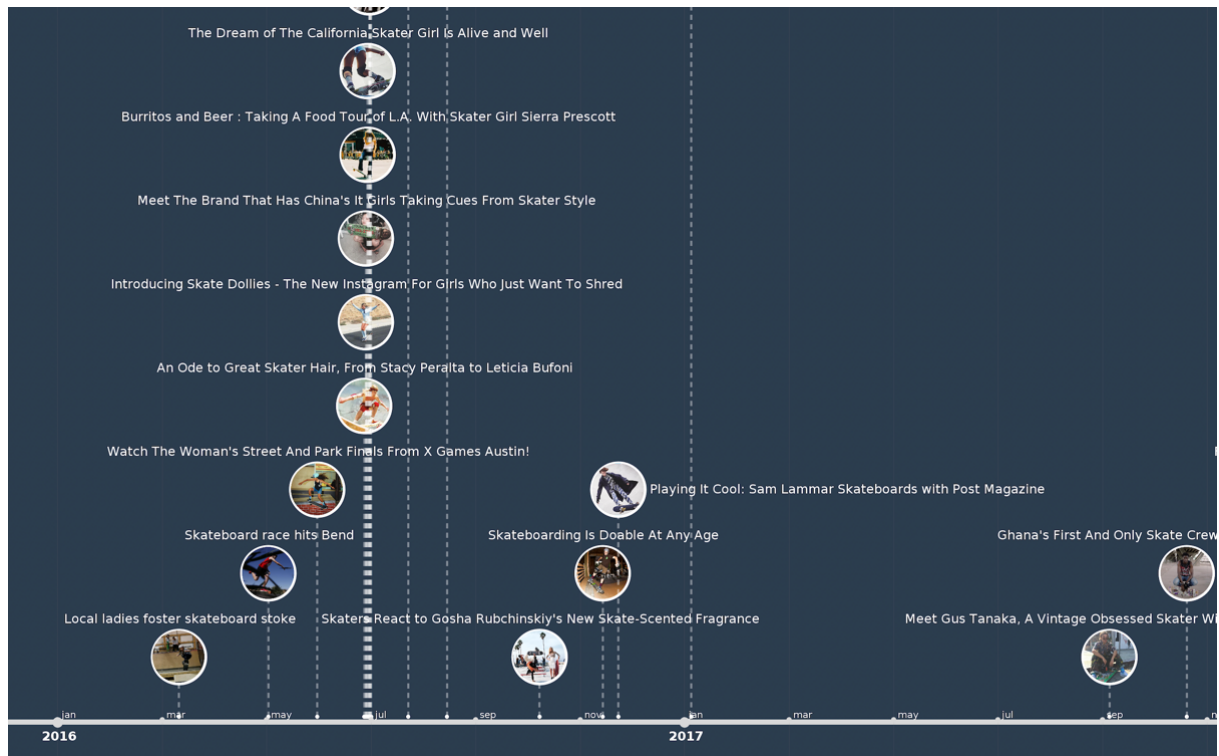
Figure 26: Details mapping fashion editorials featuring skateboarding, 2019

The second phase of the diagraphical literature review mapped out the finer details of skateboarding's media genealogy. A series of edited collages, viewed as photographic suppositions from different decades, highlighted approaches to capturing skateboarding's guise and individual practitioners seen as pioneers of the craft.

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Figure 27: Review of skateboard photography in America 1960 – 1970

Redacted due to copyright

Figure 28: Review of skateboard photography in the UK 1970s

Redacted due to copyright

Figure 29: Review of skateboard photography 1980

Drawing on Alfred Gell's[17] (1998) research into the power of art to create and deploy meaning, I presented these visual anthologies by way of informing my research questions on the two topics. These representations assessed knowledge gaps and established a clear starting point for this study.

By focusing on pertinent connections in skateboard media production during the very early stages of the research, the diagraphical literature review increased my knowledge by creating more insightful and meaningful records. Visually sketching timelines met this aim via the representation and discussion of skateboard media production and fashion in the most practical of ways, forming the groundwork for developing interview questions. The outcomes of the review produced noticeable conclusions, illustrating key themes such as the use of wide-angle lenses, angles from which to capture the action, and the technology used to capture skateboarding, in turn providing materials used in the field for the purposes of photo-elicitation.

Findings provided insight, drawing connections from within the skateboard media landscape, examining how styles and technologies evolved, and considering why specific trends may have become popular or declined in acceptance. These illustrations provided an enhanced understanding of fundamental developments within the production of skateboarding throughout the years.

Returning to the research question of what embodied cultural, social, and aesthetic factors influence the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers, investigating key visuals and critical knowledge acted as a catalyst, from which to deep dive into skateboarding media, offering further evidence of the existing gaps in scholarly discourse.

The aim of varying the perception of what a literature review should look like was to bridge the gap between traditional scholarly language and the presentation of a concise summary of evidence. Rather than clashing with the conventional literature

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[17] Gell's 1998 book Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory offers an exploration of the different aspects of art production, its role in culture, and its relationship to the agency of those who make art. Gell argues that art must be understood in terms of its power to create and deploy meaning, often beyond the direct experience and intent of its makers. He argues that the agency of art is one of the most important factors in understanding the impact and function of art within a culture, both now and historically.

review, this approach broadened and presented existing production methods, exploring the nature of information. The approach provided a holistic concept map of the various subtopics and perspectives by creating visual representations of research that had yet to be undertaken to any extent. The approach communicated these key findings and relationships between the research in an easily digestible and visual format.

This research, in the form of imagery and text, demonstrated the multifaceted nature of practice. As part of the formal written literature review, it gave equal weight to visual material and text-based evidence.

2.1.2 Skateboarding, the Current State of Research

As noted in the timeline, 'Mapping journal articles containing references to skateboarding', research into skateboarding has become an extensive topic in academic discourse since the mid-1990s. These works have covered wide-ranging themes related to skateboarding culture, including sociology, anthropology, health studies, urban studies, and media studies. Scholars have examined leisure studies (Corwin, Williams, Maruco, & Romero-Morales, 2019, O'Connor, 2019), injuries (Forsman & Eriksson, 2001; Hunter, 2012), skate parks and cityscapes (McDuie-Ra, 2021, Dickinson, 2022), and gender (Beal, 1996, Carr, 2017, Geckle & Shaw, 2022). Many of these studies have established an understanding of skateboarding and its social and cultural implications, such as the development of skate parks and their impact on skateboarding communities, identity dynamics within skateboarding, and the relationship between skateboarding and belief principles.

Drawing data from the timeline, it was evident that academic studies on skateboarding and media have been primarily focused on the role of media in and on youth culture. Studies include skateboard media as a form of creative expression (D'Orazio, 2020), how skateboarders have become 'local heroes' (O'Connor, 2020) via the use of social media and digital platforms, archival opportunities to explore cities through skateboard media (McDuie-Ra, 2021), the promotion of positive media messaging as its potential to empower skateboarders (Costa, Kochanek, & Erickson,

2022), depictions of skateboarders in film and television (McDuie-Ra, 2021), as well as the way skateboarders use media to promote their subculture (Dupont, 2020).

Highlighting a lack of research dedicated to examining skateboard media production, the following academic key texts and non-academic resources have been implicit in helping to shape this research, offering insights by providing critical context and fundamental understanding.

In 'London on Film' (Hirsch, 2017), Iain Borden analyses the benefits of utilising the fisheye[18] lens for close-ups alongside hand-held cameras. In the chapter, 'Skateboard City: London in Skateboarding Films', Borden explores the nature of skateboarding as recorded by skateboarders. When discussing the act of filming, he suggests capturing shadows as a form of unification between those being filmed and those doing the filming. Agreeing with these sentiments, the research is narrow in addressing the broader significance of the fisheye. While there is mention of speed and immersion, the text skirts the role of the lens in relation to embodiment and the relationship forged between skater, photographer and videographer when used to capture a photograph, or in the case of moving image, the use of a wide-angle lens or death lens.

Duncan McDuie-Ra's 'Skateboarding and the Mis-Use Value of Infrastructure' (2022) explores how skateboarders create social relationships through the exploitation of spaces. McDuie-Ra discusses how skateboarders create an 'altersociality of infrastructure', interacting with their surroundings in dramatically different ways to its intended use. In his research, McDuie-Ra explains the role of photography and moving images to capture and circulate such interactions, using media to expose architecture and how it can become imbued with subcultural significance. While McDuie-Ra's work conveys a sense of embodiment in the form of 'alternative temporal and spatial relations' (McDuie-Ra, 2022), his study does not focus on the relationships formed between skateboarder, media specialist and space, presenting

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[18] A fish-eye lens is a wide-angle lens which has a short focal length and a greater than normal angle of view. This lens can capture a wide field of view, with a minimum focus distance as close as a few centimetres away from the lens. It creates an almost spherical, almost panoramic view of a scene and can produce images with considerable barrel distortion.

a conversation instead of media to broadcast the 'desire, damage, surveillance, and wounding' of skateboarding culture.

In Dax D'Orazio's 2020 paper, 'The Skate Video Revolution: How Promotional Film Changed Skateboarding Subculture', D'Orazio examines the effect of Powell-Peralta's usage of promotional films on skateboarding subculture. D'Orazio argues that skate videos have evolved into a prototype for skateboard manufacturers, an essential requirement for successful professional careers, and a significant platform for skateboarders to cultivate subcultural capital. Furthermore, he points out that this ascendance of skate videos is inseparably associated with its business motivations. Yet, it still plays a central role in understanding what has permitted skateboarding to persist with an opposing atmosphere during the modern rebirth of advanced competitive skateboarding. His paper recognises the production-motivation relationship yet lacks a comprehensive examination of the processes behind photography and film generation.

In addition to these academic sources, several articles and podcasts produced by the skateboard community have provided valuable insights into current knowledge of this field. These sources include:

Podcasts: The Bunt, Hawk Vs Wolf, The Bones Brigade Audio Show, Skate Creatives, and Beyond Boards. One particular podcast that stands out is The Nine Club with Chris Roberts[19]. A long-form documentary-style podcast about skateboarding culture, it features interviews with prominent skaters, discussing their roots in skateboarding, including conversations on photography and filmmaking. Episodes informing this research include #267 - Glen E. Friedman, #224 - Mark Oblow, #243 - Jake Darwen, #221 - Jason Lee, #31 Chris Ray – Stop and Chat, #119 - Chris Ray and #66 - Skin Phillips. These conversations focus on techniques and technologies used by insider specialists producing skateboard media.

In addition to podcasts, Crailtap's YouTube channel, blogs Slam City Skates and Thrasher, the Slap forum, and Instagram accounts ScienceVsLife, Memoryscreen,

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[19] https://thenineclub.com/

swift_blazer, and Blatantnostalgia have served as important resources for viewing and considering skateboarding media. Delving into both trends and technologies, Slam City Skates articles featuring Kevin Parrott, Joe Gavin, and Sam Ashley proved to be insightful when researching media production from a UK viewpoint, while Crailtap's video interviews offer a wealth of knowledge focusing on an American perspective.

Surrounded by an archive of skateboard magazines, including Skateboarder, Sidewalk Surfer, and Thrasher, the research has also been informed by many years of collecting and reading global perspectives. Although numerous magazines have ceased print operations, a few have migrated to online publication. Among these digital sources, specific articles proved especially helpful in amassing understanding. Among these, Jenkem's 'Tracing the history of skateboarding's most famous camera' (Dobija-Nootens 2018), presented well-researched commentary on the Sony DCR-VX1000 and the death lens, as well as the article 'The politics of skateboard photography' (Dobija-Nootens 2016), shedding light on the decisions made by professional photographers as to what gets covered and what does not.

While these sources may lack scholarly methodologies and critical assessment, they still present valuable perspectives on the connection between skateboarding and media production. Although not explicitly mentioned, such resources highlight the implications of tacit embodiment and experience production.

2.1.3 Embodied Tacit Knowledge and Media

Emerging from cognitive science and phenomenology, embodiment theory determines the reciprocal relationship between body and mind, showing how physical experiences shape cognitive processes and vice versa (Turner, 2000; Monaghan, 2006). Embodiment theory posits that physical experiences influence perceptual states, and intellectual states manifest in interactions with the environment (Clarke, 2008; Gregersen & Grodal, 2008). This implies that the body is not a mere vessel but plays an active role in cognition and behaviour via gestures, body movements, and acquired associations linked to cognitive processes (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

While embodiment has become an increasingly recognised concept for those studying the form and function of the human body, concern has also been raised about its potential to create a false opposition between physicality and the mind (Cheville, 2005). Presenting a critique of this dichotomy, Cheville advocates for an embodied cognitive approach that recognises how our bodies influence our minds, counter-arguing the reduction of the body to being merely an 'object of culture' (Cheville, 2005).

In Angela Leung's and Dov Cohen's paper 'The Soft Embodiment of Culture, Camera Angles and Motion through Time and Space' (2007), Leung and Cohen argue from a similar position, proposing the idea that embodiment is both hard and soft cognition, wherein the former is derived from physical bodily interactions with the world. The latter is derived from psychological representation. Their work considers how people physically interact when creating content and how this shapes their experience and understanding when viewing it. They express how culture is passed down through generations, whose physical movements are shaped by their culture, forming individual and collective patterns representing a group's values and assumptions. They address how embodied knowledge is physical and intertwined with the inner mind.

In Anna Munsters' book, 'Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics' (2011), Munster argues that embodiment and media are intrinsically linked; media can both create and challenge embodied experiences and perceptions of our society. She suggests that we must engage critically with our embodied relationships to media to understand its influence. Going one step further, I would postulate that it is also necessary to realise how media production, the interrelatedness of producers, environment, and technology are expressed in embodied practice if we are to understand its sway on culture.

The research sought to employ embodiment theory to uncover how acquiring knowledge through first-hand experience as a skateboarder affects the formation of skateboard media. Designed to observe how touch, sight, and hearing factor into the production and reinforcement of insider perspectives over time, it addresses how

such elements ultimately shape insiders' visual interpretations of skateboarding's culture.

Alongside this, engaging in self-reflective embodiment[20] provided opportunities for autoethnographic inquiry. Highlighting any predisposition of thoughts, a more conscious and purposeful sense of self was factored into the design of documentary as method. I could recognise and label my feelings, thoughts, and physical sensations via self-reflection, evaluating my beliefs. In doing so, the recognition of reflexivity within my practice was observed through analysis of interactions, and decisions were made as to how best to review these factors to ensure, as far as possible, transparency within my research design.

An example of this was observed in the first iterative stage. Through reflective practice, I recognised during an interview with a friend and participant that there were instances where the phrase 'You know what I mean' was used alongside body gestures. Although we had witnessed these moments together, my position as an inexperienced researcher resulted in essential details being overlooked. To rectify this, I carefully paid closer attention and asked contributors for further information when similar instances occurred.

2.1.4 Experience Production

Hans Gelter's work in experience production proposes a new theoretical approach to studying the artistic industries from a humanised position. With the emergence of a creative class, Hans Gelter describes experience production as a foundational philosophy from which to examine, 'new experience-based communication'. Dividing the methods by which consumers explore experience, Gelter outlines five distinct areas: (1) the experience industry, (2) the experience producer, (3) the experience production, (4) the experience product, and (5) the consumer's experience of the product. As Gelter explains, 'these can only be understood within a human socio-cultural context, where trends and daily aspirations are frequently changing and need to be addressed' (Gelter, 2006).

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[20] The practice of being aware of and taking ownership of one's physical, emotional, and perceptual state during the phases of research.
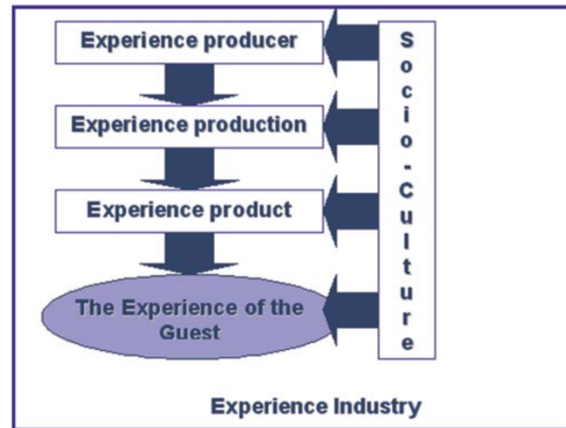
Figure 30: Hans Gelter's experience Industry overview, 2006. © Rights Hans Gelter, all rights reserved.

Tackling new methods of communication, Gelter has observed shifts in audience interaction. Addressing increased levels of individualised communication strategies across social media and the experiential marketing sphere, Gelter refers to this new wave of consumers as 'guests' rather than audiences. He frames the visitor's experience as those who come to gain understanding through personalised interactions rather than general spectatorship. Proposing that the experiences people have in businesses and other organisations have a cumulatively positive effect on an individual's overall experience, Gelter focuses on the need to create positive and enjoyable experiences for customers, employees, and stakeholders, resulting in long-term loyalty, productivity, and satisfaction.

Referencing Max Van Mann's definition of the 'lived experience'[21] Gelter analyses the 'qualities of experience' arguing 'we can learn that experiences that matter anything to us must have significance and meaning...only the person living the experience can define its meaning and significance' (Gelter, 2006). Therefore, these qualities are largely determined by the individual's perception of and reaction to the produced experience, which helps shape memories.

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[21] Max Van Mann's definition of the 'lived experience' is an individual's distinct set of memories, emotions, perspectives, and behaviours that are formed in the context of their life by the events they have experienced. Max Van Manen (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.

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Gelter focuses on the producer being separate from the guest. Describing the maker as one who 'stages' the experience, the guest is perceived as learning from these interactions, intimately forming knowledge into realisations. To be an experienced producer, Gelter describes the facets one would need, including local knowledge specific to the guest's needs. To 'stage' an experience, a producer 'needs to have good guest knowledge regarding their (guest) previous experiences, expectations, moods and feelings' (Gelter, 2006).

Accepting Gelter's idea of the guest, for a producer to create such works, they must be able to develop their skills to shape, design, and manage production methods with a specific person in mind. Therefore, these proficiencies need to be established through the progression of experimental practices; in the case of skateboard media specialists, they would be informed by embodying the act of skateboarding and photographic and film theory.

To explore theories of embodiment and experience production, fieldwork, interviews, and analysis were conducted to gain a comprehensive insight into the notion of 'experience' by skateboard media specialists. Key skills such as the senses, emotions, and 'absorption and/or immersion' (Gelter, 2006) were studied to ascertain the creative decisions and challenges undertaken by producers and skateboarders working in unison. The findings, highlighted in Chapter 4, explore the dynamic exchanges between the photographer/videographer and skateboarder to determine the direction of production and the desired outcomes both seek to achieve.

2.1.5 Representation & Identity

Aristotle believed representation was a natural state of being, presented as a real place, object, person, sound or feeling at a specific moment (Mitchell, 1994). To recognise representation as theories of culture and consciousness, Aristotle stated that man needed to view "the real to form an opinion of what was being

represented"[22]. Roland Barthes considered semiotics[23] and structuralism[24] as a system of signs, from which connections form organised encoded context (Barthes, 1964). Linking his theory to the notion of active audiences, Barthes suggested that the meaning located in published works was not created by the producer but instead by the audience themselves. In his book 'The Death of the Author,' Barthes reconceived the idea that the intentions of those creating a work don't matter. All that is important is how the audience responds to the work. Barthes rationalised that mass media, while attempting to represent a particular view of the world, may, in fact, 'mask' reality from an audience's perspective. That visual content, once considered from different viewpoints, might lead to something untrue to become true and vice versa, based on an audience's interpretation (Barthes, 1967).

Stuart Hall proposed that representation is created through language and that media illustrates or portrays such meaning (Hall, 1997). While the significance of media is not set in stone, the interpretations and implications of photographs and films depend on the viewer and the context in which they are seen. Hall advanced these complex theories further, exploring the observations of the maker and the audience. Identifying social demographics, particularly the relationships of power and identity, Hall examined the process of production and reception to better frame society's understanding of representation and identity. 'Identity is never singular but is multiply constructed across intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices, and positions' (Hall, 2017)

Hall's representational theory generated two major media philosophies: encoding and decoding. Unlike Barthes, Hall recognised the critical role of the producer and how their use of language and/or symbols are embodied within the construct of the work. Reflected by the maker when presented to an audience, Hall's works alluded to the idea that there is no such thing as 'true' representation, surmising that if people or

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[22] According to the Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism, representation was a term debated by both Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle viewed representations as necessary since mimesis is natural to man. Aristotle argued representation becomes man's way of being in the world and his method of learning.

[23] Barthes believed that signs and symbols carry meaning and that understanding them can provide insight into the culture, beliefs, and values of a particular society. He argued that semiotics could be used to decipher the meaning behind popular media, literature, and the arts.

[24] Barthes described structuralism as the study of the relationships between those signs.

events portrayed in works cannot be truly represented, it is, therefore, the case that producers will in fact 'attach' meaning to people or events to produce a representative viewpoint.

Combined with encoding, decoding proposes ways for audiences to create new meaning via their identity and values. Describing encoding as a form of power through which 'ideology or stereotyping fixes meaning' (Hall, 1980), Hall suggests decoding examines the role of social inequality in the complex way spectators observe works. Studying the role of class and the deciphering of information, Hall recognised the role of individuals' experiences and ruling media voices. Citing the dominant producers who controlled media messages, Hall positioned the audience as one who was disempowered by those regulating the message.

This research challenges Barthes' philosophy by examining concepts of 'near reality'[25] and 'near cultural identity'[26] via the surveying of embodiment and experience production theories. Observing the processes and outcomes of specialists creating media, this study assesses whether the producer's intentions and experience are necessary for generating meaningful material and questions how they control the representation of outcomes (Hall, 1980).

Investigating how cultural norms, values, and beliefs can shape skateboard media production, the research considers Hall's theory that there is no such thing as 'true' representation. It proposes the notion that skateboard photography and videography do come close to 'truth' on account of the 'desire, damage, surveillance, and wounding' recorded in the act of skateboarding documentation (McDuie-Ra, 2022).

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[25] In his book 'Photography: The Key Concepts' (2020) David Bate explains realism and semiotics are both useful theories for understanding photography. Realism highlights the similarity between photography and reality, while semiotics emphasises the difference between the two. While realism privileges the idea of similitude, semiotics points to how different codes operate in photography. The two theories can both be useful, and there is no need to choose between them.

[26] Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity suggests that the media is a key factor in forming the identities of individuals within society. He argued that individuals take in different cultural meanings from the media, and therefore, those meanings become a part of their cultural identities.

2.1.6 Insider / Outsider

As a researcher investigating skateboard media production and deeply immersed in skateboard culture, I was intricately positioned at the intersection of insider and outsider perspectives. This dual vantage point offered a unique lens through which to understand the complexities of skateboard media creation, having a greater understanding of a culture and its norms, values, and beliefs (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002) than those outside.

On one hand, my deep, intimate knowledge of skateboard culture afforded me insider status. Familiar with the nuances of the community, its values, language, and subcultural norms, this insider perspective allowed me to access spaces, stories, and insights that may have been inaccessible to those outside the culture. My immersion in skateboard culture for over two decades enabled me to build a rapport with participants and delve into the intricacies of skateboard media production with authenticity and depth. As Brian Edwards[27] argues deep researchers have the advantage of the in-depth inner workings of an organisation or group with an explicit knowledge of the history and culture, along with "the ability to interpret body language, symbols and slogans that are common within the organisation or group" (Edwards, 2002).

Outsider theorists often argue that with greater familiarity, there is usually a loss of objectivity (Hewitt-Taylor, 2002). Patricia Adler and Peter Adler highlight how insider researchers can be at a disadvantage, as the researcher may need to be seen as an impartial observer. They suggest that field research should be conducted with an outsider who can maintain an objective point of view and provide a more reflexive analysis, maintaining an open and honest attitude throughout the research process (Adler & Adler, 1987).

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[27] Brian Edwards suggests that some researchers are in fact 'deep insiders'. Researchers who "have been or spend more than five years in research whereby an individual is deeply embedded within an organisation and speaks of matters which may be hidden from the public gaze" (Edwards, 2002).

Navigating the insider/outsider dynamic, I was keenly aware of my outsider position as a researcher. My academic training, methodology, and objectives may differ from those directly involved in skateboard media production. This outsider perspective granted me critical distance and analytical insight. It allowed me to examine skateboard media production through a broader lens, considering its socio-cultural significance, political implications, and industry dynamics. My outsider perspective enabled me to ask probing questions, challenge assumptions, and uncover underlying power dynamics within the field.

Being confronted with dual roles, I came to recognise that in this study, I had to retain some level of "outsiderness" (Naples, 1996), "an appreciation for the fluidity and multi-layered complexity of human experience," (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). Navigating the insider/outsider dynamic as a researcher in skateboard media production requires a delicate balance. I leveraged my insider status to access and understand the intricacies of the culture while also maintaining a critical distance to objectively analyse and interpret my findings. By embracing both emic and etic perspectives, I produced nuanced and comprehensive research that contributes to a deeper understanding of skateboard culture and its relationship to media production, uncovering the diverse practices, meanings, and power dynamics inherent in cultural production within skateboard culture, offering a more nuanced understanding of the community.

2.2.1 Visual Methods

As early as 1900, visual literacy began to gain recognition, transforming some aspects of Western philosophy. While traditional scholarship had relied upon established written methods (Banks & Morphy, 1999), scholarly society was becoming aware of the importance of imagery in everyday life. As Marcus Banks has argued, given that images are present in nearly all cultures, they should be considered when studying society (Banks & Vokes 2010). Observation and surveillance practices, such as recording imagery, challenged traditional scholarly methodology by disrupting the idea of a world consisting of written text. Debate ensued when academics attempted to define visual approaches in purely linguistic terms (Reavey & Johnson, 2008).

How we come to understand and place value on visual research (Sanoff, 2016; Wiles, Bagnoli, Davies, Holland, & Renold, 2008) poses a challenge for contemporary researchers. In 'An Introduction to Visual Culture', Nicholas Mirzoeff (1999) claims popular opinion perceives written works as more intellectual than visuals. James Peacock (2000) adds listening is more acceptable than looking and touching, implying that written texts are preferred for scholarly pursuits.

In 2000 Mary Strong recognised and initiated a debate in the 'Society for Visual Anthropology':

> "SVA [Society for Visual Anthropology] is planning a position statement whereby visual materials such as film and video be considered legitimate scholarly work applicable to tenure and promotion decisions. Statement will appear in a future column. Debate on this subject is welcome." (Strong, 2000)

Strong's proclamation illustrates the predisposition facing current academic communities regarding visual materials. Generally viewed as cumbersome and hard to justify, visual materials suffer from being considered independent scholastic endeavours.

Yet, within the field of social sciences, several strands of documentary research have evolved. Documentary methods, documentary research methods and documentary ethnographic practice. These splinter theories have advanced how researchers handle primary and secondary data. Documentary research method (DRM) proposes researchers process and analyse documents that contain information about the phenomenon they wish to study to provide an account of an experience (Bailey 1994). Researchers working with DRM often refer to transcribed text as documentary sources, investigating and categorising (Payne & Payne 2004) these physical sources. Arguably, research is more than written data. While scripted documents are an important source of information, these documents cannot be viewed solely as social inquiry (Atkinson & Coffey 1997).

Critic Eugene Webb cited DRM's approach as a supplementary form of data collection, rarely the primary or principal research method. In his work with archival material, Webb highlighted the need for researchers to be aware of bias in

documentary evidence. Citing limitations of missing or incomplete data, Webb emphasised the consideration that there may be inaccuracies in documents and inherent prejudices of the researcher (Webb, 1984) when selecting what is evidenced within the research.

One criticism this research has of DRM is the setting aside of producing first-hand accounts for the purpose of the research. Giving attention principally to naturally occurring data and studying them as an account of experiences and of the people who created them (Payne & Payne 2004) opens debate on the transparency and rigours of such data to be solely positioned as trustworthy. Relying primarily on documents generated by others, without understanding how those forms of inquiry are shaped, leads to questions of preference. While documentation may be key to generating knowledge, DRM is limited as a stand-alone approach.

Marshall McLuhan (1994) noted that interpreting visual information is cognitively more complex than reading written text. Interpreting an image, sound, or film clip requires viewers to formulate responses based on their culture to construct opinions, which is easier to do with written text owing to understanding the writer's thoughts. Wilton Martinez (1992) argued that writing can encapsulate images produced by film, but not vice versa. This implies that without extended reflexive text, viewers cannot make sense of pictures and film, creating a reader gap (Mitchell, 1994) between intention and response that challenges ethnographers. Martinez critiqued ethnographic films for their lack of theoretical development and empirical research.

> "David MacDougall (1978) has moved closer to theories that challenge the dominant role of the author in the construction of meaning. He has characterised 'modern' ethnographic films as open-ended 'texts' in that they incorporate and juxtapose multiple perspectives (e.g. author, film subjects, 'indigenous commentary'). His approach suggests displacing traditional forms of representation and ways of reading in favour of participatory film styles which allow for more complex forms of communication: 'The underlying insight of the film-as-text is that a film is a conceptual space within a triangle formed by the [film] subject, film-maker, and audience and represents an encounter of all three'." *(Martinez, 1992)*

Nonetheless, Margaret Mead (1995) argued that visuals allow for a more holistic understanding of phenomena than other forms of research. She suggested that

visuals could capture and represent a community's social and cultural contexts, beliefs and values, and social dynamics, thus offering a more comprehensive insight. Furthermore, Mead argued that visual data collection can be used to identify patterns and trends that might be overlooked.

Gillian Rose defines visual methodologies as an interdisciplinary field combining sociology, anthropology, art history, media studies, psychology and other disciplines. She considers how still and moving images represent lives, relationships, and societies and can be used to explore and understand the world (Rose, 2016). Rose argues that visual methodologies are important for research, as they convey meaning, shape understanding and influence behaviour.

Critics have argued that Mead and Rose's focus on the visual as a means of understanding the modern world is misguided. David Buckingham (2009) rejected the idea that such methods provide participants and researchers with an accurate picture of thoughts and feelings. Josh Packard (2008) further suggested that using images and film as a form of analysis is an inadequate approach to understanding visual culture, as it narrows the relationship between power and knowledge creation.

Forging a robust case for visual representation, both Mead and Rose argue how media can capture nuances in behaviour that can't be expressed in written or spoken language. Debating the role of visuals in reducing predisposition in fieldwork, Mead often maintained that film and photography could capture culture in the moment without later having to 'rely on memory' (Mead, 1995). By employing visual tools for data analysis, interpretation, and presentation (Prosser & Loxley, 2008; Rose, 2016; Wieteska, 2018), visual methodologies offer creative and dynamic elements, enabling deeper understandings and outreach (Rose, 2016).

2.2.1 Visual Ethnography

As debate surrounding visual methodologies proceeded, visual ethnography emerged as a form of interdisciplinary qualitative research rooted in ethnography and anthropology (Pink, 2001, Pink 2006; Ali, 2018). As a renowned figure in visual ethnography, Sarah Pink began questioning visual representation within research,

particularly the role of accumulation and examination of empirical data (Pink, 2001). Along with other prominent intellectuals in this domain (Banks, 1999; Hindmarsh, 2008; Horst, 2016; Schembri and Boyle, 2013), debates on critical theory and philosophy surrounding visual ethnography increased.

Pink spent her formative years interrogating existing preconceived notions of ethnographic experiences. Analysing female bullfighters in Spain (1997) to challenge preconceived historical debates, she undertook an objective-subjective methodological approach, shifting the emphasis of ethnographic knowledge toward individuals' experiences rather than the anthropological approach of exploring entire cultures.

Defining visual ethnography as a research method, Pink advanced an understanding of how field methods such as video, photography, drawings and sketches, sound recording, and participant observation may enhance theoretical foundations in visual research, arguing that a connection between methodology and methods is essential to ensure the results are valid and purposeful.

> "I'm going to suggest that the meanings of the images we produce through these methods and not simply visual recordings of what we saw through the camera…we're not thinking about visual recordings as just what we saw through the frame and that we can analyse the content of, but they're actually traces of the roots that we've taken through the world. They mean something rather different in terms of understanding the research context." (Pink, 2011)

Pink stresses the need to be careful when considering how visual methods are employed (Pink, 2001) to study people through recording and understanding their everyday lives, experiences, and perspectives. Including the use of photographs, videos, and other forms of representation, researchers who produce visual ethnographies engaging with a "philosophy of knowledge" (Pink, 2004) must realise the object of the research within the research process. Placing images and video at the heart of research allows both researcher and participant to come to an understanding of how they might explore environments. In doing so, the captured media, in turn, frames part of the ongoing everyday life, illustrating how scholars might imagine innovating the future of practice research.

Scholars Jan Brace-Govan (2007), Su-Ann Oh (2012), and Darcy Alexandra (2017) have used visual ethnography to gain insight into the experiences and values of social groups. Alexandra's (2017) study 'More Than Words: Co-creative Visual Ethnography' showed how participants could critically use photography and video editing to reflect on their immigrant experiences in Ireland. Brace-Govan (2007) demonstrated the applicability of visual ethnography to market research, highlighting the scope of visual ethnography to provide the research with an opportunity to engage with, make and interpret material in ways that would otherwise be inaccessible or too costly.

While visual ethnography has gained a solid following, it is not without considerable ethical consideration. Kristen Eglinton's 2013[28] study examining young people and visual culture highlighted ethical challenges. Eglinton stressed a potential misunderstanding among participants between the dynamics of the 'field', real life, and the professional and the personal. She postulated that power dynamics could, and at times did, lead to confusion amongst participants about their role in research, advocating further engagement by visual ethnographers to ensure that a separation between the two is not assumed.

In Katherine Gregory's work with Muslim adults living in the Netherlands, she ended her research early, citing the video camera as a potentially unremitting form of power. In her research she found the video camera played a significant role in "symbolically reinforcing Western imperial interests" (Gregory, 2020). Gregory recognised the disadvantage of media bringing to the forefront an awareness of the power dynamics that shaped how people interacted with her and the technology.

In 'The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Anthropology' (2001), Anna Grimshaw critiques the modern anthropological approach of relying on, and being limited by, written interpretation when assessing data. Challenging the status quo, she contends that a successful ethnographic exploration of cultures must involve considering multiple perspectives of the people being studied and using the visual realm to

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[28] Eglinton, K.A., 2013. Between the personal and the professional: Ethical challenges when using visual ethnography to understand young people's use of popular visual material culture. *Young*, *21*(3), pp.253-271.

analyse signs instead of direct data. Like Gregory and Eglinton, she recognises that this requires a holistic perspective and an understanding of the implications of subjectivity.

> "Images by their very nature establish a different relationship between the ethnographer and the world she or he explores. Moreover, image-based technologies mediate different kinds of relationships between ethnographers, subjects, and audiences than those associated with the production of literary texts." (Grimshaw, 2001)

A more prominent criticism of visual ethnography is the interdisciplinary approach, partly due to Pink's emphasis on collaborative research. Thomas Benson and Raymond Miller (1982) contend that researchers must be competent in the relevant disciplines to ensure successful connections between those areas. They warn of the risks, uncertainty, and lack of clarity that arise from needing an adequate understanding of the fields being studied. Expertise in technical research is paramount for adeptness in visual methodology (Collier & Collier, 1986). Place-making necessitates interrelated processes, and researchers must be trained to use varied techniques and apparatus to capture ontological data (Malinowski, 1922). Adopting an immersive outlook is crucial for a researcher to understand the 'native's point of view' (Ingold, 2014); however, this approach may prove distracting in the field.

Anthropologists, including Tim Ingold, have long argued that visual ethnography can sometimes lead to the oversimplification, overgeneralisation, and misrepresentation of a culture. In Ingold's seminal 2008 paper, 'Anthropology is not Ethnography' Ingold maintains that ethnography is "not a method" but "a practice of verbal description", often ignoring the complexities and diversity of human experience. "The accounts it (ethnography) yields, of other people's lives, are finished pieces of work, not raw materials for further anthropological analysis" (Ingold, 2008). Ingold claims that ethnographies fail to account for culture's dynamic, unpredictable, and perpetually changing nature, as they portray a static, simplified version of reality. He asserts that this is due to the interpretive nature of ethnography.

2.2.2 Anthropology, Media Anthropology

As addressed in 'Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description,' (2021), Tim Ingold argues that anthropology is a discipline that focuses on thoughtful

reflection and mindful experience, emphasising the importance of understanding how humans relate to their environment and how they are perceived in the world. This allows anthropologists to gain insight into how people live and how their lives are affected by their surroundings.

Before this publication, Ingold explored the notion of the line in his book 'Lines: A Brief History,' (2016). Here, he asks the reader to imagine a world where 'everyone and everything consists of interwoven or interconnected lines' (Ingold, 2016). These lines could be used to bridge and comprehend different spaces and times, people, the environment, and their relations. Describing the line as fundamental to the human experience, he describes them as manifesting differently in physical, cognitive, and emotional ways. Walking, in particular, is not a means to get from point A to point B but a way to engage with the world (Ingold, 2016), enabling anthropological learning through weaving, observing, storytelling, drawing and writing.

Examining the connective line between skateboard photographers and videographers and their culture, as well as the impact of communication technologies on these relationships, provides insight into the essential bonds between skateboarders and media specialists while constructing an image. The two parties collaborate to construct a near reality encompassing a near cultural identity. This endeavour highlights the critical role these relationships play in skateboard culture.

As an interdisciplinary subfield of anthropology, media anthropology[29] provides space to scope these interconnected lines via textual and discourse analysis. Focusing on the study of media and communication technologies (Boyer, 2012), researchers Faye Ginsburg (2018), Eric Rothenbuhler (2008), Mihai Coman (2013), and John Postill (2009) have argued that media anthropology's critical role is to better understand the dynamics of power and inequality in a digital age.

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[29] Media anthropology examines the ways in which media technologies, processes and practices are embedded in culture and the social. It draws from both media studies and anthropology to look at how culture informs media production and how media is experienced in social contexts. Media anthropology focuses on issues such as how media changes over time, how modern media intersects and clashes with traditional forms of communication, and how people interact with media in different cultural contexts. It provides an interdisciplinary approach that examines how media shapes our society, how it affects individuals, and how culture shapes and is shaped by media, (Ardèvol, 2018).

Examining how media and communication technologies shape human experience, media anthropologists address how visuals are generated to create meaning and understanding (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod, & Larkin, eds., 2002). Describing media anthropology as a collaborative process (Ginsburg, 1991), the epistemological approach emphasises working with indigenous media makers to create shared spaces of representation (Ginsburg, 2016). Observing forms of 'mediascapes' (Stenton et al., 2007), media anthropology investigates how identities, beliefs, and practices can be observed by identifying patterns and meanings in photography and moving images. "I am concerned less with the usual focus on the formal qualities of film as text and more with the cultural mediations that occur through film and video works" (Ginsburg,1991).

Surveying how communication technologies are used to construct identities, create relationships, and influence behaviour, media anthropologists engage with physical, cognitive, and emotional meaning (Beatty, 2013), formed within the context of semiotic formation and dissemination. By gaining a deeper understanding of the motivations and influences that drive individuals' media use, media anthropology provides a nuanced look at how media is used and interpreted (Postill, 2009), fostering a dialogue that can help to uncover insights that might otherwise be missed (Coman, 2005).

Much like visual ethnography, media anthropology has the potential to be a powerful tool for depicting cultural knowledge, but it has its critics. 'It is very difficult to separate the operation of communicational media cleanly from broader social-political processes of circulation, exchange, imagination and knowing' (Boyer, 2012). Arguing that it is challenging to replicate and depict knowing as the interpretation of data is subjective, Boyer recognises how data may also be prejudiced or incomplete. Often lacking sustained immersion, such as participant observation or extended fieldwork (Drackle, 2005, Rothenbuhler, 2008,) many media anthropologists are criticised for relying on data they do not control. As John Postill admits 'Internet and SMS users, for example, can often modify content without leaving a trace, an ability that casts a long shadow of societal doubt over the trustworthiness of digital representations' (Postill, 2009) and of media produced by third parties without the involvement of the researcher.

2.2.3 Autoethnography

By introducing an account of oneself, autoethnography aims to shape the identity of the researcher and the participant. Acknowledging connections from the moment a researcher encounters a participant (Chang, 2016), autoethnography forms a picture of intervention in response to predetermined ideas (Ellis, 2009). Providing a voice from which to examine the 'personal', it requires the researcher to build a structural and logical methodology in which to understand how practice works in tandem with relationships; how interactions can become entangled (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011) in interesting and fluid ways. Autoethnography structures these dynamics by acknowledging embodied sensory investigations, thinking about the writing structures that will explain these dynamics, and the strengths of research design processes that incorporate the notions of iteration through reflexive approaches (Chang, 2016).

Critics have labelled autoethnography as an intellectually lazy and narcissistic approach to research (Delamont, 2009), arguing the need for research to be analytic not merely experiential (Atkinson, & Delamont, 2006). One of the challenging beliefs surrounding autoethnography is its ability to be self-deceiving (Hayano,1979). Relying on insight, memory, and the artifice of truth, it is a negotiation between one's relationship with the past and a want to tell stories through the explanation of experience and histories.

In response, autoethnographic researchers argue that by addressing the ethical responsibility of self, self within field practice and the interrogation of autoethnographic situations, the researcher is prompted to consider the ethical implications of relationships when doing research. Researchers need to consider decisions about themselves when designing a research project (Ellis, 2009) with a strong autoethnographic component running through and how to make constructive decisions about the form the research should take. Embedded into the methodology is a vital requirement to revisit the ethical considerations of the research based on reflexive conjecture, comprehending relational and moral concerns (Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2016) as well as commitments towards participants. Engaging with specifics and the everyday embodiment of practice (Wall, 2006), autoethnography aims to fully

understand the sensorial way autoethnographic practice is undertaken, paying attention to the performative element of the research.

Several key feminist researchers (Ettorre, 2016; McParland, 2012; Dyer, 2022) view autoethnography as a valuable tool for understanding how gender and other intersecting identities, such as race and class, shape people's experiences. They see it as a powerful way to challenge dominant narratives and give voice to marginalised perspectives. Feminist researchers argue for autoethnography to create meaningful dialogue and promote social change (Ettorre, 2016).

2.3.1 Focus of Inquiry – Conclusion

As Figure 31 demonstrates, the use of documentary as method, when integrated with written data, leads to more inventive outputs when exploring inquiries focused on practices. Furthermore, this review stresses the importance of this interdisciplinary approach in providing an all-encompassing view of skateboard media production.

Figure 31: Finalised documentary as method framework, 2023

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY
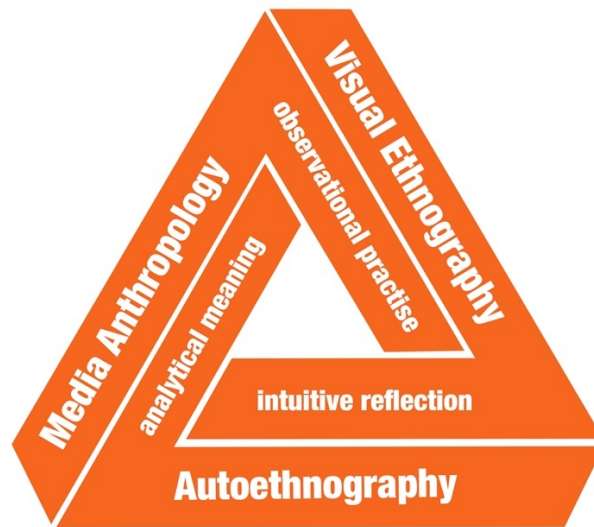
3.1 Introduction

Practice is seen as fundamental in making complex ideas more accessible and understandable via collecting and assembling visual data. Within the framework of documentary as method, the gathering of practice occurs in three ways:

1. Researcher-focused practice: creating data from a position of personal experience and intuition (O'Dell and William 2011).
2. Co-created practice: situated in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999)
3. Participant-generated practice: using data already produced by participants for elicitation (Rose, 2014).

This research examines the interwoven relationship between these three approaches, documentary as method and thinking-through-practice, exploring how intuition and practice generate knowledge and understanding, considering implications of rigour and ethics.

3.1.1 Revisiting Documentary as Method

As an interdisciplinary framework formed of media anthropological, visual ethnographic and autoethnographic approaches, documentary as method uses

documentary and documentation processes to understand the practices employed by insider media makers within skateboarding. Developed over three stages, spanning eighteen months each, documentary as method sought to reveal richer insights into the physical and intuitive practices of skateboard media specialists. During each phase of the decision-making process, recordings of results formed an understanding of the value of the structure as it developed.

3.1.2 Aims of Documentary as Method

Documentary as method aimed at moving beyond the individual processes of media anthropology, visual ethnography and autoethnography, fostering dialogue on interdisciplinary approaches to documenting practice. As illustrated in Figure 32, the triangulation of documentary as method adopts aspects of all three disciplines to form a more comprehensive understanding of practice research using visual methods.

In responding to the research questions, image-making, mapping, note-taking, and sound recording captured interviewees and makers in the field, while web scraping methods supported the development of the diagraphical literature review. Additionally, embodiment and experience production were witnessed through abstract sensory-perceptual content (Seremetakis, 1996)[30]. Focusing on the feelings, opinions of participants' behaviour, decision-making, and output, a sense of know-how, experience, and levels of expertise began to form. Supplementary to this, thematic coding and reflective reasoning underpinned the analysis of outcomes and embodied knowledge.

Pink argues, "We really need to think about what's behind it, above it, and below it. What's around it. What are those other experiences that we're engaging with as researchers?" (Pink, 2001). As a set of tools and techniques, documentary as method became a way of thinking through practice. More than final images, sounds, texts or drawings, the physical artefacts held within them are emotions, feelings, and sensory associations of tacit moments. These in-between instances were the unspoken

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[30] Abstract sensory-perceptual content is a type of creative content that is exclusively focused on the sensations and perceptions of an experience, as opposed to focusing on objective, factual details.

experiences, allowing for greater comprehension of skateboarding media production in its complexity.

3.1.3 Designing the Framework

Documentary as method was established over three phases running consecutively with the three iterative stages. Over the first eighteen months, the development of the initial framework included gathering information about iterative problem-solving, identifying and connecting with participants, and recognising assumptions, constraints, objectives, goals, methods and outcomes, alongside initial collaboration and experimentation in the field. This mapping acknowledged likely issues, highlighting potential pitfalls or challenges to ensure consistency in the research process and analysis of results. The following diagram was mapped during the first phase of research to explore the development of the research framework.
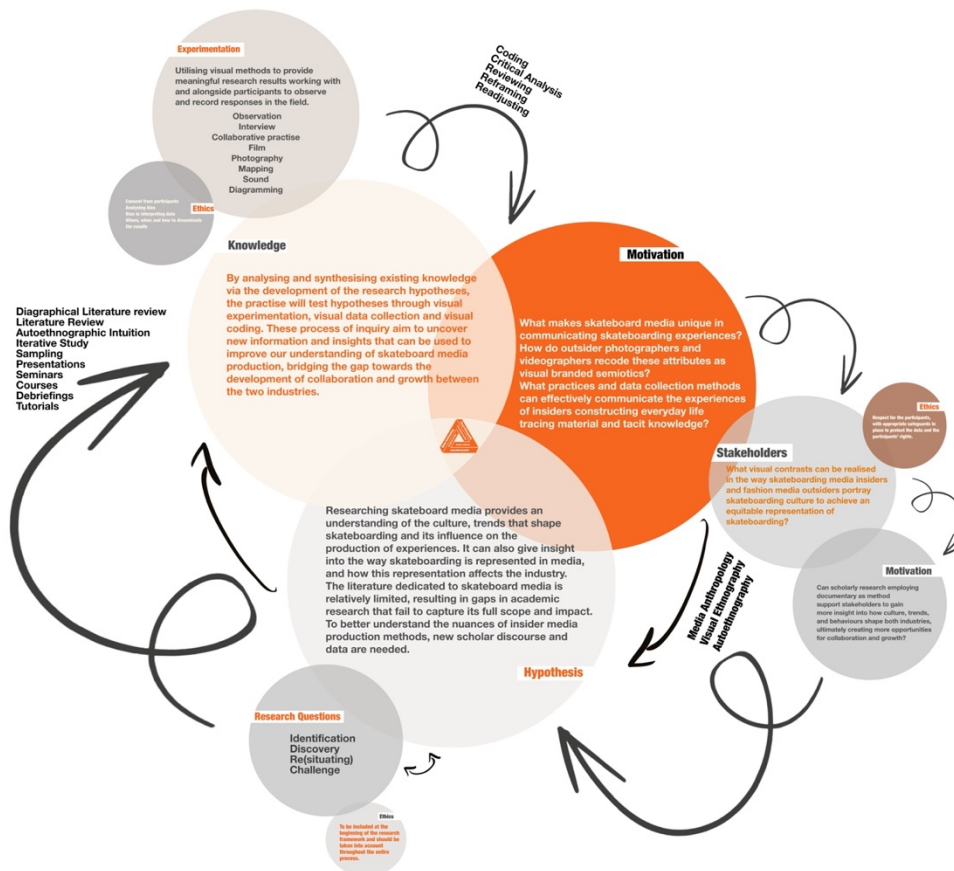
Figure 33: Mapping the Research Framework 2018

During phase two, the research framework was enriched by analysing knowledge-building practices. Through fieldwork, the effectiveness of documentary as method was evaluated, and improvements were made according to the needs of the inquiry. Phase two extended recognition of assumptions, constraints, objectives, goals, methods, and outcomes and refined collaboration and experimentation.

The final stage of developing the research framework included a comprehensive analysis of the findings, reviewing the development of practice methods, acknowledging the input from participants, and evaluating the effectiveness of their contribution to the research questions. In addition, actionable and detailed recommendations were identified for further research and development of documentary as method, providing a roadmap for further study.

The subsequent sections analyse the evolution of documentary as method and its development over time.

3.1.4 Documentary and Documentation Methods

In 'Grierson on Documentary' (1971), John Grierson defines the documentary as "the creative treatment of actuality." By his definition, documentaries should creatively convey facts based on real events. More recently, Judd Bradbury and Rosanna Guadagno describe how researchers can apply 'documentary actuality' to research practice via an observational documentary approach. In their 2020 paper 'Documentary narrative visualisation: Features and modes of documentary film in narrative visualisation,' Bradbury, and Guadagno emphasise the need for documentary filmmakers to explain their presence within the process, alongside the capturing of emotions, attitudes, and behaviours of the subject but stress the need for researchers to maintain an "original" perspective, remaining both impartial and detached. To achieve this, Bradbury and Guadagno say a researcher needs to directly explain the camera to the subject by capturing their lived experiences in real time.

Grierson's and Bradbury's and Guadagno's propositions benefit visual researchers. However, I would argue that a more intimate approach is necessary to respond to

tacit knowledge. Working in close proximity with participants and emphasising autoethnographic inquiry, I suppose that the 'creative treatment of actuality' can be achieved without being detached from contributors if researchers adopt both documentary and documentation approaches to examine data collection methods.

Documentary research offers the potential for more in-depth exploration and analysis of the topics covered. For example, visual methods such as photography and video recordings explore the dynamics of interaction between people, cultures, and places that may be difficult to capture through more traditional methods such as questionnaires or interviews. While traditional methods might capture the words spoken, visual methods can explore the gestures, postures, and movements that cannot be captured by the written or spoken word alone. Visual ethnographic research allows for more "thick description", which adds a third dimension to the data by capturing the unspoken intuitive understandings and meanings of research participants.

In addition to documentary, documentation also provides valuable information to practice PhD's. Documentation allows for a more systematic approach to gathering and interpreting data, making it easier to replicate and verify. Media anthropological analysis systems emphasise the rigorous standards and methods for collecting and drawing conclusions from data. This system underpins documentary approaches by developing a full breadth of the data and producing meaningful findings and insights. Documentary methods have been and continue to be utilised in all forms of research, producing their own documentary outcomes (Tight, 2019), artefacts to textual outcomes. Formed of written, visual, oral, and virtual inferences, the act of documenting is often referred to as the confirmation of events or processes (McCulloch, 2013).

Carl Plantinga's further adds to this, characterising documentary as

> "An asserted veridical representation[31], that is, as an extended treatment of a
> subject in one of the moving image media, most often in narrative, rhetorical,

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[31] Asserted veridical representation is a philosophical concept which refers to a real or true representation of something. It is a representation of something as it actually is, rather than how it is seen from a particular point of view or with particular transparency.

categorical, or associative form." (Plantinga, 2005)

Within the construct of documentary as a method, the combining of documentary and documentation techniques aimed to address "the creative treatment of actuality" Grierson (1971) and the "asserted veridical of representation (Plantinga, 2005) via thinking-through-practice.

Three iterative stages were designed to realise skateboard media production by capturing, curating, interpreting, and categorising data. This method enabled the replication and verification of information to explore associated tropes. Navigating each stage of the research alongside the development of documentary as method demanded tracing every decision and outcome to represent them. The use of photography, video, and sound engaged with physical environments and experiences, incorporating movement and traversing through spaces with contributors. Mapping, notetaking, and self-reflection often occurred afterwards or towards the later stages of each activity in the field.
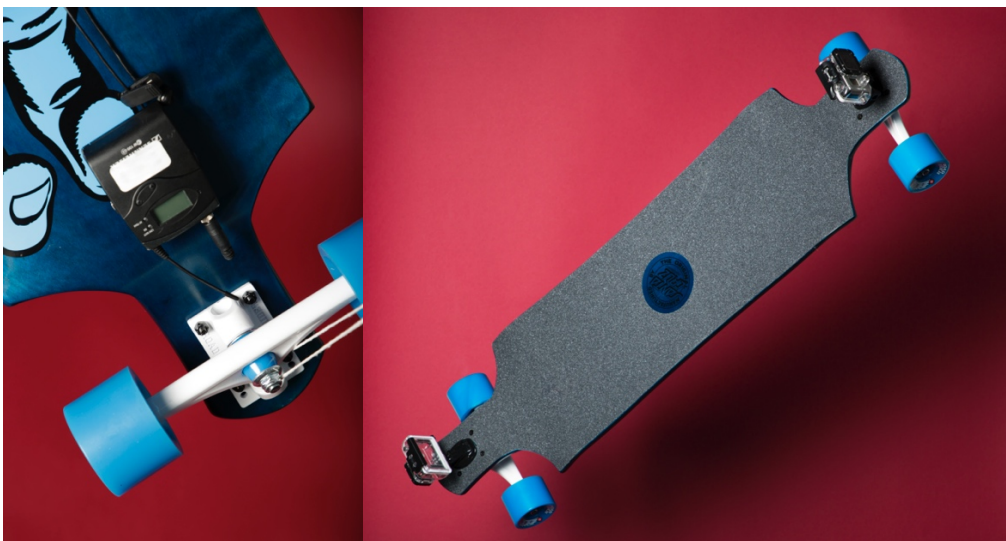
Figure 34: Modified longboard used to capture sound and video, 2018.

During stage one of the evaluation, it was noted that the camera would often become interwoven. Being seen as a form of shared experience with participants, it was a tool from which to observe contributors. I noted on several occasions how the camera was viewed as a form of mutual conversation, where discussion about film and

settings occurred. However, the camera could quickly switch to become an instrument of documentation directed at the participant.

During this same stage, it also became evident that merely recording participants' behaviour was insufficient for understanding their embodied experiences. Gaining insight into how participants crafted their creative awareness meant moving towards a combination of both documentary practice and documentation. This involved unrecorded learning, creating, pondering, and grasping tacit knowledge. By observing participants in their offices, homes, and other sites, I honed these skills via interactions between contributors and myself.

During stages one and two of documentary as method's development, careful consideration was given to the data collection tools employed to gather information. Seeing the convenience of digital technology, I opted to make it a primary source for amassing imagery. During the first eighteen months, this position evolved into a realisation that digital broadcasting felt like a standardised thinning of the material recorded. Any sense of constructing actuality was lost in the dense numbers of images shot and binged on screens. The projection saturated my eyes and formed a disruptive flatness of rapidly swiping, thumbing, and scrolling through media, which dulled the senses and slowed the analysis.

The digital process of capturing, editing and uploading in minutes brought about a realisation. Analogue methods might be better suited to this study than digital phenomena. Analogue requires the user to relax physically, reduce the mind to an almost meditative state, and take stock of the locale. Offering twelve to thirty-six images and two and half to three minutes of Super Eight film, analogue is a precious commodity in cost and time. To avoid laying waste to these valued moments, users form interpretations of physical materials in their mind, encapsulating the environment, preserving to memory textures, colours, form, and shape before the pressing of the record button is even contemplated.

Figure 35: The Braun Nizo analogue Super 8mm camera used for capturing my own and participants' practice

Figure 36: Variety of analogue film used for capturing participants, 2019

The characteristics of each medium can be understood from prior neurological research, which explores the implications of viewing the two processes of production (Smith, 2014). The character of opaqueness that emanates from analogue film is a layering of desaturated chemicals (Smith, 2014). The effects on the neurological mind when viewing this physical reduction cannot be explained by scientists. Still,

monitoring human reactions clarifies our positive emotional connection to the dilution of colour. Analogue, seen as a romantic concept (Humayun & Belk, 2020), is a reflective relationship with the power of tangible raw materials. As a method, analogue is a dense relationship with a layering of demanding considerations. The actions of loading and unloading film, sending it away for processing, the space and time in between to recall and ponder over what might be, the film being returned, the viewing, the scanning and printing of the film, the editing and output, (Mangolte, 2003) and the consideration of where to showcase the final production add to the prolonged production method and afford time to begin reflecting on those experiences.

Shaping this agency requires an understanding of ISO, depth of field, film speed and shutter speed for the photographer and videographer to capture forms within the surrounding landscape. Having shot images of skateboarding on a 35mm Nikon FM2, the characteristics of these cameras and the film loaded into the camera were part of the dialogue discussed by many participants. Choosing the correct speed of the film, balancing flash with ambient light, or simply shooting with available light, the noise of the grain, the decision as to whether to push or pull the film to shoot black and white or colour, to cross process or not to even bother processing the roll of film at all. These choices and judgements were themselves a slow-burn methodology.

In opposition to this, many modern digital cameras require little thought regarding functionality. First-generation camera mobile phones had one lens and a series of internal settings delivering automatic imagery captured in seconds. Images could then be uploaded to digital spaces in less time than it takes to set a 35mm camera in manual mode. Unlike the exoskeleton of a mobile telephone, the internal body of the analogue camera becomes an unobservable instrument, adding to the thickening of the images it captures. Each lens, shutter and sensor act as a fingerprint, leaving visible markers on the film as it is stretched from spool to spool. The traces of marks left from developing film by hand or machine are even more pronounced. The defiling of these plastic surfaces mimics the skateboarder transitioning across surfaces. The corruption of the exterior of concrete leaves observable, sometimes unobservable, scratches behind. Akin to the marks left by skateboarders, these characteristics are formed within the camera, with no two images ever the same.

In selecting to predominantly use analogue production processes during stage two, documentary as method emphasised the making of an image, capturing the image, and developing the frame of sight. This immersive slow-burning-deep approach to shaping skateboarding's look echoes the production methods so often employed in constructing skateboard documentaries. Filmed over prolonged periods of time, years in the making, these projections of culture are compacted structural remarks of skateboarding's history. As the human body becomes a visual vocabulary strained against architectural forms, it notifies viewers of the traces left behind by the life of board, wheels, and trucks. These dense visual descriptions symbolise years of hard work, painstaking experiences, and multifaceted conversations between those behind and in front of the lens.

To fully comprehend this development, analysis stages were employed throughout the advancement of documentary as method. Analysis trusted the making of photographs, video, sound, and text as a mode of recall. Evoking the broader experiences of what was happening at a particular time, the context from which data emerged was just as important as what the image looked like when it was processed or viewed in the locale or later at home. Sounds, photographs, and video were able to give context, providing much wider significance. Supported by written and visual field notes, works traced what could be seen and the elicited silent information embodied within the moment's experience.
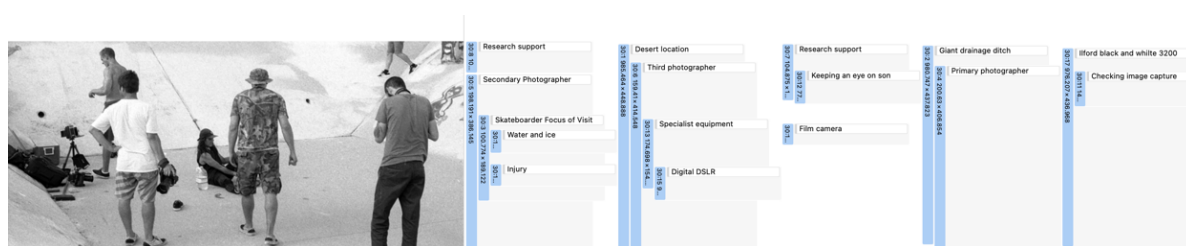
Figure 37: Coding an image of Ewan Bowman and team in the field, Los Angeles, 2018

As Figures 37-38 highlight, the analysis of images taken in the desert of Los Angeles in 2018 recalls more than just what the viewer can observe. The images of this group of participants hold within them the act of the photographers and videographers capturing the skateboarder.
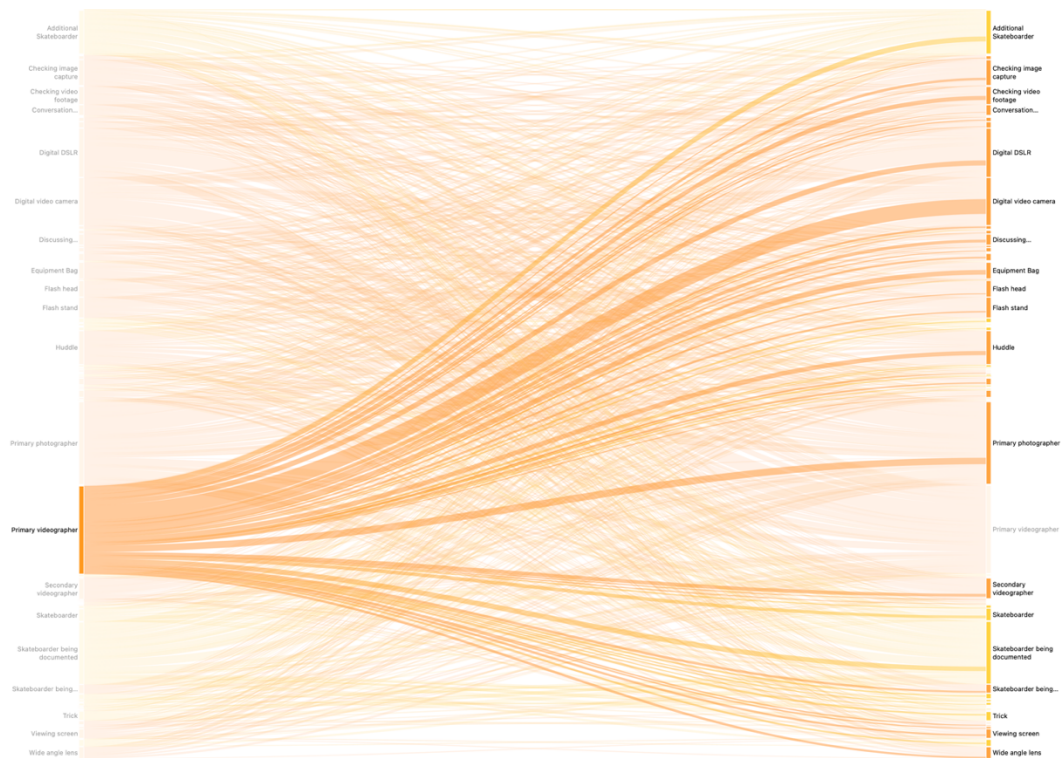
Figure 38: Examining Ewan Bowman's relationship to other activities in the field, Los Angeles, 2018

But beyond that is the conversation of several failed attempts to land the trick being attempted, the intense heat which interfered with equipment and the ability to work in direct sun for prolonged periods. The friendship between the team to maintain everyone's passion, keeping going in such tricky conditions, the sharing of food and liquid to keep everyone healthy and safe, and the stories between breaks of previous visits. These abstract sensory-perceptual moments are located in between the act of recording sound, photographing, and videoing. These seconds are the embodied practices of experience production from the position of the skateboard media specialists.

My autoethnographic positioning was accounted for alongside practice and analysis during each stage. As a lecturer in fashion media and a practicing photographer, I brought a level of understanding from a range of photographic and video products, software, and techniques, alongside a familiarity with the equipment used within the skateboarding community. At times, there were intuitive connections between participants and myself, often when using similar equipment. Knowledge gained through prior experiences (Blackler, Popovic, and Mahar, 2003) led to encounters

where 'speaking' the same language formed a shared understanding of the activities. This mutual appreciation helped build more profound respect for knowledge and expertise, bridging gaps in understanding between participants and myself and allowing for productive collaboration in the field.

3.1.5 Thinking-Through-Practice

As Mark Johnson (2014) explains, while there is a seemingly emotional or instinctive reaction to art, there is evidence that artistic perception is rooted in knowledge (Johnson, 2014). Johnson argues that art and knowledge are thus intertwined cognitively, symbolically and viscerally. With an appreciation of experience, location, performance (McIntosh, 2010), understanding, and evaluation, thinking-through-practice is a cognitive process interwoven within the framework of documentary as method. Building on Macintosh's and Johnson's theories, thinking-through-practice examines relations between human meaning and bodily engagement within physical, social, and cultural environments, seeking to connect ideas, experiences, and learning through critical reflection.

Data gathering through photography, film, and sound parallels the skateboard and fashion sectors. Recording the portrayal of environments, positioning of skateboarders to photographers and videographers, and sounds was comparatively straightforward. However, portraying a skateboard media expert's social dynamics and perspectives at a given time was difficult. A greater comprehension of how to show these intricate knowledge structures and offer crucial insights through visual methods was needed.

Alongside sight, there were instances when the senses of touch, taste, and smell became integral to comprehending the creative process. Utilising thinking-through-practice I would use mapping, self-reflection, notations, and media-elicitation, after the fieldwork, to code social dynamics & perspectives, by way of informing my understanding. One example was in 2018, working collaboratively with Ewan Bowman in sweltering Los Angeles temperatures. The images and notations I produced reflected the level of discomfort felt, yet not the total intensity of the heat and its impacts on production. As Figure 39 illustrates, we witness Ewan Bowman

draped in wet fabric to maintain a more relaxed body temperature, with an umbrella shading him from the direct sunlight. What the images do not evoke are the emotions and changes within the videographer's mental state. Standing and seated in the same environment for over three hours, these images act as a form of recall for myself and a projection of what occurred. Encapsulated within them is insight into how Ewan and his team stayed dedicated to their goals regardless of the extreme conditions.

Figure 39: Videographer Ewan Bowman draped in wet fabric to maintain a more relaxed body, Los Angeles, 2018

Reflecting on fieldwork, thinking-through-practice provided a greater appreciation for the relationship between the physical and non-physical, capturing the participant and their interactions within the experience. This learning process, alongside an understanding gained from producing media in the field with participants, assisted in reinforcing how media-making reflects skateboard media experts' personal and cultural identity.

3.1.5 Iterative Design Approach

In this research documentary as method engages with iterative thematic inquiry (Morgan & Nica, 2020). Involving multiple data collection sequences, analysis, and reflection, iterative thematic inquiry focuses on how participants experience making within a cyclical process. Three incremental studies are shaped by visual practice,

visual analysis, and visual presentation, including planning, executing, evaluating, and refining observed outcomes. Analysed and coded results identify emerging themes, leading one study to the next, with each iteration focused on specific research questions from the previous review. Gathering materials through communicative experiences (Miles and Huberman, 1994), the iterative stages form a holistic picture from which to draw valid knowledge. Each phase is summarised to illustrate its findings, contributing to the following evolutionary study and generating continuous findings.

Encouraging thoroughness, documentary as method acknowledged subjectivity, peer involvement, and reflectivity (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Referring to beliefs and one's perspective, autoethnographic philosophy was utilised to examine the ethics of friendship, preference, memory, and intuition via analysing an individual's perception at all stages. With data drawn from embedded communities, the implementation of sound ethical theory was always at the forefront of each stage of development.

The iterative cycle involves identifying the research problem, collecting data, analysing, evaluating, measuring understanding (Otto & Smith, 2020) and repeating the process. The three iterative cycles helped to refine documentary as method by systematically analysing the data, understanding its implications, and then revising the process until understanding was achieved. The process helped to identify any ineffective methods of research practice, as well as address any necessary changes that need to be made to ensure transparency of results.

Semi-structured interview questions, coding of answers and the option to revisit responses were offered to all participants to mitigate potential ethnocentrism (Da Col, 2017). This ensured consistent and fair data collection and an impartial environment by maintaining the same inquiry and method throughout the iterative phase. Presentation of findings at conferences and in-house to peers and academics served as pinch points to objectively analyse and explore the iterative design approach within documentary as method.

3.2.1 Fieldwork Design

The following fieldwork design was mapped to identify patterns and relationships between points and to facilitate informed decision-making regarding resource allocation for data collection and analysis.

Once mapped, it was simplified into five stages, repeated as part of the iterative approach to documentary as method.

Stage 1: Formulate Conjectures

To identify or re-examine relevant research questions to narrow the fieldwork's focus (Millen, 2000) and to provide direction and guidance to all involved (participants, support team, and myself) at the start of each new iteration.

Stage 2: Identify Field Methods and Select Tools

As different visual methods were involved for gathering meaningful data on skateboarding media production, it is essential to identify and/or revisit the selection of research methods and participants (Pink, 2004) that fit the study's aims at the start of each iteration. To ensure fieldwork goes smoothly, any supporting personnel are briefed (Clerke & Hopwood, 2014), and a daily period during fieldwork visits is planned to clarify roles and queries (Clerke & Hopwood, 2014).

Stage 3: Collect Data

Fieldwork involving capturing visual data (photographs, films, sound recordings, notations, drawings, interviews, digitally compiled reference materials) must be accurately stored on a hard drive and backed up daily. Prioritising the ethical implications of visits (Scheyvens, 2014), consent forms for participants are created with safety and privacy in mind, alongside risk assessments (Appendix 1). Goals, methods, locations, participants, and a timeline for each research iteration are also outlined.

Stage 4: Analysis & Coding

Reviewing and reflecting on data collected from the field, thematic analysis and coding identify patterns, relationships, trends, cultural references, implications for viewers, and the language and interpretive aspects conveyed within data, which is integral to the research process. The environment in which visuals are intended to be viewed is reviewed, and the ethical complexities of visual research practice are examined. Completed forms and notes are to be completed and stored at the end of each day, and risk assessments are reviewed and adjusted where necessary.

Analysis of research questions is undertaken at each iterative stage to narrow the research focus and refine the trustworthiness.

Stage 5: Review & Re-evaluate

After assessing for inconsistencies within the practice, the research proceeds to the next stage of iteration by demonstrating and instructing assumptions drawn from the previous stages. This reawakening of information aims to provide newfound insight, enabling further exploration and direction through minor modifications. Gaps are identified, and the repeating of iterative fieldwork is utilized to explore the field in more detail.
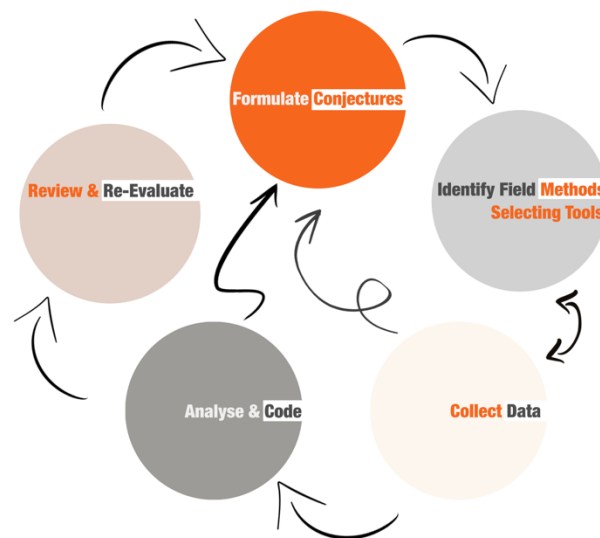
Figure 42: Stages of fieldwork simplified, 2019

A review of data collection undertaken during an initial fieldwork visit to Copenhagen Open 2017 revealed several issues, highlighting the importance of these steps and the need to evaluate fieldwork design regularly.

An initial summary of video and photographic files revealed a need for more control over the environment where the interviews took place, impacting the quality of the conversation. On close examination, the visual coding of the interviews exposed that while the equipment was adequate for the task, it was not being used optimally. Several interviews were hindered by the sun backlighting the participant, making perceiving facial features in the video difficult.

Figure 43: Interview with Arto Sarri highlights issues with placing the subject by a window, 2017

Public movement and reverberation within the space fragmented conversations and phrases and made them difficult to transcribe, thus compromising the quality of the recordings and the rigours of the data. While zoom microphones had been employed to capture sound separately, the analysis highlighted that further training was required on software to reduce background noise and natural elements such as wind.

During my 2018 visit to Los Angeles, a heightened awareness of the dual roles I was occupying within the construct of fieldwork design was revealed via coding and analysis. As a researcher working with and alongside participants and developing the interdisciplinary approach, documentary as method, analysis, and coding played an essential role in contextualising and documenting their differences. Enabling a fair and impartial research process to be undertaken, this critical phase highlighted the importance of considering each perspective and being aware of methods used to co-produce systems of communication (Conquergood, 1991), alongside observational studies from a singular perspective to ensure meaningful outputs reflected the needs of the research questions.

Iterative fieldwork allowed this research to develop deeper engagement with the subject matter and refine points of inquiry and data collection. Via repeating activities and revisiting fieldwork to collect more data, the stages of design challenged the research questions, gathering richer, more comprehensive, and more nuanced data. Allowing for the development of meaningful and actionable insights, the iterative

approach grounded the research in context, identifying and addressing ethical issues, increasing the rigours of results, whilst building meaningful relationships with research participants.

3.2.2 Ethics

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were addressed. Risk-benefit assessments were undertaken to identify potential advantages and threats, adjusting the research as necessary. The iterative framework incorporated ethics forms and emails to ensure accurate information was provided, including the decision for participants to opt-out and/or have data deleted. Regular risk assessments were conducted, considering possible authority structures in response to analysis and coding. The following examples illustrate several decisions this research took to ensure the well-being and safety of participants and myself.

Given that skateboarding videographers and photographers often break trespassing laws, it was essential to emphasise the importance of setting ethical boundaries. To gain ethics approval (Appendix 1), a consideration for the project's moral and academic implications (Delamont & Atkinson, 2018) must be sought. From previous experiences before undertaking a PhD, it was clear that skateboarders often flouted the rules to skate in areas that could lead to their being asked to leave. The research, therefore, had to take extra care to ensure that no ethical codes or standards were violated (Delamont & Atkinson, 2018). In consultation with supervisors, I carefully planned the necessary steps to protect myself and all those involved in the research, safeguarding the well-being of everyone involved (Atkinson, 2007).

In iteration one, an analysis of interview questions revealed that several contained leading information. Coding of responses indicated that wording may have influenced participants, particularly the question, "Do you have an opinion on couture fashion brands who use skateboarding's look to profit from the subculture?" which evoked discomfort from participants. In hindsight, attention should have been given to constructing questions to elicit open-minded responses without trapping participants into considering one perspective.

Further analysis indicated that while interviewees were enthusiastic about skateboarding and media, few had little to say about its visual interpretation by other industries. Many were unaware of couture fashion's role in the culture, and those who did felt powerless to challenge how couture brands portrayed skateboarding in photography and film. This analysis prompted revising the research questions for subsequent interviews, centring firmly on media production methods and tacit knowledge.

As part of an initial field visit to Copenhagen, three impromptu conversations raised concerns about the rigours of responses to the research. Pre-arranged participants had been provided with information about the study by email, but insufficient time was available to explain the research intentions to those spoken to spontaneously, leading to incomplete data and, at times, the acknowledgement of unreliable recollection from participants. Additionally, the lack of recording equipment resulted in a further loss of benefits. Acknowledging these issues, I refrained from undertaking spontaneous interviews during future research, choosing instead to ensure that any additional participant had a complete understanding of the study beforehand and that the correct equipment was available to record data.

During this same visit, an analysis of interviews suggested that location impeded certain aspects of communication. Poor recall was common, particularly during conversations conducted away from the proximity of pertinent artifacts. Arto Sarri's experience was particularly poignant: as he stated, "It would be great to show you [the interviewer] what I mean," [indicating images to illustrate his thoughts] (Sarri, 2017). These setbacks were brought on by remote interviewing. As a result, I decided that future interviews would take place at physical locations that could provide more comprehensive records or access to participants' photography or films.

Reviewing my ethics strategy in 2019, my first visit to Los Angeles in 2018 raised potential concerns regarding fatigue risk. On average, I conducted three daily interviews, each lasting ninety minutes. To improve the project's success, I gathered a research team comprising of myself, Leo Sharp (additional support as a photographer and sound recordist), Ryan Gray (videographer), Ben Halliwell (data storage), Rosie Lorenz (sound recordist) and Kieran Hodges (videographer). I called

on team members at different stages during iterations one and two to address fatigue issues. Seeking to minimise the risk of errors, interviews were reduced to two a day, with each person focusing on one specific role. Planned regular breaks were taken during filming to ensure everyone was well rested.

Further to this, during my first visit to America in 2018 (accompanied by Leo Sharp and Kieran Hodges), it became clear that working with individuals with a passion for skateboarding had pros and cons. As noted in my self-reflective journals, sometimes team members were so engrossed in the research they would ask additional questions or get caught up in the action themselves. To ensure no prejudice on the part of the team, I opted to do fieldwork in the UK and have the final visit to Los Angeles unaccompanied. As research became more refined and tasks more focused, solo fieldwork provided opportunities to gain a detailed understanding without the influence of others (Adler & Adler, 1987), enabling me to test theories without the input of the research team.

3.2.3 Fieldwork Notes

Carol Hendrickson argues that the use of visual and graphical field notes can enhance the accuracy of research (Hendrickson, 2008) Inferring that researchers can more easily recall and document the details of their research environment and process via photos, drawings, diagrams, videos, and other forms of visual media. 'Visual field notes provide a more vivid description of the research subject' (Hendrickson, 2008), which helps analyse and interpret the research results.

Providing 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 2008), Geertz argues that field notes further offer unique insights into the social context of a research subject, capturing the minutiae of a situation. Researchers can gain additional awareness of their subject that might "otherwise be missed in quantitative data" (Geertz, 2008).
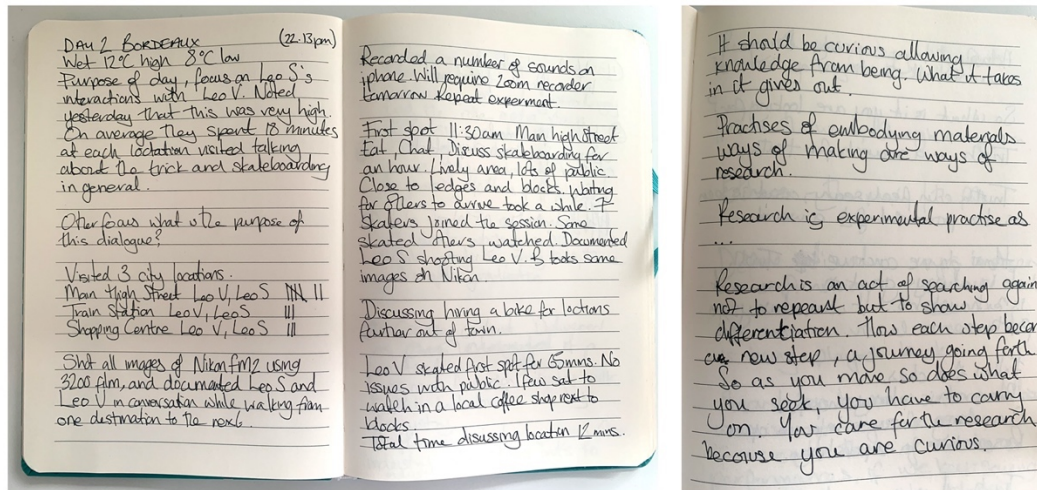
Figure 44: Field notes taken in Bordeaux, alongside notes responding to fieldwork, 2018

As part of the fieldwork design, field notes were captured before, during and after each day I worked alongside participants. Documenting interactions, visual observations of the environment, and initial responses to interviews, conversations, and deliberations, the data was used to create diagrams and notations, which informed the development of each iteration. These records provided invaluable insight into patterns that emerged from the research process. The generated images and text acted as aide memoirs providing first-hand accounts of the senses. As references, they were used to corroborate and review the accuracy of data collected in digital and physical spaces months and years after outcomes were captured.

As the research progressed, I found fieldwork notes were an invaluable source of information when attempting to comprehend the complexities of dynamics and agency. Through my observations and interactions with participants, I gained an understanding of how previous relationships with individuals shaped our collective behaviour in the field and during interviews. As the researcher, I must be aware of how each person's presence could potentially shift agency within a study. In my journals, I noted the importance of changing one's physical position and approach, reviewing questions asked to understand the research from the participants' perspective.

3.2.4 Collaborative Practice

The data collection process aimed to be mutually respectful (Lenette & Boddy, 2013). Participants discussed their knowledge and showcased their skills. They were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the information they had provided during further meetings or by email and ask for any comments to be stricken from transcripts and edits during or after fieldwork had taken place.

Forming a sense of ownership and involvement in the study, it was important that participants felt that they were actively contributing to the research process (Pink, 2001), given the hours they forwent for the research. Participants contributed to the body of knowledge through semi-structured interviews, observational fieldwork, and the proofreading of visual data for the thesis.

3.2.5 Friendship & Family as Method

As with all methodologies, researchers must recognise the challenges of their actions. Placing a greater emphasis on subjective acts, documentary as method involved prolonged periods in the field. Identifying the importance of an ongoing reflexive approach, documentary as method encouraged the recognition of predetermined behaviours (Tillmann-Healy, 2003), addressing and acknowledging favouritism formed before, during or after the research has been and is undertaken. Situated within autoethnographic methodology, the acknowledgement and willingness to explore predetermined ideology recognised the significance of friendship and family exposing emotive connexions, providing space to be upfront about the nature of partiality within this research.

Gradually garnering the attention of academics, friendship as method is a methodology to explain the variety of ways in which researchers communicate with communities. It examines the multiple relationships established within the field before, during and after research has been undertaken. One of the benefits of this approach is its attention to the notion of shared capital by those participating and contributing to research in relation to the researcher.

Lisa Tillmann-Healy's seminal work in 2003 looked closely at friendships within research. Arguing that friendship is a form of knowledge, Tillmann-Healy believes that close relationships can be used to access and understand complex, often confusing worlds. Asserting that friendship is a tool to engage more meaningfully to better understand the people, ideas, and techniques (Tillmann-Healy, 2003), she argued that friendship can be used to build relationships and networks of those being studied.

Criticism of Tillmann-Healy's work lies in explaining friendship within friendship as a method. As Marina De Regt argues, it does not consider the "nuances of individual relationships and the complexities of human nature" (De Regt, 2015). While Tillmann-Healy identifies important aspects of friendship, such as communication, trust, and respect, her explanation does not adequately address the many other qualities that go into creating a meaningful and lasting bond between people during research (Hockey, 1993). Additionally, as Helen Owton and Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson argue the approach to friendship as a method can fail to consider the fact that friendships are not necessarily linear or predictable, but rather are highly individualised, often subject to change over time (Owton & Allen-Collinson, 2014).

Family and friends have been intricately involved throughout this research, acting both as gatekeepers and participants. Several participants acknowledged that they were motivated to support a fellow acquaintance, often enlisting others to join the research. As native voices from within the community, this involvement provided invaluable insight and understanding to the research.

My partner and daughter, who make up my immediate family, often immersed themselves in the research process, whether behind the camera or in front of it. Leo supported capturing interviews and acting as a sound recordist whilst documenting my presence in the field, and my daughter would take photographs while travelling with us.

During the global pandemic, Leo's support proved invaluable. As restrictions forced researchers to consider the dilemmas before them, I had three further years of fieldwork to consider. In conversations with supervisors, I realised that incorporating Leo into the study, more than I anticipated, was the only way to resume my practice. In doing so, he and I had to renegotiate how best to move forward objectively by acknowledging our situation's personal and private nature.

Leo was originally part of the research team, with tasks and boundaries defined in advance. Previously, I had photographed him in Boudreaux to test various concepts; however, I had to consider the delicate nature of his participation, the potential risks involved with the research project, and new ethical considerations. Knowing that Leo had intimate knowledge of the research, how might this influence his behaviour in front of the camera? Might he behave differently due to his understanding of the research questions? Returning to coding and analysis, an in-depth exploration of Leo's behaviour exposed recurrent patterns and themes confirmed within prior field observations.

Recognising once again the complexities of dynamics and agency, the shifting of our positions was stressed through friendship as method by fervently highlighting the narratives of these persons within this research. Possibly seen by some as tenuous,

I acknowledge these connexions, recognising and actioning critical self-reflection to build a frank picture of this research. Utilising autoethnographic accounting to examine how interactions became, at times, entangled (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011), I documented patterns of behaviour and critical periods where friendship formed inhibited outcomes. In doing so the design of documentary as method recognises the importance of revealing these interactions and stating within this chapter how the framework responded to these moments.

3.2.6 Coding and Analysis Methods

Interrogating Frayling's (1994) concept of 'doing design while doing research', a visual qualitative thematic approach[32] (Braun & Clarke, 2016; Onwuegbuzie, Johnson & Collins, 2009) was employed to analyse data. Digital and physical coding techniques were adopted. Rigorous keywording and colour coding were used to identify patterns, themes, and categories, cross-reference them, and collate them into taxonomy (Gioia Corley and Hamilton, 2013).

The first stage of coding utilised Photoshop.
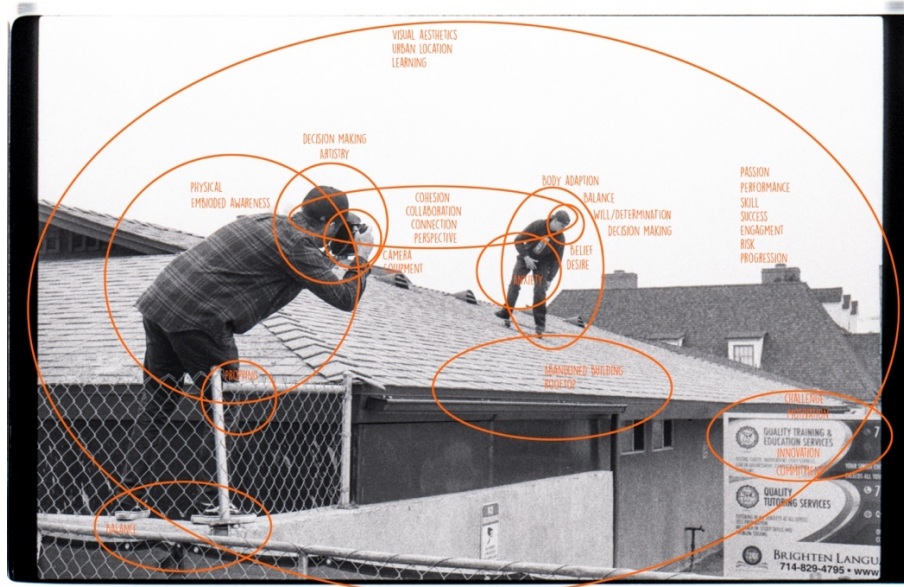
Figure 46: Coding in Photoshop. Fieldwork Observing Mike Burnett, 2022

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[32] Analysis of visual data and research questions was undertaken at each iterative stage to narrow the research focus, determine appropriate visual methodologies for fieldwork, and develop and refine the trustworthiness. The purpose of analysis and coding while researching was to determine the exact worth of the visual methods utilised in the field alongside the research questions, to uncover any underlying assumptions, identify any potential constraints on data collection or analysis via unpacking of key concepts involved in the research question.

Photoshop was employed to assemble images from individual fieldwork visits. Codes were layered over pictures formed of both still and moving images to construct and evaluate tacit experiences visually (Figure 46) before re-edited commonalities were presented as findings (Figure 47). Verbal and nonverbal cues were added as notations through text and the use of visual elliptical markers. Coding with Photoshop highlighted the materiality of tacit knowledge.

Figure 47: Visual coding from multiple fieldwork observations surveying the huddle, 2022

The second stage of coding utilised ATLAS.ti software to identify and group data from interviews and photographs (Figure 48). While Photoshop provided a way to form visual cohesions ATLAS.ti provided an opportunity to further these findings, with the ability to code and extract the most critical points of data alongside responses to interview questions.
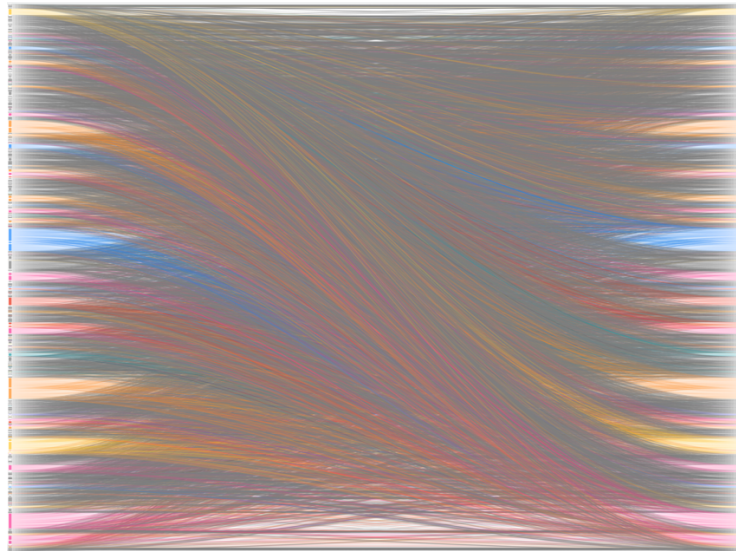
Figure 48: Completed coding of all photograph and super 8mm screengrabs in ATLAS.ti, 2023

Figure 49 illustrates the use of coded co-currencies, mapping keywords and prominent phrases such as the fisheye, deaths lens and moments where participants huddled around a camera to view the outcomes recorded on camera. Visualising themes and trends by connecting associated terms, the research was able to extract meaning and draw conclusions. By repeating this approach at each stage, the study was able to refine its insights further and detect patterns that may otherwise have gone unnoticed.
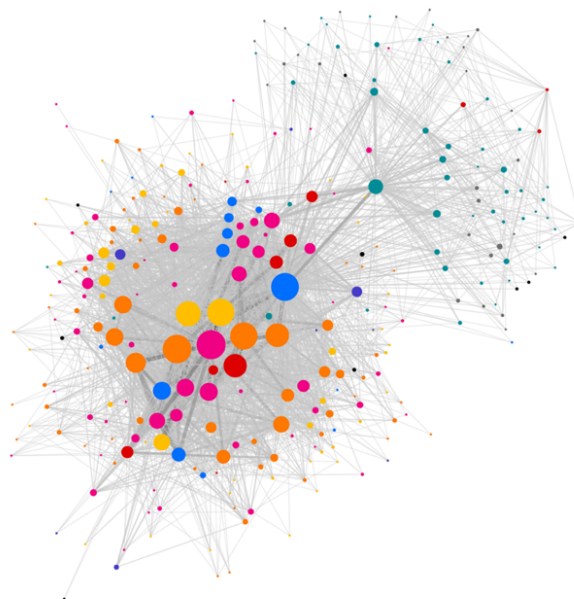
Figure 49: Code co-occurrence of iterations, 2022

Coding via ATLAS.ti and Photoshop presented practice as sets of words, phrases, and concepts (Figure 50), identifying these consistencies and highlighting the nuanced complexities in findings. As each iteration evolved, these patterns, themes, and categories supported the development of ontological and epistemological positions in the field.

Figure 50: Coded words and phrases from transcripts and images to form insights and explore patterns, 2022

3.2.7 Sampling Methods and Website

This thesis presents a selection of samples to illustrate the findings derived from the investigation. The editing and refining of this material have been undertaken to maximise their effectiveness for the reader. A larger body of works can be accessed on the Hubbacouture.uk website[33], providing a platform to share the research findings with a wider academic audience.

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[33] See Appendix 3 for an overview of the website as constructed in 2023.

Figure 51: Landing page of the website, 2023

The website, constructed in a linear format, depicts the stages of the research project. Beginning with the diagraphical review, it then follows as a series of drop-down menus listed in order of the iterations and associated projects. Each menu provides results and conclusions, with a final summary of the main findings under the heading tropes.
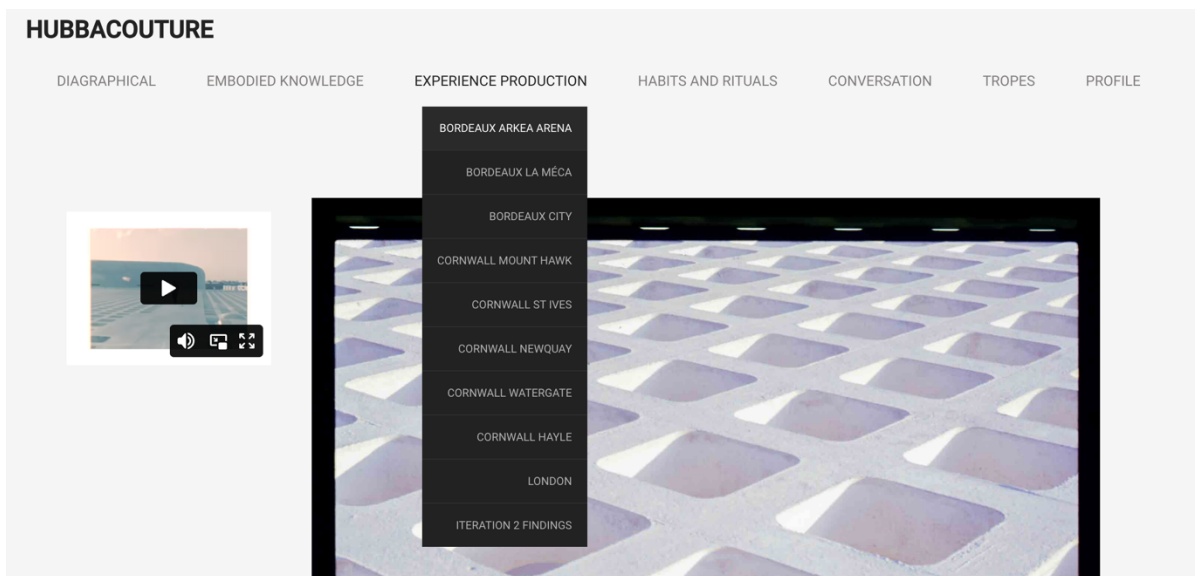
Figure 52: Drop-down menus illustrating linear design, 2023
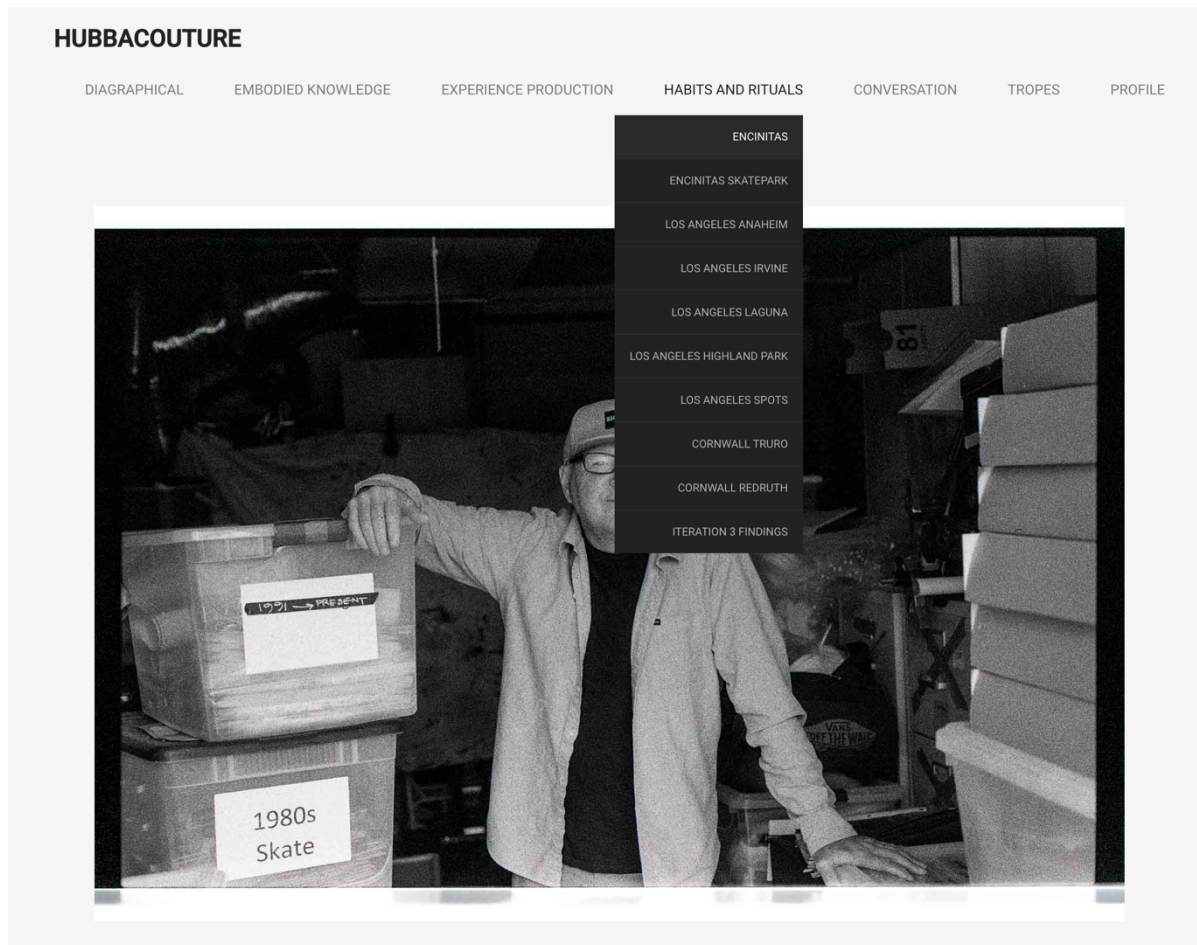
Figure 53: Hubbacoutre website showcasing iteration three research, 2023

The section 'Conversation' illustrates how access to moving images can further research. While this thesis serves as a documented representation of the study, it is impossible to adequately capture the nuances of moving images and sound in words. Thus, making the website is the ideal medium for disseminating this practice. Through edited responses to interviews, viewers are provided with access to data that renders a more thorough understanding of the research topic, enhancing the discoveries made through this critical discussion.
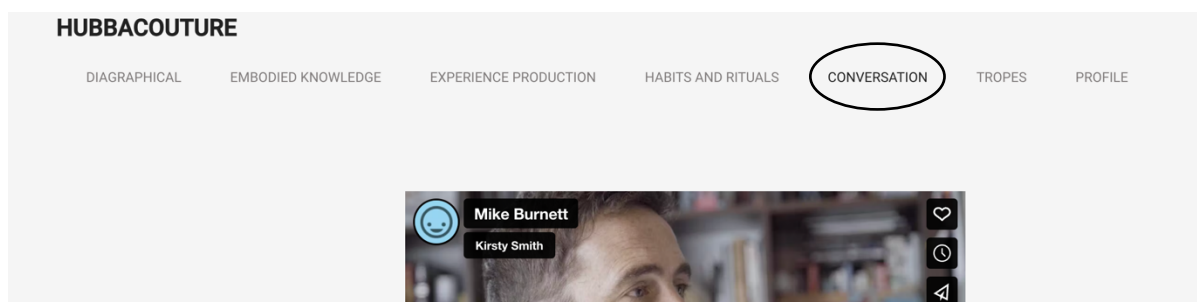
Figure 54: Hubbacoutre website, 2023

3.3.1 Conclusion

Drawing on media anthropology, visual ethnography and autoethnography, the interdisciplinary framework of documentary as method has been employed to investigate skateboard media specialists' working practices, exploring embodied knowledge and experience production. Chapter 4 demonstrates the results of combining these multiple disciplines for a deeper understanding of the complexities and nuances of skateboarding media production.

CHAPTER 4: THE CREATIVE TREATMENT OF ACTUALITY

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents and discusses research findings, opening with a discussion of Arthur Elgort's fashion photography for Vogue, Juergen Teller's campaign for Celine, and the Chanel Allure Homme fashion film. This exposes the narrow understanding of skateboarding within fashion photography and fashion film.

Succeeding this the three iterative studies which contributed to the development of this research knowledge and understanding critically debate the three iterative stages:

1. Crafting Skateboarding's Guise - Investigating Embodied Knowledge: September 2017 - August 2019 (Gain insight into how skateboard media specialists use their physical bodies and intuitive knowledge to inform outcomes)

2. Refining Knowledge - The Role of Experience Production: September 2019 – August 2021 (Investigate how skateboard media specialists use those experiences of being skateboarders to form tangible outcomes)

3. Defining Skateboard Media Production – Illustrating Unique Tropes: September 2021 – May 2023 (Realise the relationship between embodied knowledge, and experience production within the production of outcomes)

The conclusion provides an overview of the five key tropes, suggesting ways to improve skateboarding's representation by outsiders while considering potential future research. Sub-chapter 4.1.1 provides a preface to a research fellowship at the Lemelson Center of the Smithsonian Institute Washington DC, to analyse invention and innovation in American skateboard culture.

4.1.1 The Lemelson Centre Fellowship

Before the PhD, in 2014, I was awarded the opportunity to spend a month at the Smithsonian Institute, Lemelson Centre's Fellowship Program, where I researched and analysed materials held in their extensive 'Innoskate' skateboarding archive.

Since its launch in 2013, Innoskate has become a global voice raising the profile of skateboarding and academic inquiry, hosting demonstrations, panel discussions, film screenings, and creating a national collection of skateboards.

Spending time in the Smithsonian's archive provided a rare opportunity to witness and access collections of interviews, articles, and video footage of events, exploring personal interests. Recognising that the areas of media production and fashion were only lightly touched upon in the Smithsonian's investigations, it was clear that there was still significant research to be conducted in these fields. Approaching the Royal College of Art with a series of steadfast theories, affirmed through questions, the importance of validating the complex experiences and identities of skateboarding media production was identified as a critical theme that required academic attention.

4.2.1 Translating Skateboarding, Positioning Fashion Media
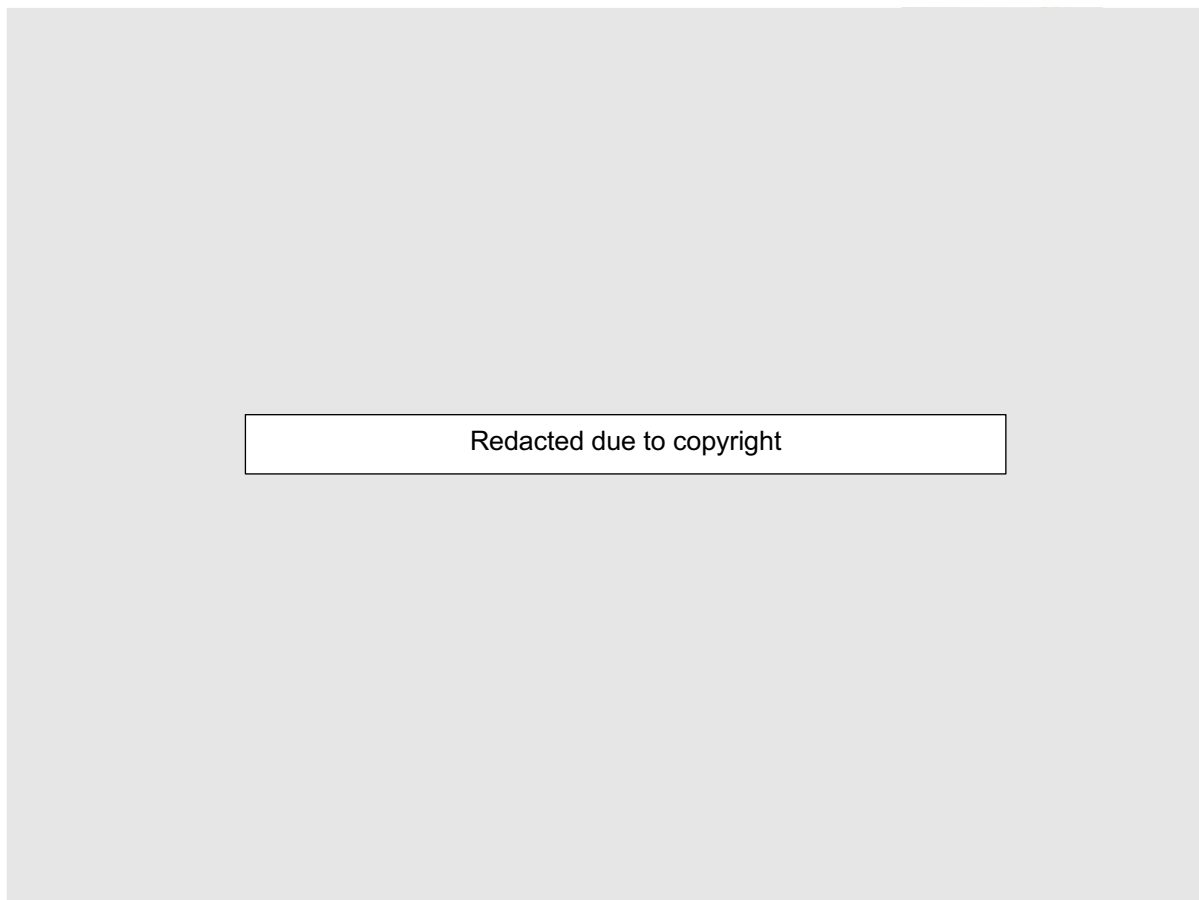
Redacted due to copyright

Figure 55: Examples of fashion editorials featuring skateboards and skateparks from 2010 - 2021

As early as 1991, skateboarding culture has been appropriated[34] (Alspaugh, 2019) by the high-end fashion industry, with appearances in publications such as Vogue, GQ, and Harpers Bazaar and in campaigns by brands including Gucci and Dior. These manifestations have been adapted to aid fashion brands, appearing on billboards, websites and magazines across the globe.

As debated in sub-chapter 1.1.1, this increased prevalence has been met with scorn from the skateboarding community regarding issues of equitable representation and the integration of skateboarding's look by fashion media outsiders. Viewing such paraphrases as 'mindless constructs of cultural misuse' (Cook, 2021; Davis, 2019; Jones, 2014), Instagram's asphaltposerclub[35] regularly posts satirical responses to such content, highlighting a lack of authentic depiction by fashion brands. While it is difficult to quantify the site's contents, the public discussion on this topic suggests such media frustrates skateboarders.

Like skateboard media, fashion photography and films are valuable, inspiring artistic expressions, creating visual concepts, and challenging social norms (Hancock, Johnson-Woods, & Karaminas, 2013). By providing a platform for creative exploration and pushing boundaries, fashion photography and film can be a powerful form of communication and storytelling (Buffo, 2017). Capturing clothing, accessories, and models to demonstrate, promote, and create editorial content (Bartlett, Cole, & Rocamora, 2013) for magazines, websites, and advertising campaigns, fashion media involves styling, props, and lighting techniques. Fashion media may call for post-production techniques such as retouching, colour correcting and compositing to create representations of natural or fantasy narratives.

Within this research, I position fashion media as imagined fiction that shapes views on brands and trends (Wolny & Mueller, 2013). I further suggest that while the endeavour to mix skateboarding and fashion media is simply part of following trends,

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[34] Cultural appropriation: "Culturally laden references woven into the construct of physical artefacts by fashion designers who have no association with that culture. Such appropriation can be practiced without an understanding or appreciation of the originating culture, thereby thinning the underlying heritage while making profit from its appearance." (Alspaugh, 2019)

[35] @asphaltposerclub

fashion photographers and videographers pay heed to the findings of this research to prevent the exploitation of skateboarding culture for future campaigns. This serves to safeguard the depiction of skateboarding culture and respect for its values, rather than manipulating its image through fashion media, simply for the sake of staying up to date.

4.2.2 Reviewing the Translation of Skateboarding in Fashion Photography and Film

Drawn from the diagraphical literature review, the following three coded samples reveal the translation of skateboarding from the position of fashion media specialists. Comprising two photography-based cases and one film-related study, they illustrate where embodied tacit knowledge and experience production could be improved in the construction of the works to realise ways to portray skateboarding culture by achieving an equitable representation of skateboarding.

Redacted due to copyright

Figure 56: Arthur Elgort for US Vogue, March 2004

The first example addresses the work of American fashion photographer Arthur Elgort. Elgort experimented with the image of skateboarding for Vogue Italia's January issue in 1991 and for US Vogue in March 2004. The example above is from his 2004 shoot, photographed at the iconic Venice Beach Skatepark in Los Angeles. Here, we can see music icon Pharrell Williams styled alongside model Julia Stegner as part of a five-picture story. This shot is the only image among the five that includes skateboarding. (Appendix 4)

Echoing Vogue magazine's mission to present fashion "in the context of culture and the world we live in—how we dress, live and socialize; what we eat, listen to and watch; who leads and inspires us" (Vogue, 2018), the image features Stegner wearing high heels and a pencil skirt, clutching a long board next to a low rail in the skatepark. To the left of Stegner, Williams, who is performing a trick called a street plant, is wearing jeans and trainers.

As Figure 57 illustrates, by placing Elgort's 1991 image for Vouge Italia alongside his 2004 photograph for US Vogue, the visual coding of both images reveals similarities and instances where Elgort expands his composition, demonstrating how the later image produced in 2004 evolved marginally.

Redacted due to copyright

Figure 57: Arthur Elgort for Vogue Italia, January 1991, and for US Vogue, March 2004

Both 1991 and 2004 photographs depict skateboarding environments. The former shows the model wearing high heels while standing on a skateboard in a tight-fitting knee-length black dress, her arms wrapped around two skateboarders to support her. The latter features Stegner in heels, holding a longboard in a way that deviates from typical skateboarding stances and does not advance female representation from the 1991 image.

In contrast to the 1991 image, where the skateboarders appear passive, smiling towards the camera and holding their boards, the 2004 image of Pharrell Williams[36] suggests action. While Williams performs a trick known to skateboarders, another skateboarder ollies[37] over a concrete funbox[38], while other skateboarders can be seen in the background. These elements provide some context, lending credibility to Vogue's 2018 mission to represent the culture of today.

The two images, shot a decade apart by the same photographer, reveal the grandeur associated with the production of fashion photography while at the same time illustrating a lack of understanding of any tacit context of the world skateboarders live in. Even when encircled by the heritage of this rich culture, the two models are almost disassociated with the creativity of the background. Instead, the photographs exhibit a shallow impression presented as a basic understanding of the context of skateboarding culture and the environment skateboarders thrive in.

In the second example, Céline's Spring 2011 (Figure 58) campaign features models Daria Werbowy and Stella Tennant, photographed by Juergen Teller. Like Elgort, Teller had previously captured skateboard-themed photographs, such as his 1996 shot of Angel Lindall for i-D magazine (Figure 59).

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[36] Pharrell Williams has a strong connection to skateboarding culture. His brother, Cato Williams, was a professional skateboarder, and Pharrell himself sponsors the Ice Cream Skate Team supported by Reebok. His clothing brand, Billionaire Boys Club, created in 2003 with partner Nigo, is a unique blend of streetwear and luxury elements.

[37] An Ollie is a skateboarding trick performed by jumping and popping the board off the ground while in the air. It involves the skater simultaneously jumping up and using their back foot to press down on the tail of the board, causing the front end of the board to rise up into the air.

[38] A funbox is a standard element of a skatepark. It generally consists of a box shape with a flat top and a ramp on two or more sides. A funbox may also include other elements that allow for more complicated skateboarding tricks such as a rail.
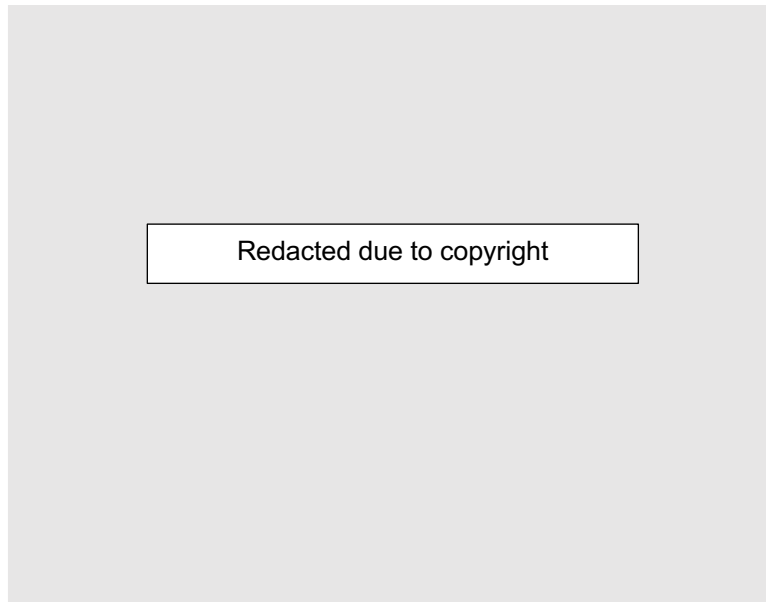
Figure 58: Juergen Teller for Céline's Spring campaign, 2011

Figure 59: Juergen Teller i-D Magazine, 1996

In the article, Lindall appears to be dancing in front of a well-grinded skateboard on the floor at night. Wearing a dress, and well-worn trainers, the article charts the model's rise to fame featuring the headline 'Fresh and Funky.' Alongside the image

of her with a skateboard is text in the form of a short interview. When reading the dialogue, there is no reference or connection to skateboarding; instead, the skateboard appears to have been utilised as a mere prop to create a "fresh and funky" impression.

Under Pheobe Philo's creative direction, Céline launched their Spring 2011 collection, featuring relaxed silk prints in bold pops of colour for a mature female market. Alongside this, Philo commissioned a limited series of skateboards reflecting those same colours to be made and retailed at $2500. Philo collaborated with Teller to create a series of images featuring model Daria Werbowy holding an orange skateboard, an emblem of the shift in aesthetic towards a luxe streetwear trend.

Figure 60: Juergen Teller for Céline's Spring campaign, 2011

Fashionistas on fashion forums like 'The Fashion Spot'[39] were critical of this latest campaign, with one person exclaiming, "Céline woman and a skateboard, really now?" Another contributor added, "As someone who skateboards, it does not work." The juxtaposition between the model's lavish attire and awkward skateboarding stance highlighted the disparity between them and skateboarding culture, which appeared slightly farcical. As one commenter pointed out, "In real life, the griptape would destroy your great silk suit pretty quickly."

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[39] https://forums.thefashionspot.com/threads/c%C3%A9line-s-s-2011-daria-werbowy-and-stella-tennant-by-juergen-teller.211183/page-3#post-26399731

The two examples above show that fashion media often lacks the significant visual communication theory to portray situational aesthetics. Captured by those who are less learn-ed in skateboarding, the visions portrayed within these examples amplify the theory that the thinning of skateboarding's revered voice from within the community is often lost in fashion's objective translations and reconfiguring of meaning. Although high-end fashion brands are profoundly "interested in youth culture" (Van Assche, 2017), there still seems to be a disconnect regarding how photographers and creative directors portray the skateboard community. This research suggests that by failing to consult with specialists from the field, fashion brands risk disregarding the very culture they aim to emulate.

A further illustration of this 'interest in youth culture' was Vogue's 2016 "Skate Week". As skateboarding became an obvious part of the fashion landscape, Vogue contributed an entire editorial package online and in print to the culture. With skateboarding's influence appearing everywhere, from international runway shows to campaigns, skateboarding and the skateboard became a symbol of youthful rebellion, creativity, and urban cool. Aiming to resonate with younger and interested audiences, it was clear that their approach lacked a strong, if not well-researched, message.

Quatersnacks[40] repulsed by the concept responded with an article titled, "The Shit We Learned from Vogue's Skate Week", where members of the skateboard community ardently condemned Vogue's approach to reporting on the culture. As Lucas Wisenthal summed up in his article for Complex magazine, "The sheer tone-deafness [of Skate Week] was dumbfounding. So too is that of the stories comprising Vogue's Skate Week, an editorial package dedicated to, I suppose, the intersection of skateboarding and high fashion." (Wisenthal, 2016)

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[40] https://quartersnacks.com/2016/07/the-stuff-we-learned-from-vogues-skate-week/
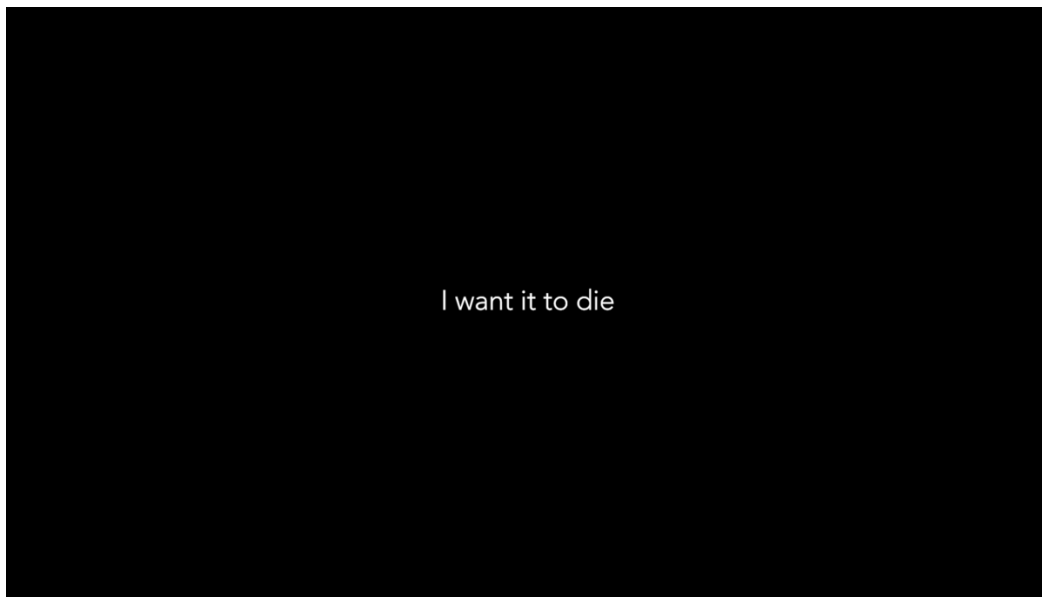
Responding to these findings, I created three works titled 'Comments'[41]. Surmised as three artefact-oriented anthropological studies (Wingfield, 2009), they examined the public threads of Quatersnacks and asphaltposerclub, providing insight into sociocultural reactions to fashion-related skateboard events and campaigns. Figure 61 features a screengrab from '17 comments' which sourced viewpoints from non-participants via open-access public threads, responding to Quatersnacks reporting of skate week. '35 comments' and '117 comments' surveyed similar open-source threads responding to a menswear catwalk and female fashion campaign utilising skateboarding on asphaltposerclub's Instagram page.

These artefact-oriented anthropological studies showcased where oppositional views exist. They revealed the conversational clashes and confirmative signifiers of those contributing to these threads. Voices are presented as an emblematic account, a rhetoric of words displayed as text on a blank screen, projecting the skateboard community's feelings as encountered within open forums.

While some brands and fashion media specialists have utilised skateboarding's look ineffectively, there are cases where campaigns have emphasised skateboarding

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[41] Comments is a series of three experimental films examining the impact of public discourse surrounding Vogue's Skate Week. The work can be viewed at http://www.hubbacouture.uk/diagraphical/comments/

culture, portraying the activity more professionally and artistically. In my final example, I discuss Chanel's Allure Sport Homme advertising campaign from 2016.
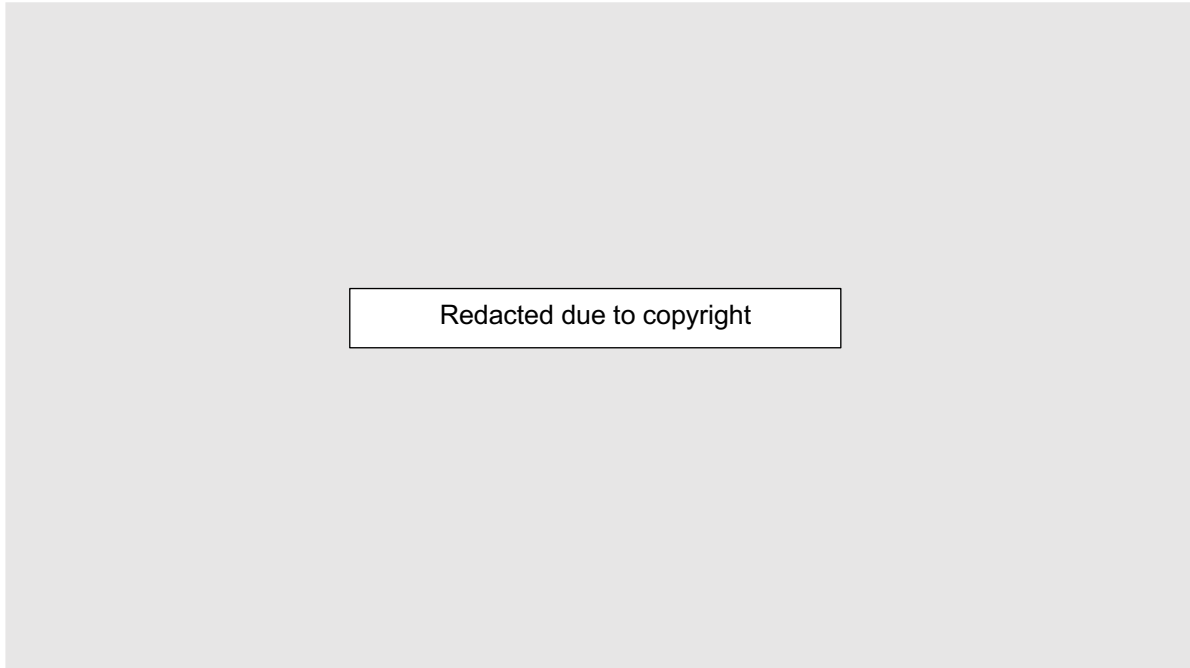
Figure 62: Allure Sport Homme: Slide, the Film with Adam Crigler, Directed by Jacob Sutton, Chanel, 2016

A professional longboarder, Adam Crigler is featured in two black-and-white fashion films titled 'Allure Sport Homme: Slide'. Wearing a protective leather suit, gloves, and helmet, he is captured gliding down California roads at high speeds, evoking embodied understanding through his handling of the longboard and the accompanying audio of the board's movements. The thirty second videos are showcased as part of a series focusing on male athletes and are fast fast-paced in their editing. In one film, viewers watch as the video switches between shots of Crigler's body, face, and the action, ending with Crigler power sliding through water. In the second film, much of the action is filmed from a head camera, giving the perspective of Crigler himself.

Often seen as fast and challenging, Chanel's films' sound and camera angles are more accessible to viewers who downhill longboard. Revealing tacit knowledge, compared to the preceding examples, there is an apparent attempt to connect the manoeuvrability of longboarding with surfing. This bridge is made more robust as the film concludes against the backdrop of the Californian ocean.

As a storytelling vehicle, the fashion film narrative connects Crigler's character, the longboard, and the road. But as commentators on Chanel's YouTube channel pointed out, the ad's focus on a seductive smell is a nonsensical connection to cologne when paired with skateboarding/longboarding, unless as one person mentioned, it was to 'mask the smell of perspiration following an intensive period on a board' (Unknown contributor, 2017).

Fashion media employs comparable codes and conventions to form visual signatures like skateboard media. Reflective of its audience (Smedley, 2013), fashion photographers and videographers establish a similar sense of ownership over the media they produce (Arnold, 2001). These outcomes are defined by semiotic approaches, which in turn demand multiple positions and perspectives from their viewers and readers based on their respective requirements.

They are highlighted in Dior's 'Seoul Skateboarders' for their Fall 2022 show. Having invited a group of ten local female skateboarders to showcase their skills at Seoul's Ewha Woman's University, Dior filmed a series of interviews, where the women discussed the sense of camaraderie they share as females skateboarding and living and South Korea. While the film places a spotlight on female skateboarding, it is evident that someone with knowledge of the culture has not undertaken the approach to filming. Camera angles often missed parts of tricks altogether by either zooming in too close or turning away as the action was happening. Having spent a significant budget on a temporary skatepark, this illustration of missed opportunity on the part of the brand showcases a lack of cultural understanding to capture the achievement of female skateboarders in moving image format.

As we can see from these examples, the order by which these two practices of aesthetical information are created forms tensions between what reassembles original and/or creative viewpoints when exposed through the lens of fashion. The paraphrasing of skateboarding's visual jargon and the shifting focus away from the rigour displayed by those charged with creating insider skateboard media emphasises a lack of disregard for its role and purpose. The diagraphical literature review further emphasises this, showcasing a more comprehensive range of high-

end fashion industry translations, depicting connexions supposing knowledge while thinning out understanding.

Recognising how each approach to media has a particular audience and purpose, unpacking these examples illustrates the unfamiliarity of high-end fashion brands to translate the image of skateboarding, presenting an opportunity to debate and investigate the production methods utilised by skateboarding media specialists. By exploring the relationships between doing, seeing, and making (Pink, 2017), this research has identified five tropes seemingly lacking in fashion media production. Researching the implications of tacit knowledge, shared perceptibility, aesthetic equality, and democracy within the making of skateboarding content, the following data illustrates the importance of these tropes in constructing skateboarding's story and advocates why utilising the skills of skateboard media specialists within projects, such as Dior's 'Seoul skateboarders' would add value via experience production and embodied knowledge.

4.3.1 Crafting Skateboarding's Guise, Embodied Production

Between September 2017 and August 2019, three major research visits to Bordeaux, Copenhagen, and Los Angeles were conducted to study skateboard media specialists' use of physicality and intuitive knowledge. Data collected aimed to test the following research objectives:

1. To explore and document skateboard media specialists' use of physicality and intuitive knowledge in skateboard media production.
2. To examine and document how skateboard media specialists utilise physicality and intuitive knowledge in producing content.
3. To analyse skateboard media specialists' creative and interactive processes in media making, utilising documentary as a method.

4.3.2 Copenhagen July 2017: Scoping and Testing

Banks (2011) contends that the meaning of an image consists of two elements: the 'external narrative', which refers to the social context that produced the image, and the 'internal narrative', which is the story communicated by the image. For this research, it was critical to uncover the meanings attributed to images and films by the

participants who created them if one is to form a representation of a narrative. One way to do this was to interview and observe specialists seeking to understand their beliefs, values, and the reasoning behind their decisions when creating media in a particular way.

Copenhagen[42] was intended to be an opportunity to test 'meaning' by uncovering 'internal narrative' via the observing and interviewing of skateboard media specialists alongside skateboarders. As an annual event that brings together the global community, Copenhagen Open was an ideal locale to begin exploring the potential of documentary as method and delve into the research questions. Guided by Ingold, Rose and Pink, the principal purpose of the visit was to experiment with photography, film, and mapping methods, surveying skateboard media experts and how they used their bodies as a form of knowledge.

Garnering insights over four days, the fieldwork was supported by a research team consisting of sound recordist Rosie Lorenz, videographer Ryan Gray, and a further photographer, Leo Sharp. Three pre-arranged interviews[43] were conducted with Arto Saari (photographer), Colin Kennedy (retired professional skateboarder and marketing manager at Nike SB), and professional skateboarder Jeron Wilson. With ethical approval sought and written permission forms printed, participants were asked to give the right to consent to being recorded via video and sound, for a portrait to be taken, and where stipulated the use of their images being published within this PhD as visual illustrations elucidating explicit conversational moments.

During the four-day event, a further three impromptu interviews were conducted with professional skateboarders Sam Beckett, Boo Johnson, and Remy Taveria, along with one informal conversation with professional skateboarders Gino Iannucci.

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[42] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/copenhagen/

[43] A set of twelve questions were explored with participants, three areas were addressed; individuals experiences of skateboard media production (either in front of the camera or behind the camera), the role of skateboard media in their personal/professional lives, and any thoughts participants wished to add on ways in which skateboard media is interpreted within the fashion industry. Questions were intentionally broad during these initial interviews to assess participants reactions to lines of inquiry, capture meaningful data whilst highlighting potential areas of knowledge that could be tapered. Further to this, the interviews sought to identify any challenges that may arise from this line of inquiry, focusing the study towards a more efficient set of questions.

Figure 63: Stills Taken from Video Interviews, Copenhagen, 2017

As discussed in sub-chapter 3.2.2 the analysis from this initial visit examined the design of documentary as method, addressing ethics and quality of visual recordings. This included participant well-being, researcher access, and the use of visual techniques. Interviews revealed insights into the qualitative understanding of participants' feelings and experiences. Data was explored via thematic analysis, and the coding of visuals provided the opportunity to begin investigating the following initial findings.

Figure 64, captured by skateboard videographer Ryan Gray, bears witness to Copenhagen Open in action[44]. Observing how tacit knowledge and experience production inform skateboard media production, as the skateboarder attempts to flip his board over the object a videographer is filming with a wide-angle lens while moving on a skateboard himself. This image superfluously sums up several troupes in one. That of the lens choice for capturing the action, the route taken by the videographer to mimic the pathway of the skateboarder and the tacit knowledge which the videographer has acquired from his own experience of being a skateboarder, which helps him to instinctively understand this situation and how best to respond to capture the action.

Witnessing the informal and often subconscious understanding acquired through experience, practice, and observation, Figure 60 identifies a series of actions taken to capture the action in the best way possible. In the image, the videographer is aiming the camera upwards, with the body slightly folded towards the skateboarder. Traversing the same landscape while riding a skateboard, the videographer is dragging his back foot to slow down at the exact moment when the trick is being performed to frame the skateboarder in the footage. Resting one hand on his leg for

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[44] CPH OPEN hosts skateboarding events in multiple locations, spanning multiple days. Described as, 'a 100% independent skateboard event unlike anything else – it is whatever the riders and audience make it.' https://www.cphopen.com/

balance, the image does not illustrate the moment the videographer steps back onto his skateboard, continuing his journey to film further skaters.

During my interview with Arto Saari, I enquired as to whether his experience as a professional skateboarder had impacted his photographic practice. Arto explained that his familiarity with the culture and ability to anticipate a skateboarder's movements was invaluable, especially when shooting incredibly intense tricks where the toll on a skater's physical body and state of mind could be drawn out depending on how quickly the trick could be landed[45]. He described how his understanding of skateboarding helped him locate himself in the environment, be more intuitive to the manoeuvres of the skaters, and know where to set up equipment for the best shots. He believes his ability to anticipate how a shot looks from a skater's perspective allows him to shoot images that accurately showcase the art of skateboarding.

Both skateboarders Sam Beckett and Colin Kennedy noted the importance of the photographer and videographer in shaping the image of skateboarding. Beckett expressed how working with highly skilled photographers and videographers helped him progress, seeing their outcomes as feedback integral to his growth and development. When I asked Sam how so, he emphasised the importance of collaboration when media was created. "Being able to talk with a photographer or videographer that is invested in what I'm doing and interested in what I'm trying to achieve is great. I trust that person to get it right [media] because they know me and they know how I skate" (Beckett, 2017). Colin further acknowledged the importance of the photographer and videographer noting the role they played in helping him develop as a professional skater "When things were going wrong, they would (photographers and videographers) say what I needed to hear or show me what I was doing on camera, I'd listen or look at the camera and most of the time that really helped" (Kennedy, 2017). Analysing both comments, it became clear that the role of a prized photographer and videographer was more than just a person capturing media; they also acted as coaches.

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[45] Landed is a skateboarding term that means successfully completing a trick. It is usually used to refer to a trick that was kicked off with a proper take-off and a smooth landing.

4.3.3 Bordeaux March 2018: Witnessing the Collective

In March 2018, I set out to explore two suppositions drawn from my visit to Copenhagen: how skateboard media specialists employ their corporeal presence and intuition to shape results and the notion of communication and coaching during media capture.

Bordeaux[46] provided the opportunity to explore data collection approaches to the visual, assessing which methods would be best suited in the field to record findings. Copenhagen had previously raised issues of quality[47], specifically the attributes of where to film interviews. I sought to use Bordeaux as an opportunity to compare criteria regarding cameras and video equipment before venturing to Los Angeles on a month-long field study. Bordeaux was also the first stage where friendship as method was implemented. Travelling with my partner Leo Sharp (Leo S) and our daughter, Bordeaux, sought to consider how close relationships might affect data collection together with the role of insider media specialists to capture near reality.

Seeking to understand the discernible moments of two people's intertwined patterns, rhythms, and routines expose senses of tacit knowledge, Bordeaux documented native skateboarder Leo Valls (Leo V) and his relationship with Leo S photographer, across multiple locations within the city. Working to observe two people acutely, I formed a visual diary exposing the relationship built between the pair. At the same time, I began to address the effectiveness of digital and analogue techniques and their ontological association within the research framework. The importance of time and routine, the purposefulness of each piece of equipment to record data, and the identification of intention arising in the field were critical considerations to understanding the role of the visual anthropological analytic gaze.

Aiming to 'mirror' the reality of the everyday, observations focused on the distinction between things, matter and meaning, a representation of reality generated in sound, photography, and film to construct an interpretive materiality. In-situ discussions were held at each location to examine the phenomenology of embodied participant

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[46] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/bordeaux/

[47] Discussed in sub-chapter 3.2.2

experiences. Replacing traditional interviews, strategies of recording the relationship between humans, places and objects were captured via notations and diagrams. The following observations were drawn out of analysis from this week-long study.

Figure 65: Still from Super 8mm, Leo Sharp Photographing Leo Valls, 2018

Figure 65 exemplifies a familiar sight to me. I have witnessed Leo S lie chest down on roads and pathways to capture skateboarding in all weathers. This embodied position is not rare in skateboarding. I have observed this corporeal shape enacted during every field study in this PhD. But like the dragging of the foot by the videographer in Copenhagen, it plays to the role of tacit knowledge. Leo S described how the different positions a photographer adapts comes from having a grasp of the environment. Being able to take the right photo at the right angle and capture the skateboarder in their location is something Leo S describes as 'knowledge which has been built up gradually over time and difficult to put into words' (Sharp, 2021). Leo explained how his knowledge of where to place his body and camera comes from understanding how a skateboarder moves and what pathway they will take. When asked how this knowledge is 'built', Leo described how he gained a deeper

understanding of the environment and subject through his own skateboarding experience. He explained how skateboard photography had been a series of trials and errors, learning the correct settings to use and what angles would work best, but how his knowledge, [tacit knowledge] of being a skateboarder enabled him to form a complete story of the skateboarding experience.

As a professional skateboarder, Leo V was no stranger to being documented. Leo S, on the other hand, was not. As a subject now in the frame and as my partner, family as method formed the foundation of a mutually constitutive understanding of social and cultural experiences. Turning attention away from our relationship, family as method sought to consider the distinction of the familiar. With an associative understanding of the research, his readings of the environment provided intricate metaphorical descriptions of reality. The degree with which Leo S described the field, the encountering of signifiers and the repertoire of explanations yielded abundant information. Engaged with a knowledge of the research, Leo S sensed when he might add to nuanced understanding. Leo S would automatically focus on what existed in the moment and how he and I could better understand that instant together, rather than responding with what he knew from his past and how he came to know it unless promoted.

In Figure 66, Leo S is seen left of the shot, shooting on an analogue Hasselblad with fisheye. When I ask Leo why he chose to shoot on film, Leo describes how the environment is 'made for it' (Sharp, 2018). Enunciating how Hasselblad offers a unique look and feel compared to digital cameras, Leo S said the same can be said of the building's distinctive look. He explains that as Leo V is wearing similar tones of clothing, the quality of Hasselblad will produce a sutured natural look and very sharp images in terms of accuracy. Leo explained how the leaf shutter in the Hasselblad allows for precise flash synchronisation, compared to his digital counterpart, which was significantly slower. This allowed Leo S to accurately capture Leo V without blurring or missing the elements of the building and clothes Leo V was wearing.

Figure 66: Still taken from Super 8mm film study of Leo Sharp photographing Leo Valls, Bordeaux, 2018

While recording this fieldwork, I became more aware of the intense dialogue happening throughout the day. Using tally lines each time the photographer and skateboarder came together to discuss an aspect of the trick, the lengthy and rich exchanges of knowledge were noted as significant moments requiring further research. Becoming attuned to the importance of such colloquies, deep listening was applied to explore the intensity of these interactions.

Before or at the beginning of a session[48] the conversation usually followed a similar template. What trick did the skateboarder want to attempt, what tricks had been done at a spot, what had anyone else been trying, what had yet to be done, the best time of the day to go without being kicked out of the spot, the run-up, the runout and if anything else might be needed to assist the trick[49], the speed needed to land the trick,

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[48] A session in skateboarding is the amount of time spent by the skateboarder or skateboarding group in a designated area, either a public skate park or a private area such as a street spot. During the session, skateboarders can be seen skateboarding as well as socialising with other members of the community. Sessions often happen in one space but can move to several locations over the course of a day.

[49] In conversations during the PhD, skateboarders, photographers and videographers could be heard discussing the need for bringing certain equipment, like a piece of wooden board, to a location for the purposes of making the floor or an obstacle accessible for the purposes of shooting footage.

the angle of the run-up, a need for a spotter[50], if the skateboarder would prefer to go by themselves with just a photographer/videographer, or choose to skate with a group, usually ending with a conversation as to whether they felt up to landing the trick that day or if should they go another day and try something else. For each session, the dialogue was similar, a natural methodical, almost mantra-like approach to working through the process of capturing material.

More than a professional relationship, I witnessed collective conversations between skateboarders and photograph. As they worked together to capture the perfect moment, their exchanges were as much about how the skater's legs felt as they were about landing a trick. I have come to refer to this as the 'bonding climate' —a sensory space where the creation of a unique atmosphere allows for an image to be captured via the collaborative and mutual understanding between skateboarder and media specialist.

Figure 67: Leo and Leo discussing skateboarding while walking, Bordeaux, 2018

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[50] A spotter is usually another skateboarder positioned to chase or capture a skateboard in case the board rolls towards a road of water at high speed.

Arising before, during and after the capturing of a trick, the bonding climate exists in every moment I witnessed during the phases of fieldwork. Between skateboarder and photographer/videographer, there is a shared connection. It is both physical and verbal and can be one or both simultaneously. Both parties desire to support one another and record something exceptional from the skateboarder. It is the visual cues of foot position, hands, body, and head. It is, at times, the observable and unobservable coaching through words and/or body language to encourage and support when the attempt to land a trick may not be going to plan. It is the showcasing of what has been taken on the back of the camera's LCD screen by way of inspiring the skateboarder to dig a little deeper to find the energy for one more go. It is the hands in the air, the running to embrace when the trick is landed and the nods/smiles that say we just captured something amazing. The bonding climate is minutes; it is hours. Having observed and viewed the impact of these moments, it is apparent that at all levels of skateboarding, these interactions are an important part of the process of capturing skateboarding.

Within the construct of a bonding climate lies the notion of the huddle. I describe the huddle as a significant moment when participants and those witnessing the event come together to cluster around the camera's LCD screen and view the trick.

Documented at each new location we visited, the huddle is a strategic moment performed for four apparent reasons: to encourage, confirm the quality of the landing, ensure the excellence of the media and by way of celebrating the landing of the trick. While observing conversations, it was clear that the huddle was an important break in the flow. If a skateboarder was struggling, the huddle reassured them that the trick could be achieved. Looking back at near misses and how close they were to landing, the photographer and skateboarder were observed discussing and making sense of what might not be going quite right in the huddle.

Once a trick was landed, the huddle would act as an opportunity to certify the trick from both perspectives. The photographer would check his camera's screen to ensure the flash had fired correctly or that the angle of the shot was in line with the

trick. The videographer would check to ensure they had caught the line[51] and that it was filmed well. Skateboarders were often overheard discussing foot position, hand position and whether they felt the shot reflected what they had just done. After the huddle, further conversation would often occur. Should one more attempt be considered in case the skateboarder could reposition an arm, leg, or go higher? If the rollout was 'sketchy'[52], was a further attempt required? Understood as a significant conjecture, the huddle makes sense of what happened, the point at which a discursive claim is made. While a new image has been created, it is this very act of enunciating the trick which brings an end to the moment.

Figure 68: Still from Super 8mm, illustrating 'The Huddle', Bordeaux, 2018

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[51] Filming a line in skateboarding involves capturing a skateboarder's performance when attempting a series of tricks in one continuous shot. The skater typically starts at one end of a skatepark or street spot and moves through the space while performing a variety of manoeuvres. The purpose of filming a line is to document the skaters' full performance and showcase their talent.

[52] Landings that are anything but smooth and consistent can cause even the best style to appear unsteady and precarious (though this sometimes adds to the style). The term "sketchy" is often used to describe such landings.

Analysis of images taken in Bordeaux revealed another significant visual cue, the 'embodied hold'. Unacknowledged until this point, I have witnessed the embodied hold for years without giving much thought to its role. Within this research, I began to explore its relationship to media and the function it played in capturing footage.

As illustrated in Figure 69, the embodied hold was observed between tricks or just before the skateboarder launched into a trick. The skateboarder did not solely execute these movements; the videographer utilised them when filming. Witnessing this pattern of behaviour, skateboarders and videographers would either grip the nose of the skateboard and hold or rest their foot on the board so that it is raised at an angle. Ready to set off, skateboarders and videographers would propel their boards forward with either their hand or foot, forming a synchronised movement as they attempted the trick or follow while filming.

Figure 69: Still from 35mm Study exploring the body language and the 'embodied hold', Bordeaux, 2018

The hold was also employed for longer periods when skateboarders would congregate to talk or take an extended breath between tricks. Alongside visible body language, this pattern of behaviour signified when a person was at rest or about to attempt a trick. A unique position, this familiar/unfamiliar characteristic became a distinct 'vision' within the recording of skateboarding culture, part of the credentials consistent with the actions of those who know.

Figure 70: Study in Bordeax of Leo Valls and friends illustrating the 'Hold', 2018

The final characteristic to emerge from this analysis was the line or sequence. Both aim to capture the make and rollout, the moment when a skateboarder lands back on the board and continues rolling, showing control. In skateboarding, the make and rollout indicate that a trick has been landed skilfully and consistently. For an image to be published, the rollout needs to have occurred and been witnessed. In photography this is much harder to define, as Leo S explained:

"Before video, photographers relied on taking sequences to prove a skater had landed the trick. If someone was going to attempt a huge rail or a set of ten stairs, you wanted to let everyone know they had landed it. Now with video there's no need, you can see it…But sequences were expensive when you were shooting on film. You could blow through fifteen rolls in an afternoon trying to capture a trick. Most of the time, you wouldn't bother paying to process the rolls you knew they hadn't landed; there was no point. You marked up the film you needed, and the rest would most likely end their lives in the bin. Now, with digital, it's easy to prove a skater landed a trick. We still shoot sequences on film; it's just costly." (Sharp, 2018)

As a method of shared understanding, the huddle often acted as an opportunity to examine the make and rollout on film. However, for photography, it was usually left to the discretion of the photographer and witnesses to reach a unified agreement on the quality of the outcome.

Visually analysing approaches to documentary as method yielded further critical insights into the use of technology to capture data. After dedicating extensive time to

examining recordings from Bordeaux, two notable trends emerged. Digital accounts performed well as epistemological tools, essential for capturing interviews, while analogue was identified as a separate entity for capturing tacit experiences. Utilising a Nikon 35mm with 3200 and 800 iso film and a Braun Nizo Super 8mm with Kodak 50D, the grain and texture of skateboarding's renderings added layers of rich properties when captured on film. Initially associated with nostalgia, the works soon evolved into a series of artefact-oriented anthropological studies where grain forced the viewer to narrow the eyes and take stock of the content actively.

I found that using 3200 films meant less detail was visible in the images, which, in turn, demanded more awareness to identify elements and see subtle details. The difference? Sophisticated levels of concentration were required to classify the elements in the image. With advantages and disadvantages to these methods, the research found using analogue film worked well in low light conditions while also establishing a particular aesthetic associated with the early days of skateboard photography. Limited to a set number of exposures per roll, working with 35mm and super 8mm further required more mindful action in the field. Encouraged to think carefully about composition, lighting, and who to place in the frame, agency became a critical conversation. Embedding social relationships between persons and objects onto still film, levels of attentiveness in the field challenged approaches to using digital renderings, which often ran into the hundreds of images.

Perhaps the most debatable aspect of working with analogue was the shared limited understanding of what persons and things would be explained within specific contexts. Providing a set of pre-edited pieces, might these outcomes be seen as insufficient? Conversely, as the research shifted focus from epistemology towards ontology, this newfound orientation looked to answer that dispute. The conveying of rich tacit knowledge from Copenhagen and Bordeaux had provided several coded cues revealing observable and unobservable assumptions of what may or may not have been pre-witnessed. Through collaborative experiences and practice, intuitive insights were beginning to form. Often embedded in the skills and abilities observed, working in the field proved further beneficial by developing my tacit understanding of problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making via verbal and nonverbal communication.

Analysing fieldwork from Bordeaux, I better understood my place within the physical environment. Taking a step back to establish open space, the visuals associated with this fieldwork allowed me to create a distinction between myself and the participants. This new understanding made it clear that as a researcher, I was entering a distinctive space, becoming an author of the experience, rather than my previous position within skateboarding culture.

4.3.4 Los Angeles August 2018: Near Reality?

In August 2018, the first significant fieldwork study was conducted in Los Angeles. Twenty-two semi-structured interviews and several observational studies were conducted over one month. Seeking to explore previous findings, the research was primarily motivated to capture data via interviews and participatory observational studies. This critical juncture questioned how the making of skateboarding media practice from an insider perspective generated a sense of "near reality" (Luhmann, 2000) via embodied practice, exploring the role of communication between skateboarder and media specialist in constructing footage.

This exploration focused on making and editing, having identified several tropes utilised by photographers and videographers in the previous two field studies. To understand these processes, sound recording, photography, and video generated insights examining lived experiences.

Participants were contacted two months before the field visit via email or direct messaging over Instagram. Prospective dates accompanied a short account of the research. Of the twenty-two photographers, videographers, skateboarders, and industry professionals contacted, eighteen responded. All participants were male, ninety percent white, and ages ranged from twenty-eight to sixty-two. Among the contacts who did not respond, three were minority males and one female. During fieldwork, an additional four male photographers and industry professionals were interviewed. These were arranged via gatekeepers who felt particular voices warranted inclusion within the study.

Working in-situ, lessons had been learned from Copenhagen. Interviews predominantly took place in participants' offices, with participants consulted to determine if the workplace would be a practical space to record conversations. Eighty percent of those interviewed explained that their home was their office, while twelve percent referenced their office as an extension of their home. One participant asked to be interviewed at a company he worked for but which he had no office[53]. During three lengthy interviews[54] we moved locations, sometimes outside to inside, sometimes as a way of reframing the space. This acted as a form of a break and to switch out batteries on equipment.

While coding interviews by photographers and videographers, it was clear that the home/work environment offered a natural setting, providing a greater insight into participants' lives while adding context. In all instances, there were framed and unframed images of photographs they had taken on the walls. Analysis detected that eighty-five percent of participants gravitated towards photo-elicitation, reflecting on their and others' work when responding to questions. Participants used their physical work several times per interview in reference to discussions. Analysis identified that when a person physically moved to show an example of their work, their physical gestures increased.

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[53] During the interview which took place in an office not of the participant, the quality of additional references and resources discussed was noticeably different. The answers provided insights; however, the atmosphere was distinctively more formal. With limited images visible on the walls and less references to expanded upon, the interviews lacked the additional layers of detail; the responses were far more unyielding in their replies.

[54] Interviews were conducted over a three-week period with an average interviewing time of 127 minutes. Despite my attempt to keep the interviews to an hour, the detailed information discussed warranted further unpicking. In fieldnotes, and as reported in sub-chapter 3.2.2, I reported experiencing levels of fatigue due to the number and length of interviews, where the need to remain focused has high. Following this period of research, I evaluated the process and determined that pacing interviews would be essential to achieving successful results in future, making efforts to limit the interview length to an hour where feasible. Moreover, I concluded that it was important to take regular breaks and striving to only undertake one interview per day where possible.
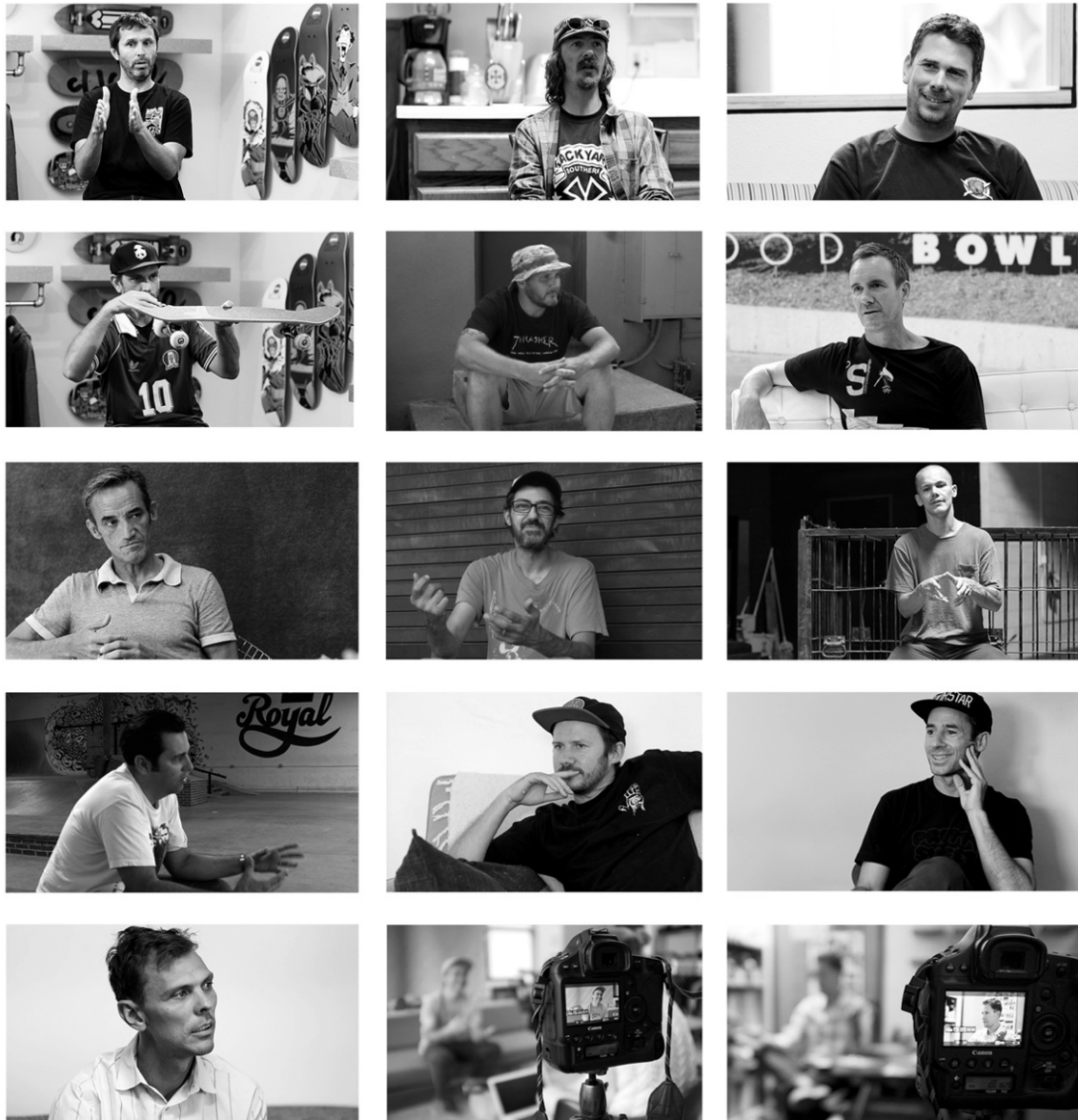
Figure 71: Stills taken from video interviews in Los Angeles, 2018

Deciphering how verbal discourse and body language applied to these moments, it was understood that the images provided additional visual cues helping to spark memories and evoke emotions. Drawing from these findings, the research was able to conclude the following:

- Participants would accompany the showcasing of images with a technical explanation of how the image or film was captured, along with stories leading up to and on the day of the media shoot.

- Participants were physically seen relaxing at these points, and the use of language changed markedly from formal to informal.
- When discussing an image, participants often recalled more vivid details about the day, including environmental factors, injuries and the time taken to capture the trick.

Figure 72: Tobin Yelland discussing images from his archive situated in his office, 2018

It was noticeable that when discussing personally selected artefacts, the media provided a creative outlet for participants to articulate their feelings verbally and nonverbally. From the researcher's position, this provided an engaging way to capture

the participant's narrative, forming richer and more meaningful content than words alone.

The coding of over forty hours of interviews took eight months. An extensive process, I used ATLAS.ti to analyse line-by-line to distinguish subject content. Creating short words or phrases summarising a particular section of text, the following categories were formed to identify specific themes from which patterns and findings were interpreted.

Achievement	Counter-culture	Discovery	Film-making	Influence	Motivation	Power	Self-awareness	Style
Adaptability	Courage	Discrimination	Financial constraints	Innovation	Movement	Practicality	Self-confidence	Subculture
Adaptation	Craftsmanship	Disrespect	Financial difficulties	Inquisitiveness	Multidimensionality	Preference	Self-consciousness	Subjectivity
Advancement	Creative expression	Diverse	Financial gain	Insecurity	Narrative	Pressure	Self-criticism	Success
Adventure	Creative Influence	Diverse interests	Flexibility	Inspiration	Negativity	Pride	Self-development	Support
Aesthetics	Creative process	Diverse perspectives	Focus	Inspirational	Networking	Privilege	Self-doubt	Teaching
Aggression	Creative thinking	Drive	FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)	Interaction	New experiences	Problem solving	Self-evaluation	Team dynamics
Alternative	Creative thoughts	Economy	Freedom	Interest	Nonconformity	Process	Self-expression	Teamwork
Ambition	Creativity	Editing	Friendship	Investment	Nostalgia	Production	Self-identity	Technical details
Appreciation	Critique	Education	Frustration	Involvement	Observation	Professionalism	Self-promotion	Technological advancement
Art appreciation	Cultural appropriation	Efficiency	Gender	Judgment	Obsession	Progress	Self-reflection	Technology
Artistic expression	Cultural change	Effort	Gender bias	Knowledge	Obstacle	Purpose	Sense of belonging	Technology advancements
Artistic influence	Cultural context	Embarrassment	Gender diversity	Lack of awareness	Open-mindedness	Qualities	Sequence	Technology development
Artistic quality	Cultural diversity	Emotion	Gender equality	Lack of understanding	Opinion	Quality	Sharing	Testing
Artistic vision	Cultural engagement	Emphasis	Gender stereotypes	Learning	Opportunity	Questioning	Skateboarding culture	Time-consuming
Artistry	Cultural factors	Encouragement	Global perspective	Learning and Development	Originality	Questioning societal standards	Skateboarding industry	Timing
Aspiration	Cultural identity	Enjoyment	Goals	Learning from mistakes	Ownership	Reality	Skill	Transformation
Attitude	Cultural influence	Enthusiasm	Gratitude	Learning from others	Participation	Rebellion	Social acceptance	Transition
Barriers	Cultural innovation	Entrepreneurship	Group dynamics	Learning process	Partnership	Recognition	Social belonging	Travel
Behaviour	Cultural norms	Environment	Growth	Life	Passion	Recommendation	Social comparison	Trend
Beliefs	Cultural references	Equipment	Growth mindset	Lifestyle	Passion for skateboarding	Recreation	Social connection	Trust
Belonging	Cultural shift	Ethics	Guidance	Limitations	Peer influence	Reflection	Social dynamics	Uncertainty
Business	Cultural significance	Evolution	Happiness	Listening	Peer pressure	Regret	Social engagement	Unconventional
Career aspirations	Cultural understanding	Excitement	Hard work	Locations	Perception	Rejection	Social identity	Underestimation
Career exploration	Curiosity	Exclusion	Historical significance	Long-term goals	Performance	Relationship	Social impact	Understanding
Challenge	Cynicism	Exclusivity	History	Longevity	Perseverance	Relationships	Social influence	Uniqueness
Challenging	Decision-making	Exhilaration	Hobbies	Loss	Persistence	Relaxation	Social interaction	Validation
Cognitive processing	Dedication	Expectation	Hope	Love	Personal accomplishment	Relevance	Social justice	Value
Collaboration	Delayed gratification	Expectations	Hospitality	Luck	Personal connection	Representation	Social learning	Variability
Commitment	Democratisation	Experience	Hostility	Material	Personal experience	Resilience	Social media	Variety
Commitment to quality	Design	Experimentation	Human experience	Media	Personal growth	Resistance	Social norms	Visual aesthetics
Communication	Desire	Expertise	Human nature	Media analysis	Personal history	Resistance to change	Spectators	Visual perception
Community	Desire for freedom	Exploration	Humour	Media culture	Personal perspective	Resourcefulness	Speculation	Wonder
Confidence	Desire for learning	Expression	Ideas	Media influence	Personal preferences	Respect	Sponsorship	Work
Conformity	Desire to travel	Failure	Identity	Media interest	Personal reflection	Responsibility	Spontaneity	Work ethic
Connectedness	Determination	Family	Imagination	Memory	Personal satisfaction	Risk	Sport	Work experience
Connection	Development	Fascination	Imitation	Mentorship	Perspective	Risk-taking	Stagnation	Work-life balance
Consumerism	Difficulty	Fashion	Impact	Mindset	Philosophy	Role models	Stereotype	Work: Career
Continuous improvement	Difficulty expressing oneself	Fear	Importance	Mistake	Physical	Routine	Stereotypes	Work: Commercialism
Control	Difficulty expressing thoughts	Fear of judgment	Independence	Mistakes	Physical activity	Safety	Storytelling	Work: Productivity
Coolness	Disapproval	Fear of the future	Individualism	Misunderstanding	Positive attitude	Satisfaction	Street culture	Youth
Corporate influence	Disconnection	Film editing	Individuality	Misunderstood	Positive emotion	Saturation	Strength	Youth culture
Cost	Discontent	Film production	Inequality	Money	Positive experience	Scope	Stress	Youthfulness

Figure 73: Categories of words and phrases from interviews undertaken in Los Angeles, 2018

Attempting to code fifteen minutes of super 8mm film and thirty-five rolls of 35mm using ATLAS.ti proved more cumbersome. The translation between the different formats, resolutions, and compressions proved difficult when combining them in particular orders. As a result, the coding of visuals from Los Angeles followed an earlier format where images were laid out in Photoshop[55], feature identifications were created, classifications applied, and pattern recognition analysed via data regrouping.

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[55] Images were arranged into collages to illustrate each location visited. Depending on the number of photographs, this could be spread over one or multiple pages—the arrangement of images aimed to draw attention to themes or patterns derived from the visual fieldwork. Additionally, the Super 8mm film was organised as a series of collages with a screenshot taken for each change in camera angle. Via this visual representation of the fieldwork, I could look for connections between the elements within the photographs and film. Collages offered an opportunity to interpret and discuss the data logically, presenting the fieldwork visually to better understand the findings (Appendix 2).

The subsequent findings were broken down into three distinct themes: documenting a person's place of work, participatory observations in the field, and responses to sites of practice. Analysis from this month-long study yielded the following observations.

In the inaugural series 'Workspaces'[56], imagery was captured that depicted the locales where participants edited their visuals and/or moving image. This exposition aimed to elucidate how an individual's work environment reflected their behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, and lifestyles. Through this portfolio, a deeper understanding of the person and their culture was recorded, providing insight into the context and atmosphere of the space. Analysis of the images highlighted unifying features, including equipment, archival materials, and other items pertinent to the role of image-making.

Figure 74: Workspaces - Mike O'Meally's office uncoded, Los Angeles, 2018

'Workspaces' sought to gain insight into the role of tacit knowledge, how it is intertwined with the human activity of editing, and the environment in which the activity occurs. Providing evidence of this relationship, photography captured

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[56] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/los-angeles-workspaces/

individuals' associative objects related to practice, desire, and motivation. Seeking to understand how perspective, ideas and decisions become woven into the construct of workspaces, this series of documentary responses provided a layer of understanding, exploring aesthetic qualities and patterns of routine.
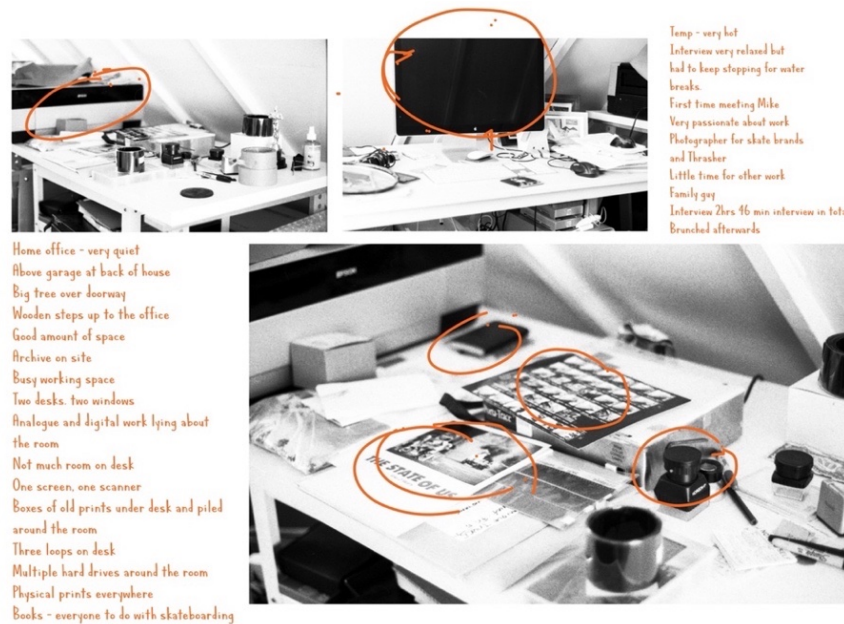

Figure 75: Workspaces - Mike O'Meally's office coded, Los Angeles, 2018

Figure 76: Workspaces - Common themes, 2018

The second measure of analysis examined interviews conducted in workspaces, images taken during participatory observations in the field to explore notions of "near

reality" and "experience production" and via the responding to these sites of practice[57].

Aaron: I think skateboarding, because for the most part, it's a pretty boundless activity – there no rules, there's not always a designated place to skate - because of that, especially after the skate parks closed in the '70s and in the early '80s. In the late '70s, there's no place to skate so people just turned to the streets, it became this whole thing of making do with what was around you.

I think in those early inceptions of street skateboarding, there was innovation happening constantly because they were discovering skating curbs, skating steps; so they were taking all this urban landscape and making that their new skate park. So the amount of innovation and just rethinking what was around in their environment was pretty staggering when you look back because it was, again, without having a designated area, they took everything that was around them and tried to skate it - curbs and walls, steps, handrails. It's already coming from within the skate parks and vertical skateboarding.

Figure 77: Coding Aaron Meza's interview, 2019

Working alongside participants afforded opportunities to observe and gather rich understanding. Interacting in an intimate and meaningful way, I explored the culture and customs of media production, beginning to form knowledge of the perspectives and motivations of individuals and groups gathering to create skateboard images and films. Each location presented an opportunity to investigate how meaning was attached to the construction of images and films via the recording of contributors in action.

An analysis of movement and bodily shapes made by photographers and videographers in the field supports prior remarks of Arto Sarri and Leo Sharp, which suggest that individuals responsible for capturing media are highly perceptive of their surroundings. They often position their bodies to document the physical movement of skateboarders. Skateboarding necessitates balance, agility, coordination, and consideration for space (Synder, 2012), which I witnessed mirrored in the postures assumed by photographers and videographers during shoots.

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[57] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/los-angeles-ewan-bowman/

Figure 78: Visual Data Collection- Ewan Bowman in the Field, Los Angeles, 2018

Figure 79: Documenting photographers' and videographers' positions for reference, Los Angeles 2018

When studying Ewan Bowman's and Mike Manzoori's approach to filming skateboarders, I noted that forming a successful media piece was more than technical

knowledge of camera functions. Observations exposed how photographers and videographers were active participants in their environment, how they used embodied knowledge via synchronisation and agile responsive movements, as well as verbal and nonverbal communication, to capture successful tricks.

Figure 80: Screengrab from video showing Ewan's reaction to injury, Los Angeles, 2018

In Figure 80, I recorded and coded Ewan's reaction to the skateboarder tweaking[58] their ankle. Implying an understanding of what it was like to experience the same sensations, Ewan's facial gestures indicated that he harboured a knowledge of the feelings from such an injury. During this moment, Ewan spoke about how those without knowledge of skateboarding or the skateboarder might witness such an injury and presume to end the filming. Instead, Ewan understood the skateboarder's determination to continue, having filmed with him for many years. Ewan talked about the skater's experiences as part of the bonding climate. In doing so, Ewan could utilise and relay his knowledge of the location, forming an understanding between himself and the skateboarder.

Witnessing this embodied knowledge shaping media production, it became evident how verbal and nonverbal cues, such as hand gestures and spoken instructions,

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[58] To tweak an ankle means to twist your ankle while doing a trick on a skateboard. Tweaking an ankle is a common injury that can be both minor and major, resulting in pain and swelling. Sometimes a skateboarder will rest for a short time, on occasions medical attention may be necessary to assess and treat the ankle if necessary.

assisted in directing the skateboarder with taking off, landing positions, speed and where to apply wax[59] to ensure the board would slide effortlessly.

Figure 81: Screen grab taken from video of Ewan waxing concrete ledge, Los Angeles, 2018

Beyond these more apparent signals were the less noticeable shifts in position. I witnessed photographers and videographers on all occasions anticipating and pre-empting skateboarders' moves and altering their position accordingly. Millimetre by millimetre, these slight alterations, no matter how small, illustrated the need for photographers and videographers to be ever aware of the changes in behaviour being exhibited to capture the trick successfully.

The minor manoeuvres observed during fieldwork further demonstrated the photographers' and videographers' dedication and patience, adjusting lighting, tripods, and cameras to reflect changes by millimetres. Watching as videographers followed in proximity to the skateboarder, drawing on their embodied knowledge to record a seamless line while balanced on a skateboard, the extensive rhythmical symbiosis between the two individuals could be seen in the modifying of their postures. Travelling at speed as a skateboarder slammed into the floor, landed a trick, or decided not to commit to the manoeuvre and take a different path, the

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[59] Wax is applied to surfaces to reduce friction and help the skateboard move smoothly without sticking to the surface. The wax works by forming a layer of lubrication between the surface and the board. This helps the skateboard slide along with less drag, making it easier for the skateboarder to perform manoeuvres.

photographers and videographers reacted at speed. This was more pronounced when using a wide-angle or 'death' lens due to the extreme closeness.

In interviews, I asked participants about the process of documenting skateboarding. Describing how the practice of filming and photography moves beyond the trick itself, Grant Brittain, Mike Blabac, Mike O'Meally, Giovanni Reda and Tobin Yelland, all described how skateboard media is beholden to the power of shared experiences. Whilst they are charged with bringing the narrative of skateboarding to life, they recognise how media is often conceived from familiarity. This tacit knowledge forms signals from their past, acting as exchanges of empathetic realisation. "As a videographer who skates, I feel like I have a strong connection with the person [skateboarder] I'm filming. I think I pick up on things, like being able to read the scene more easily and understand what's going on." (Reda, 2018) Grant Brittain explained, "Anyone can learn to take a skateboard photograph by looking at other people's work, through trial and error and knowing how to use equipment well, but a great photograph is made by building relationships with skaters over years." (Brittain, 2018)

Seeking to understand how a sense of near reality is formed in still or moving image, the analysis of practice and interviews from Los Angeles strongly suggested that environmental memories, relationships, and a shared visual and aesthetic understanding held between members of the skateboard communities, provided the key to understanding experience production within skateboard media production.

4.2.5 Milton Keynes & Manchester 2018

Sparked by my experiences in Los Angeles, I returned to the United Kingdom (UK) to conduct two further visits to Milton Keynes[60] and Manchester[61]. Curiosity guided me to observe skateboard videographers, examining the same themes of documenting near reality and experience production to determine if similar results would be produced.

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[60] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/milton-keynes/

[61] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/embodied-knowledge/manchester/

Figure 82: Studies of Lyndsay Knight filming in Milton Keynes, 2018
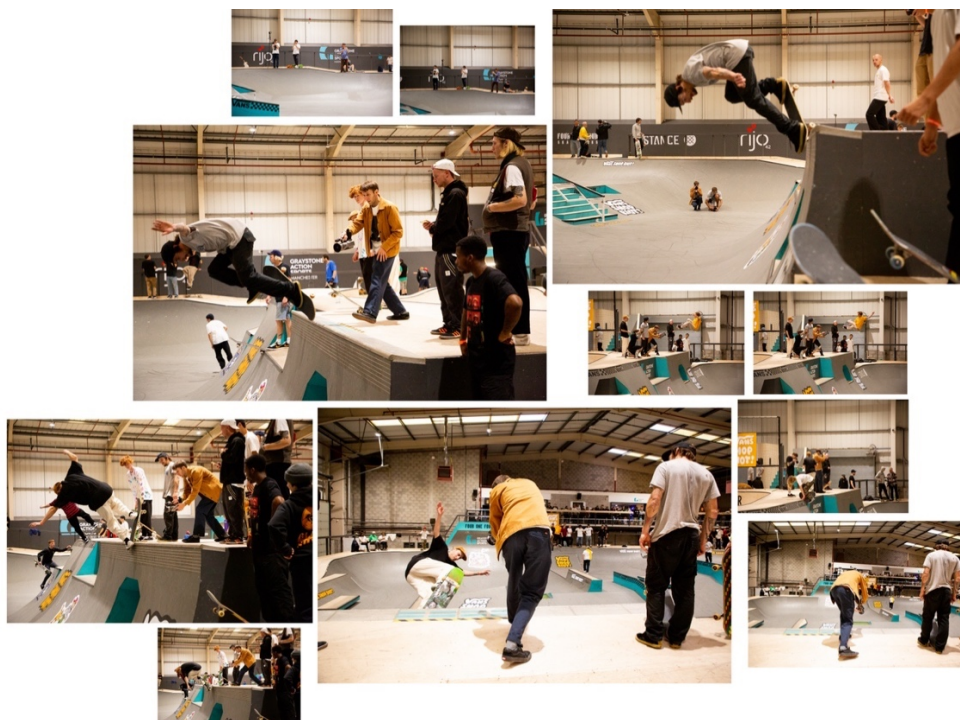

Figure 83: Studies of Ryan Gray filming in Manchester, 2018

In Manchester, I observed Ryan Gray filming at two organised park competitions and one day watching Lyndsay Knight[62] film for his personal portfolio at several locations in and around Milton Keynes city centre. Remarkable similarities were noted, addressing the ways in which these videographers and photographers captured footage as those in Los Angeles. Utilising similar technologies, the same levels of embodied practice were witnessed in the UK.

Figure 84: Ryan Gray filming with wide angle lens in Manchester, 2018

Documenting Ryan it became evident that he often followed a similar approach to capturing moving image; that is, utilising the same levels of embodied communication, camera techniques that emphasise the manipulation of camera angles, zooms, and embodied movement that frame the skateboarder's physique and trick within the capturing of the shot. He also employed comparable lenses and cameras to those I had witnessed in Los Angeles. Coding demonstrated equivalent synergies between videographer and skateboarder, recognising similar actions

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[62] Lindsay Knight is a director, filmmaker, and skateboarder from Milton Keynes. He has been making skateboard films since he was fourteen and continues to film for personal enjoyment alongside working in the moving image industry.

displaying insight into the creative process, and recognising related movements through the eye of the specialist into his tools before an outcome was formed.

4.2.6 Identifying Five Tropes

In Iteration One, observations, co-currencies highlighted in ATLAS-ti, and interviews yielded substantial data, culminating in six findings. Separated into two categories: significant findings for which further observations were necessary to corroborate the data and critical findings requiring further exploration of their relevance to skateboard media production. These findings were:

Significant findings

The 'bonding climate' - a highly embodied practice established between the cooperative behaviour of a media specialist and skateboarder to effectively capture a trick at a granular level. This implies that the act of making is not solely located with the photographer/videographer but is a collaborative process with distinctive communicative methods contributing to the overall outcome.

The huddle - a moment for skateboarders and media specialists to come together around the camera after a trick has been landed. Celebrating success, which is part of the bonding climate, is a way for each person to show their appreciation where the capturing of a moment has been recognised. The huddle further motivates the skateboarder to keep pushing themselves when the day may not be going to plan, raising the bar for what is possible by everyone.

Embodied know-how - Photographers and videographers can interact through embodied know-how and tacit understanding, comprising nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and gestures. These channels of communication are used to comprehend each other's expectations and intentions without resorting to verbal discourse.

The line/sequence - helps to convey the narrative of skateboarding dynamically. Demonstrating the creative potential of the trick, it shows the progression of the skateboarder, granting the viewer a sense of the overall location, self-expression, and

the ability of the person in front of the camera through the momentum and flow of the line. Proving a trick has been landed is an integral part of skateboarding photography and videography. The line/sequence, the make and roll away demonstrate that a trick has been accomplished and verified to an audience.

Critical findings

Fisheye lens - utilised by all photographers I had interviewed; research acknowledged the embodied role of the wide-angle lens in capturing skateboarding but required further understanding as to how it was considered unique within the production of skateboard media.

Part of embodied know-how, the embodied hold - The presence of an 'embodied hold' was commonly witnessed amongst skateboarders and videographers before the commencement of a trick or when resting. This phenomenon was not merely performed by the skateboarder but also by the videographer, enabling them to set off and attempt their task at a speed in keeping with the skateboarder.

Gaining an understanding of these findings, iteration one provided key knowledge in five significant areas of embodied practice. Exploring how skateboard media specialists use their physical bodies and intuitive expertise to inform outcomes, the second phase of the research, I aimed to refine this knowledge, formulating deep insight into experience production, focusing on materiality and choices of technology.

4.3.1 Skateboarding, the Role of Experience Production

Within the first phase of the research, the development of documentary as method allowed for data collection and data analysis which would then be used to refine outcomes and review the set of conclusions outlined in sub-chapter 4.2.6. To assess the rigours and transparency of research outcomes and the framework documentary as method, the second iteration of fieldwork aimed to focus on further examining the four main findings – the bonding climate, the huddle, embodied know-how, and the line/sequence while defining how important the critical findings of embodied hold and the fisheye/death lens were to the production of skateboard media. Additionally, revisiting conversations with participants and adding new voices was identified as

crucial for understanding the role of technology, specifically the wide-angle lens, developing further knowledge of experience production.

However, in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the lives of researchers in many ways, including the ability to conduct face-to-face ethnographic interviews and fieldwork. The need for social distancing and travel restrictions made it impossible for researchers to conduct observations in the traditional sense. As a result, this research had to find ways to adapt, switching to online interviews and limiting fieldwork to specific geographical locations, dependent on government policy.

Transitioning to online interviews required rethinking challenges and potential benefits. Surveying hypermedia advancements, the study explored the differences between the importance of adapting research methods to the current situation and the potential ethical implications this may have on the quality and transparency of the data collected during a pandemic.

Figure 85: Linnea Bullion Zoom Interview, 2020

Online interviews involving participants from different countries became increasingly accepted during the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the research did not come to a complete halt, hypermedia research became especially advantageous. It provided the opportunity to reach participants in a variety of geographical locations, even those who were quarantined, expanding the scope of the research project during a difficult period.

But as the world grappled with the realities of global and national lockdowns, the research hit an impasse. Unable to continue working within observational parameters, powerless to conduct any in-situ fieldwork outside of the UK from December 2019 until July 2020, a limited number of observational studies were conducted alongside my partner in May 2020 within the legal limits of group sizes of six and only within Cornwall. With most lockdown restrictions lifted in July 2020, further fieldwork was undertaken in the UK, focusing on the southwest region. As we entered a second lockdown in November 2020 all in-situ fieldwork ground to a halt until April 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a challenge like that of skateboarding: adapting to a seemingly impossible situation. Re-evaluating goals, methods, and accomplishments, lockdowns provided a space to adjust position and find ways to make progress via small incremental revisions. Seeing this as a chance to turn a seemingly insurmountable obstacle into an opportunity to learn and grow, stage two of the research re-focused, emphasising online interviews, further coding, and the opportunity to explore the development of documentary as method. Data collected aimed to test the following research objectives:

1. To interview and document skateboard media specialists' discussing the use of technology to form knowledge of methods of experience production.
2. To re-examine and document how physicality and intuitive knowledge factor into creating skateboarding media content, where possible.
3. To re-visit the findings from a previous iteration to determine if they remain consistent with the experiences shared by skateboard media specialists in iteration two.

4.3.2 The Move to Online Interviews: Rethinking the Challenge

Analysis of practice and interviews revealed tropes that connected tacit knowledge and experience production. Thinking-through-practice, the materiality of image-making, mapping, notetaking, and coding generated new knowledge and understanding. Based on the first round of interviews, my intuition guided the formation of new questions to uncover the media specialists' relationship with technology, giving rise to further discussions.

In the second phase of interviews, findings led to more extensive discussions on the interconnections between experience and production. Revisiting conversations with Mike Manzoori, Grant Brittain, and Giovanni Reda, plus new voices of Anthony Acosta, Hannah Bailey, Davide Biondoni, Linnea Bullion, Glen E. Friedman, Chris Johnson, Andrew Peters, and Jenna Selby, allowed for a deeper appreciation of the complexities and relationships between the two.

Questions examined cultural, social, and aesthetic factors influencing the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers. Focusing on the underlying aesthetical preferences of individuals and cultural values captured in their work, interviews sought to explore the decision-making process, what made a great image, what never saw the light of day. Composition, light, and motion were addressed along with collaboration between photographer/videographer and skateboarder. Research questions further addressed the role of the audience and engagement.

Coding of conversations demonstrated that much like skateboarders, photographers and videographers often use guerrilla approaches to creating skateboard media. Relying on creativity to capture and document the culture, they needed to be mindful of the perception of skateboarding by onlookers and law enforcement (Carr, 2010), their presence and activities within the environment (Woolley & Johns, 2001), as well as considering the precarious nature of the activity when handling expensive equipment in risky spaces[63] (Borges Rodrigues 2020; Chiu & Giamarino 2019).

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[63] It is not uncommon that skateboarders in urban centres experience confrontations with security personnel and police officers due to the perceived antisocial nature of their activity (Chiu, 2009). To avoid such confrontation, skateboarders often are prompted to skate in less populated and out-of-the-way areas, then the inner city

Participants discussed capturing media that spoke to the fundamental principles of production but also contained within them the authentic energy, creativity, and unique visual style of the skateboarder. They spoke of the freedom to shape gritty, raw media that reflected the culture rather than a polished style. How they made images and films from an enthusiastic position, but how their audience was always at the forefront of their minds.

Participants had various opinions on how they captured and communicated a skateboarder's authentic self (steeze[64], lifestyle, music, clothing, an accumulation of some or all). However, they all agreed that while skateboarders bring energy and creativity to a shoot, the photographer and the videographer layer a visual style on top via their approach to manipulating cameras, lighting, and software.

As evidenced in the field, skilled skateboard photographers and videographers had an extensive range of cameras. Differing equipment was integral depending on what they were shooting. What was clear from conversations was that if money were no object, many photographers would still prefer shooting on film over digital. Most felt that while digital cameras are excellent for producing magazine-ready images, many still preferred the look of images taken on film.

Participants exhibited great enthusiasm when discussing equipment, particularly when prompted by questions. The Nikon FM2, the Olympus OM, and the Hasselblad were cited as being significant analogue camera bodies from the 1980's until present day, while the Panasonic Super-VHS, was highlighted as being a high-quality format video camera in the 1990's. However, for most participants, the four technologies considered to have revolutionised skateboard media were flash lighting and the fisheye for photographers, and the VX1000 with the Century Optics MK1 fisheye for videographers. Known as the 'Death Lens' together with the VX1000 Sony, had produced the ideal combination of technology for skateboard videographers. It was

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locations later in the day when crowds decrease in number. While this lowers the risk of directly facing confrontation with security personnel or police officers, it increases the risk of having equipment stolen or other undesired attention. I have observed this on numerous occasions.

[64] The term "steeze" is a combination of the words "style" and "easy" which is used to describe how smooth and effortless a trick looks. If a skater performs a trick with ease and makes it look aesthetically pleasing, then they get the label of being "steezy".

easy to manoeuvre while skateboarding and could withstand falls. Aaron Meza explained, "The introduction of the MK1 took filming lines to a whole new level" (Meza, 2018).

Figure 86: Mike Burnett's 'main' camera bag containing digital camera and flash, Los Angeles, 2020

During interviews, participants discussed how their knowledge of space and locale was unequivocally linked to their approach to media production. Skateparks and street skating were seen as a form of arcade, street more so. Participants Anthony Acosta and Mike Manzoori explained that when photographing or filming stairs, rails, blocks, walls, benches, ledges, and curbs, they wanted to form an image whereby the prominence of the skateboarder in the space looked larger than life. In conversation with skateboarders and media specialists, they recognised the significant role of a locale in media as a form of education and a way to encourage and generate awe from the audience's perspective. Seeking out 'legendary' destinations that others would seek out was an important part of constructing skateboarding's narrative.

To create this larger-than-life feeling, the fisheye or wide-angle death lens was and still is often employed by media specialists. In conversation with Grant Brittain, he described several moments in his life where the transformations of cameras, lenses

and lighting invariably influenced the kind of photograph he sought to capture. In his earlier years, before flash was affordable, Grant often placed the skater in the centre of the frame using natural light to create a sense of movement.

When discussing the physicality of his history as a skateboarder turned photographer, Grant appreciated his intuitive understanding of the culture and how it translated into the images he wanted to create. Recognising how lenses, cameras, and flash were the tools by which he formed a personal narrative, he also acknowledged the need to protect autonomy, rebellious habits, and the habitation of unmediated spaces as shaped through his eye.

Figure 87: Grant Brittain's shot of Jim Thiebaud Wallride, San Francisco, 1986. © Rights Grant Brittain, all rights reserved.

Participants emphasised that the media they captured was not merely focused on the action but also the culture in its entirety. Noting the importance of capturing lifestyle and personality, they discussed exposing home lives, tastes, interests, and passions of the people depicted in their media, contributing to diverse knowledge of skateboarding culture. As discussions evolved, it was evident that a fine balance was struck between documenting intimate moments and preserving a sense of privacy. Participants considered their role to illustrate their point, drawing upon their knowledge of the skateboarding scene, pointing out the attitude of rebellion coupled with a sense of community.

Figure 88: Tobin Yelland's shot of John Cardiel & Slayer poster, San Francisco, 1991. © Rights Tobin Yelland, all rights reserved.

4.3.3 Cornwall, June/July 2020: Re-Focusing

Having taken a lengthy break, almost twelve months between physical research, I was apprehensive about returning to the field. On the 1st of June, the restriction on leaving home to meet outside in groups of up to six people opened the doors to remain local but re-start fieldwork. Having determined the limitations to research, I implemented my original findings from Bordeaux and set out to document my partner Leo utilising family as method.

Initially, I moved at a slower pace while documenting Leo when he was working. Collecting footage of local skateboarder Cora Stocker[65] was a pivotal opportunity that allowed me to re-orient my thoughts. Subsequently, I further explored the data I had gathered, focusing primarily on the commonly reoccurring motifs highlighted in the first iteration of documentary as method and iteration two interviews.

Figure 89: Leo Sharp photographing Cora Stocker at Mount Hawke Skatepark, 2020

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[65] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/experience-production/cornwall-mount-hawk/

I again employed analogue photography, super 8mm and sound recording equipment to immerse myself in the environment, capturing places, objects, persons, and sounds at specific moments in time. Through this approach, I recognised and illustrated the context of key findings, considering how skateboard media is moulded by experience production.

In Cornwall[66], I conducted observations of Leo as he captured images of skateboarders in skateparks and at street locations. Repositioning myself from side-by-side to pointing my camera directly at Leo, I continued analysing the relationship between the photographer, skateboarder, and the physical environment. As a result of these sensory activities, I grappled with the complexities of the bonding climate, the huddle and the use of technology at an imitate level.

Figure 90: Leo Sharp photographing Barney Page, St Ives, 2020

In the collaged image of Figure 90, Barney Page performs a boardslide to pullover[67] ending with a hill bomb[68]. Witnessing a combination of the creative energies between the skateboarder and media specialist to form a sense of collaborative and mutual understanding, the visual, auditory, and physical elements of both parties brought to the space were felt by each other. Through conversation, the skater's motion and control of space were discussed. The landing of the board on the rail was realised, and the alighting off the rail to continue down the hill was appreciated.

Not recorded as a sequence, the combined skills of the media specialist's keen eye for detail and the skateboarders' abilities created an atmosphere allowing participants to draw on their expertise to create something powerful. Observing a sense of creative free flow, both parties were operating within an understanding of what it takes from each other to create the perfect photograph. Leo's minor adjustment to flash to ensure the moment when Barney slides the rail is accompanied by finger pointing to indicate where the skateboarder is initiating the trick. The slight adjustments in Leo's height each time Barney attempts the trick ensure he is perfectly framed in the space to capture not only the manoeuvre but the steepness of the landing.

Observing how Leo worked and the techniques he used helped me better understand the environment and how to adjust my photography. Surveying how Leo worked (see Figure 91), I gained insights into his equipment modifications to inform his composition. I observed the subtle cues in his body language and mannerisms to help me better understand the relationship between the skateboarder and the environment. In return, I responded to moments that required my repositioning to change my camera's viewpoint and capture the details of the fieldwork.

To gain further insight into Leo's approach to capturing skateboard media, I observed him in five more locations for one month. Through my observations, I examined how the social context surrounding image creation shapes communicative and

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[67] A boardslide is a skateboarding trick that involves sliding the board along an obstacle with the board's underside facing the direction of travel. A pullover is in an additional movement, whereby the skateboarder grabs the board with their backhand to pull the board over the obstacle to land on the ground.

[68] Bombing a hill or hill bombing is a skate term used when a skater attempts to ride their board down a long/steep hill at speed. To successfully bomb a hill the skater must reach the bottom without falling off their board.

representational narratives. I witnessed collaborations between himself and videographer Ryan Gray at three of these locations (Figure 91). Additionally, I observed moments between shooting images and videos, where skaters took the opportunity to relax and converse with each other. Complementing these experiences were spontaneous interactions with passers-by.

As skaters honed their bodily experiences, Leo and Ryan adapted to the environment by assembling equipment and surveying the landscape to ensure familiarity with one another before shooting. Such mutual understanding was demonstrated through finger-pointing to direct movement, identifying entry and exit points, and developing a rhythm of capturing film and taking shots from different angles. With everyone unified by a single mission, in this intimate yet, at times, intense atmosphere, the skaters, Leo and Ryan, operated with mutual respect and professional synergy aimed at fulfilling the task at hand.

Figure 91: Leo Sharp photographing the UK Palace Team, Newquay, 2020

Further, I observed synergy between Leo and Ryan as they worked shoulder-to-shoulder to capture the trick. Their interactions reflected a desire to collaborate, in which both maintained their autonomy while also utilising the same viewing angle. Moving in harmony, they communicated their joint mission, balancing against one another.

4.3.4 Weston-Super-Mare, July 2020[69]: Affirming the huddle

Weston-Super-Mare was geared toward gaining a better footing on how the behaviour of those in the huddle was perceived and how it could be documented and understood through photography. I aimed to delve into the intricacies of the group by capturing the moment when everyone gathers around the camera and noting the spatial boundaries and the various types of communication that took place in such a context.

Figure 92: Observing the huddle, Weston-Super-Mare, 2020

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[69] By July regulations stated that thirty people could come together outdoors.

In this case, the huddle presented an opportunity to observe specialists at work, critiquing the consistency of each other's work and movements and marking the occasion as a form of cultural consumption. Through this discursive practice, the media specialists, the skateboarder who completed the trick, and the onlookers engaged in further dialogue to discuss the creativity of the technique either simultaneously or one after the other.

4.3.5 Confirming the Five Tropes of Iteration One

As with iteration one, interviews provided lengthy dialogue from which to code and draw out clear key findings. As previously employed, visual research outcomes and code co-currencies looked for repeated displays of behaviour, phrases and words forming categories to identify common themes. Adding to the conversation, space had surfaced as a finding yet to be flagged as a critical area of research. To gain a thicker comprehension of the environment, the third fieldwork iteration attempted to explore the critical role of locale and its impact as an emerging motif in the formation of skateboard media.

4.4.1 Iteration Three: Defining Skateboard Media Production

After careful observation and detailed analysis of the five tropes, the final stage of the research began with a grouping of the embodied hold, space, and embodied know-how. An analysis of interviews specified how these three areas were intertwined and closely related. The embodied hold, the physical ability to move and control the skateboard skilfully when filming Space defined as the ability to use tacit understanding to read the environment while capturing media and embodied know-how, being the knowledge and understanding of how to manoeuvre one's body in unison with the skateboarder to capture footage. With five catalogued tropes, iteration three set out to pay close attention to the bonding climate, the huddle, the custom of filming or photographing the sequence/rollout, the utilisation of the fisheye/wide angle lens and embodied know-how.

The researcher concluded with a focus on four individuals: Grant Brittain, Mike Manzoori, Mike Burnett, and Leo Sharp. In 2022, a twelve-day fieldwork visit to Los

Angeles was undertaken to study the five tropes' impact on skateboard media production at a deep level. Findings were recorded via video and photography. Undertaking the research solo, I sought to collect data via photography and film, consulting verbally with participants informally. Conversations occurred both insitu and away from the act of skateboarding, over coffee. Discussions focused on the five tropes with the aim of substantiating research results. Visual studies and natural conversation sought to verify findings from iterations one and two whilst fine-tuning any amendments. Further research was undertaken in the UK with Leo Sharp alongside the final stages of coding, analysis, and writing up these findings.

4.4.2 Los Angeles, March 2022: Documenting the Familiar

Six destinations were visited in Los Angeles with photographers Grant Brittain, Mike Burnett, and videographer Mike Manzoori. In addition, videographer Matt Bublitz was present during my observations of Mike Burnett and Mike Manzoori during his filming of Chris Joslin. By conducting a thorough observation, I sought to refine my understanding of the behaviour, analysing the frequency of phenomena observed on previous occasions.

I conducted field observations over multiple days, dedicating an average of seven hours per day to the study. During this research phase, I followed participants from when they came together to when they parted ways.

4.4.3 Grant Brittain, Archives and Bowls

I met with Grant Brittain in Encinitas[70], home to his extensive archive. Here, we discussed his passion, his knowledge of skateboarding photography, and his technical know-how. Much like our conversation in 2018, Grant explained how he had started as a skateboarder working at Del Mar skatepark, where he began photographing the community.

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[70] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/habits-and-rituals/san-diego/

Figure 93: Grant sharing his knowledge while exploring his archive, Encinitas, 2022

I asked Grant if he felt his knowledge of 'being' a skateboarder brought a layer of understanding to his photography. Grant explained how his formal training in photography and the influence of iconic names like Irving Penn and Ansel Adams enabled him to develop an understanding of lighting in his work. He then recounted how his knowledge of skateparks was even more integral in accurately representing skateboarding culture. Acknowledging that anyone with a camera could shoot an image of skateboarding, much like previous participants, Grant emphasised the importance of understanding the technical aspects of skateboarding from a skateboarder's perspective. How the trick will be done, when to capture it, and where it will land require a series of decisions based on inherent knowledge.

Grant discussed his go-to lenses and cameras, sharing that he had initially learned on film cameras and still preferred them in specific ways. He also noted that digital cameras have opened a world of possibilities for experimental approaches. Expressing his enthusiasm, he remarked on the benefits of shooting later at night, as it provided the opportunity for skateboarding with less risk of encountering police or security.

Heading to the local skatepark[71], Grant selected a wide-angle lens. Intrigued by his selection, I enquired into Grant's inclination towards the look of a fish-eye lens compared to other options. Grant explained that he appreciated the versatility of both long and wide-angle lenses in capturing a narrative; in this situation, the wide-angle lens enabled him to take pictures of skateboarding up close to portray the skateboarder in the environment accurately.

Upon our arrival at the skatepark, Grant quickly integrated himself into the group. He promptly engaged in conversation with the other skateboarders, taking note of their skills. His attention was particularly drawn to Heimana Reynolds, who was skateboarding in the bowl. He called me over so that the two of them could take a picture together. As Grant took his position, I took mine, and we began documenting simultaneously.

After the session, Grant rose and laughed as he commented that his body wasn't as agile as it used to be. I laughed, having just witnessed him contort his body into a position to best capture the trick, which felt more like a yoga pose. It was clear that both photographer and skateboarder were content with the shot, as they huddled together to view it from the camera's screen while smiling to acknowledge the achievement. As Grant promised Reynolds that he would edit and send him the photo by the end of the day, Reynolds resumed skating in the bowl.

Observing Grant was almost cathartic. A veteran of the scene, his demeanour was relaxed and open. The community knew him, and skateboarders were quick to say their hellos when he arrived at the skatepark. As Reynolds described, when I asked him what he enjoyed most about shooting with Grant, "You always get a great shot from Grant, he's a legend. I mean look how quick he shot that image, it took minutes." (Reynolds, 2022)

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[71] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/habits-and-rituals/encinitas-skatepark/

Figure 94: Observational study of Grant Brittain photographing Heimana Reynolds, Encinitas, 2022

4.4.4 Mike Burnett, Street Spots, and a Low Jack Car

I met Mike Burnett on an overcast day near Anaheim[72], where he and Matt Bublitz were about to spend the day at various spots shooting with skateboarder Chris Bunner. (Former professional skateboarder Ben Woosley was also in attendance). Documenting the first trick, we turned the corner of a main road to face an abandoned building. Without much thought, equipment, including flash lighting, was already being set up, and Chris had launched himself onto the wall to access the structure's roof. A one-story building, he began testing the state of the tiles to ensure safety before rolling into the entry point, where he would launch off the roof onto another obstacle.

At the same time, Mike and Matt sought the most suitable position to capture the shot. I refrained from questioning either and merely observed. I watched as Mike climbed a structure to obtain the correct angle for his shot of Chris. As Mike achieved his

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[72] http://www.hubbacouture.uk/habits-and-rituals/los-angeles-highland-park/

position, Matt deliberated on how to document his perspective best. Initially, this began with a distant viewpoint from across the street; however, upon several attempts to land the trick, Matt relocated closer to the action. When I later asked why, he explained that his position was inadequate to truly portray Chris' endeavour. He was conscious that he and Chris would only be satisfied if the photography and film accurately captured the magnitude of his attempt.

During the attempt to land the trick, Chris became frustrated. I observed as Mike coached Chris through the moment, discussing where he might direct his attention to improve his chances of success. Additionally, Chris consulted with Matt to examine the footage. During this moment, I noted how Chris and Matt used this time as a form of check-in to again identify what was going awry and how to modify movements.

Figure 95: Chris and Matt viewing footage, discussing the manoeuvre, Los Angeles, 2022

During my observations, I noted a plethora of verbal and nonverbal cues. Ben provided cues to indicate when it would be appropriate for Chris to proceed. Mike and Matt utilised these cues to begin documenting while Chris attempted his trick. Additionally, Mike and Matt demonstrated nonverbal communication in the form of

adjustments in their bodies in unison and verbal conversations with Chris about the trick. Both Mike and Matt opted for a wide-angle lens. Much like Grant, they explained how the nature of the trick required the locale to be a prominent part of the narrative and that a wide shot gave the footage just that.

Mike added to the story as the day progressed by taking an incidental photograph to accompany Chris' story, featuring him with his prized car. Mike moved close to the vehicle using a fisheye lens to emphasise its size. When I asked Mike why he approached this shoot similarly to the previous skateboarding shot, he explained how he wanted to emulate the same feeling of empowerment and accomplishment he was portraying within the skateboarding shots. He described how he felt that exaggerating the car's size created a much more dynamic and powerful effect than would have otherwise been achieved.

Figure 96: Mike photographing Chris with his car, Los Angeles, 2022

As the day progressed, Chris experienced increasing pain in his ankle due to an earlier injury. Despite the discomfort, he was able to continue to capture still and moving images at two additional locations. However, by the final spot, the pain had

become too great, and he was no longer able to endure the discomfort. While Mike had set up the camera, believing Chris might attempt the trick, the session soon evolved from one of focus to a laid-back fun moment for everyone to skate. I watched as Ben, Mike, and Matt grasped their skateboards and began rolling around the location. Soon, Ben took hold of Matt's camera and captured footage of Matt attempting to perform a boardslide on a rail. Now, in front of the camera, Matt was enjoying the opportunity to capture some footage of himself skateboarding.

Figure 97: Videographer, Matt Bublitz skateboarding, 2022

Here, the comradery relaxed into conversations of the everyday. Focused on trying tricks viewed as fun and not so serious, Chris watched, clapping as Matt or Ben landed or nearly landed their attempts to slide their board along the rail. Switching roles, it was obvious how much pleasure they all got from skateboarding, exposing their delight as they experimented with different ways to attempt manoeuvres. As they continued, the conversations naturally progressed about what had been achieved. Welcoming ideas and being open to suggestions, it was clear they liked talking about skateboarding and learning from each other. There was a real sense of connection in each other's accomplishments. Evident in the way they communicated and enthused

each other, this imparting of knowledge and experiences stoked the fire of their enthusiasm to progress, and no matter the outcome, it was evident that the time spent together was regarded by all as enjoyable.

4.4.4 Mike Manzoori, Coaching the Next Generation

My third and final case study was spent observing Mike Manzoori as he shot with Chris Joslin. This was a masterclass in videography as he spent time instructing a team member through some of the more technical aspects of filming. He demonstrated a great deal of practical knowledge, explaining the process of setting up a shot and fine-tuning the camera functions to achieve the look he wanted. He was also aware of the limitations of the camera and lenses but had solutions based on prior experience to solve most questions. Listening to his conversation, I was able to gain valuable insight into the mindset of a professional skateboard videographer and how they feel when they are in the process of shooting a trick.

Figure 98: Observing Mike exploring the functions of the camera fine-tuning settings, Los Angeles, 2022

Mike's discussion provided me with constructive insight into skateboard videographers' challenges, such as the patience and resilience they must have to

create high-quality productions. I also gained a greater understanding of the technical aspects of the role, including determining the most suitable angles and capturing multiple takes of each trick, if required, from various positions for the editor to shape a narrative of the trick being performed within the location. Toward the end of the twenty-minute discussion, Mike set up his camera. He explained the similarities between the camera settings he uses for skateboarding and filming commercial content involving people moving at speed. However, he also noted the additional pressures skateboard videographers face due to the presence of police, security, and the public who might watch, which can become obstacles for the skater. Sometimes, the public can even share the footage ahead of the videographer.

Mike explained that in his role as a commercial videographer, these aspects of filming do not factor into his day-to-day because the crew usually have permission from the owner of locations to be there and film. He discussed how he had become skilled in judging people's body language when negotiating with law enforcement and security. He would, if he could, persuade the police to give them more time. When dealing with the public, he noted that he typically asks people not to film or wait to post footage until they have released their own. From my observations and experiences of having a similar role while working with my partner Leo, these additional layers are an interesting yet expected part of Mike's job. Mike noted that when working in public places, people usually demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for the culture, such as applauding whenever a trick is accomplished. However, he recalled instances where people had exhibited aggressive behaviour if they felt that the activity adversely affected them or the environment, such as making too much noise or if they thought it was damaging surfaces. Mike elucidated that the potential for distraction necessitated them to select filming times when there was a low likelihood of encountering large crowds.

During a later discussion, Mike underlined the significance of sound for successful skateboard media. He suggested that the sound of grinding the board, the landing noise, the murmur of spectators, and the sound of the spot all contribute to setting the atmosphere for the visual scene. Mike also emphasised that establishing trust with a skater to capture his/her style and approach is necessary for success. He further remarked that committing to the craft of capturing skateboard media is

comparable to other professional occupations, describing how, for him, it took a lot of practice, time, and commitment to understand how to shoot successfully.

As a sponsored skateboarder, Mike transitioned into videography with relative ease due to his experience making home movies and training on various cameras as his career evolved. Moreover, his 1994 production, 'Sound & Vision' is regarded as the first U.K.-based independently produced and distributed skateboarding video, serving as a significant milestone in his journey from professional skater to filmmaker. In an interview with Ben Powell, Mike described his early filmmaking techniques, mentioning that he aimed to "take the camera out, film what happened and then, when [he] had enough footage, [he'd] made a video" (Manzoori, 2018). While his filmmaking ability has improved since then, Mike maintains that during his days skating with friends throughout Britain, he developed a critical understanding of what should be included in a skateboard film.

As I observed Mike capturing the day's skateboarding tricks, it was evident that he possessed the same enthusiasm for filming as he had in his youth. From his vantage point in the lower corner of a set of stairs, I witnessed Mike in his element as he guided Chris in achieving his goal. As with all shoots I had observed, there were moments of frustration, joy, and complete exhaustion; however, the collective effort between the skateboarder, filmmaker, and photographer ultimately led to the permanent document and highlighting the trick for all to view.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1.1 Summary

Before this body of work was conducted, I intended to focus on professional insider photographers, videographers and skateboarders employed within the skateboard industries in America, the United Kingdom, and Northern Europe. This ensured a structured method for coding practice and interviews, allowing for meaningful comparisons throughout the study. The bonding climate, the huddle, the sequence/the rollout, the wide-angle lens and embodied know-how (encompassing the embodied hold, nonverbal and verbal cues and coaching alongside the ability to read spaces as part of the production process) began to surface in the field as a result of participant observations and interviews. At that time, I anticipated that practice methods of photography, film, sound, and diagrams would contribute to the development of practice. Still, as the codes began to reveal themselves, the methods of documentation were modified to adapt to these occurrences. For example, in the third and final iteration, shooting with a fisheye lens on a 35mm camera was initiated to reflect the findings of the previous two iterations.

As this research found, skateboard media production is much more than a mere distribution of culture (Wernick, 1991); it occupies space and time, intertwined with artistic creativity (Rancière, 2013). It provokes questions regarding technique, theory, and politics (Gitlin, 1978). Examining the links, exclusions, distinctions, and indifferences presented in specialist media production by those embodying skateboarding, the formation of knowledge and addressing the nexuses where cultural consciousness is visually constructed, this research has highlighted where individuals exist within their version of skateboarding photography and videography but where tropes have become shared principles, unifying to present a shared reality.

This research also revealed the visual disparities in the portrayal of skateboarding culture between those with insider knowledge of the culture, skateboard photographers and filmmakers, and outsider photographers and filmmakers from the fashion world. Interviews and observations found that insiders strive to present realistic and raw depictions of skateboarders in their natural settings while

emphasising the creativity and culture of the scene. Conversely, analysis of fashion outsiders' imagery stressed the creation of aesthetically attractive visuals, framing a seemingly utopian representation of skateboarding that seldom parallels reality. This objectification of a misrepresentation of skateboarding culture sparked criticism from community members in both the skateboarding and fashion realms.

5.1.2 Key Findings

The first research question of this PhD practice thesis asked: what cultural, social, and aesthetic factors influence the documentary practices of skateboard photographers and videographers? Revealed in the documentation of skateboard photographers and videographers, insider experts have developed a range of knowledge gained through tacit embodied understanding and technical know-how passed down from expert to expert.

Observing the phases of making and editing afforded time to assemble and reflect valuable insights demonstrating the complex interplay (Gelter, 2006) between skateboard media specialists and skateboarders. Drawing attention to the process of making, the exposing of tangible and intangible methods of production, the skilful and intimate relationships formed during these moments illustrated the creation of near reality (Bate, 2020, Luhmann, 2000), reflecting on meaningful experiences (Johnson, 2010) shared between photographer, videographer, and skateboarder.

Documenting these moments provided a richer understanding of how skateboarding media is constructed, displaying the distinctive patterns and behaviours exhibited by insiders. As a result, the three iterative studies uncovered five distinct cultural associative approaches to constructing insider media. Carefully coding these five findings, the bonding climate, the huddle, the sequence/the rollout, the wide-angle lens and embodied know-how, portray and visualise the expert realisation of tacit understanding stored within the body (Barsalou, Niedenthal, Barbey, & Ruppert, 2003), and acquired through extensive practice and experience (Bates, 2018).

As a documentarian, I consolidated these findings by studying the everyday practices of specialists within the skateboard media production field. Over six years, I acquired

understanding and insight by engaging with and immersing myself in relevant environments. Exploring "movements of making" (Ingold, 2011), I observed the fabric of everyday life, the physical, sensory, and social. I discovered the aesthetic dimensions of the maker's practice and how that informed the producer's experiences by adding layers of meaning contained within media outcomes.

Reviewing my findings, analysis demonstrated how, through embodied know-how, skateboarding operates within a particular sphere abiding by social criteria. Over time, those who operate the cameras have devised ways to translate the image of skateboarding into still and moving image via principles which have been formed through the sharing of knowledge and the understanding of meaning. Alongside skateboarders, the bonding climate and the huddle illustrate approaches by which deep levels of interaction translate movements to its specific audiences. While the media specialists refine their outcomes through lenses, settings, and lighting, meaning befalls images via the embodied monologues (Cassell, Nakano, Bickmor, Sidenr & Rich, 2001) between media specialist and skateboarder at the time of capturing the image.

Within the bonding climate, the insider specialist selects tools of the trade most suited to the locale and the style of skateboarder. The communication between the two contributors forms a fingerprint from which to capture near reality. The huddle, the make, and the rollout form part of these critical moments. Both documented and undocumented, they resonate in the representation of the manoeuvre, denoting the encounter in a visual depiction. In doing so, skateboarding photography and videography have become a valuable commodity recognised as artistic and commercial. Its authoritative aesthetic represents a cultural mindfulness that can inspire and develop connections worldwide, encouraging participants to come together to share their views and opinions.

Leading from the first question, the second research question asks, what are the effective methods of data collection and analysis for understanding media production methods utilised by skateboard media specialists? To understand the complex collaboration between skateboard photographers, videographers, and skateboarders, I found myself emphasising the methods of observation and dialogue

(Ardèvol, 2018) to explore the visual and textual themes present in skateboard media. Initially, I was drawn to utilising visual ethnographic inquiry. While thoroughly exploring contemporary discourse, it emerged that individual methodology visual ethnographic enquiry could not generate a profound comprehension of skateboard media production. However, when combined, documentary as method proved to be a beneficial framework for studying media production. Merging visual ethnography, media anthropology and autoethnography the research set out to collect data through an intensive audio-visual study. Through field observations, I sought to analyse the behaviours of skateboard media specialists and compare any patterns that emerged. To this end, I documented participants' activities through photography, film, sound, and semi-structured interviews. This enabled me to understand better the embodied influence on skateboard media production choices and preferences. I could interpret and synthesise collected data through thematic analysis to make sense of the formal and informal practices used in skateboard media creation.

Focusing on digital and analogue data collection methods during iteration one, self-reflective accounts recognised a form of 'thinning' apparent in adopting digital approaches. I found binge-viewing dense numbers of pictures and films on a screen flooded my eyes. The projection of photography and film via back-lit technology felt disruptive and flat. While digital cameras and recorders were much more efficient, this convenience was viewed as an overly reliant method, leading to a need for more critical thought. Recognising an instinctive need to slow down, I promptly began to rethink the pace at which images and film were produced and viewed.

During the second and third phases of the research, digital capture methods were only used for filming interviews and very limited fieldwork. All other observational studies relied on analogue techniques. Contrasting the two approaches, analogue photography and videography are frequently viewed as a romantic concept (Schrey, 2014). It requires a deep relationship with tangible raw materials. The process of loading and unloading film, sending it away for processing, waiting for the film to be returned, viewing, scanning, printing, editing, and outputting the final product, and choosing where to showcase it all add to the charm of this method. To shape agency using analogue techniques, a person must also understand ISO, depth of field, film speed and shutter speed to capture the physical form within the landscape.

I found that analogue approaches required more thought, a need to take time to relax, observe the environment, and form a mental picture of the surroundings. With each roll of film or cassette offering only a limited number of images or time, the film became a valuable commodity. Ensuring these moments were fully formed, the introduction of visual diagrams and notations was committed to memory of environmental factors such as temperature and timings, alongside the textures, colours, shapes, and forms caught when pressing the shutter button of my camera.

As a method of documentation, there were further signs of environmental indicators and traces of the past left on the film. Leaving visible markers on the surface as it is stretched from spool to spool, pronounced the traces left from developing film by hand or by machine and almost mimicked the action of the skateboarder. The corruption of the exterior of concrete leaves observable, sometimes unobservable, scratches behind. Akin to the marks left by skateboarders, these characteristics were formed within the camera; no two images are ever the same. Analogue had intuitively become a slow burning methodology recognisable as an absorbing visual research practice.

Documentary as method yielded responses to the research questions, proposing a framework that enabled me to study close personal relationships in the field and the flexible adaptation to support the study during a difficult period of our history. Providing a tangible interdisciplinary approach, documentary as method encompassed an empirical and philosophical line of inquiry echoing my developing practice as a researcher, along with the study of media producers. Sometimes challenging results showed that the photographs, films, and sound formed intimate accounts of a yet under-researched study area.

The third research question asked, what visual contrasts can be realised in the way skateboarding media insiders and fashion media outsiders portray skateboarding culture to achieve an equitable representation of skateboarding? The discourse exhibited in this research draws attention to the diminished portrayal of embodied, tacit understanding formed at the point of creation (Toren, 1993) surrounding skateboarding's cultural aesthetic use by couture fashion photographers and videographers. As observed, exemplars often lack subtext, illustrating a shallow

understanding of the interactions uncovered in this research. Having exposed a disingenuous visualisation of value and context, it has been demonstrated that much of couture fashion media fails to portray value and contextual significance from the perspective of the skateboard community.

It is possible that drawing a comparison between fashion media and skateboard media is superfluous. Studies into fashion media have shown that the role of fashion films and fashion photography is to exhibit physical beauty, wealth, exclusivity, and elitism (Soloaga & Guerrero, 2016). Yet they also pose forms of expression, examining current societal trends. As the findings of this research have shown, brands such as Chanel, Gucci, Dior, and Prada have set out to seduce customers via the creation of heightened sensory experiences (Soloaga & Guerrero, 2016), transmitting skateboarding as an audio-visual couture lifestyle. It is thus tempting to view such media as simply a product of fashion and to disregard the behaviour by averting our gaze.

While each genre of image-making is noted for its distinctive forms of creative artistic expression, it is evident from these research findings that the crossover of skateboarding culture does not represent the same lived experience and often lacks cultural understanding within fashion media. Results of this study further imply that both skateboarding and fashion communities are conscious of these inconsistencies in vocalising unenthusiastic opinions in forums and on social media accounts, such as asphaltposerclub, The Fashion Spot, and Quartersnacks. This research, therefore, suggests an alternative to overlooking this issue, advocating for an incorporated approach to media production.

Combining the knowledge of skateboarding's insider media specialists alongside fashion photographers and videographers, I encourage fashion brands to consider the importance of faithfully capturing the look of skateboarding in the media when striving towards commercial intent. As this research has found, skateboard media is more than a skateboard and clothing; it is the visual translation of cultural identity accurately portrayed through the bonding climate, the huddle, the sequence/the rollout, the wide-angle lens and embodied know-how.

5.1.3 What comes next?

Offering insight into skateboard media production techniques, I look forward to presenting and exhibiting my findings through academic conferences and scholarly research articles. Having previously screened and presented works at Somerset House and London Design Festival, I intend to create a set of in-depth papers and presentations that delve further into the research tropes and the development of documentary as method, to share knowledge with broader academic communities. I welcome the opportunity to continue collaborating with curator Tory Turk, supporting the Design Museum with their 2024 exhibition 'Skateboard' by contributing a short oral history of my relationship with skateboarding; I will also be facilitating a panel discussion focusing on DIY approaches to skateboard media production.

I further recognise that the research findings have prompted additional inquiries in themselves. Of note is the need for more female photographers and videographers present within the skateboard industry, as well as the possibility of including the various techniques used by non-professional skateboarders when producing skateboarding-related media in the scope of the inquiry. Subsequently, further research is warranted to assess the reasons for the under-representation of females in this field and to evaluate potential gender-based differences in approaches to producing skateboarding-related media. Additionally, expanding the scope of the research to examine the distinct strategies adopted by non-professionals in skateboarding media production could provide a more comprehensive appreciation from alternate perspectives.

5.1.3 Conclusion

To fully evoke the lack of subtext in the representation and validity of skateboarding within couture fashion media, I argued for an approach to collaborative incorporated media production, where the context of skateboarding becomes near reality via shared practice mirroring the standards so acutely identified within the production of skateboard-related images when generated by the fashion industry.

Emphasising thinking-through-practice and through my research questions, I have illustrated a gap in an under-researched area: the embodied experiences used to

observe and communicate skateboard media production methods. Seeking to understand patterns and behaviours which lead to the creation of photography and film, documentary as method details the tacit knowledge and intersectional understanding which form a rich critique of making. In so doing, I investigated the exclusion of those tropes by those less acquainted with the culture and the behaviour of skateboarding. From embodied knowledge to meaningful representation, the role of documentary as method presents skateboard media production for fashion media communication, by understanding the culture that skateboard photographers and videographers exemplify.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Documents and Training

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS   epigeum

Certificate

Number: 1790920003

This is to certify that

Kirsty Smith

Successfully completed the course
Ethics 1: Good research practice

as part of the Epigeum Online Course System with a score of 90%.

Dated: 14 March 2018

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Consent Form

Hubbacouture

For further information
Supervisor: *Teal Triggs*
teal.triggs@rca.ac.uk

Date:

I *(please print)*…………………………….…have read the information on the research project *Hubbacouture* which is to be conducted by *Kirsty Smith* from the Royal College of Art, and all queries have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to voluntarily participate in this research and give my consent freely. I understand that the project will be conducted in accordance with the Information Sheet, a copy of which I have retained.

I understand that I can withdraw my participation from the project at any time, without penalty, and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing. I understand that:

I consent to:
- *Being documented in the field*
- *Having the results any documentation of myself in the field displayed online and in physical format as part of ongoing immersive exhibitions*
- *Being interviewed*
- *Being recorded as part of the interview*
- *Having the interview edited and displayed online and in physical format as part of ongoing immersive exhibitions*
- *Grant permission for my published works to be republished on the Hubbacouture research website and thesis only.*

I understand that all information gathered will be stored securely, and my opinions will be accurately represented. Any images in which I can be clearly identified will be used in the public domain only with my consent.

Print Name:...

Signature..

Date: ....

Complaints Clause:
This project follows the guidelines laid out by the Royal College of Art Research Ethics Policy.

If you have any questions, please speak with the researcher. If you have any concerns or a complaint about the manner in which this research is conducted, please the address the RCA Research Ethics Committee by emailing ethics@rca.ac.uk or by sending a letter addressed to:
The Research Ethics Committee
Royal College of Art
Kensington Gore
London
SW7 2EU

Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form for Research - updated in response to Covid-19

Activity being Undertaken	**Fieldwork: California, USA, France, UK General**
Area of Activity	**Los Angeles, San Diego, Bordeaux, Cornwall, London, multiple areas within the UK**
Name of Researcher	**Kirsty Smith**
Researcher Email	**Kirsty.smith@network.rca.ac.uk**
Researcher Mobile	**07730580169**
Institution	**Royal College of Art**
Date of Activity	**Duration of research**
Location During Stay	**1 day to 21 days**
Brief Description of Work:	**Fieldwork** **Interviews** **Update: Online interviews** **Practise filming and photography**

Additional members of research team	**Leo Sharp: Photographer / Film Camera** **Kieran Hodges: Sound / Camera**
Estimated number of people involved in activity	**Multiple participants photographers / videographers** **Research team and I** **Unknown number of skateboarders and additional photographers/videographers**

Hazard Identification:

Identify all the hazards; evaluate the risks (low / medium / high); describe all existing control measures and identify any further measures required.

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	LIKELYHOOD OF RISK. (LOW/MED/HIGH)	CONTROL MEASURES	OVERALL SEVERITY OF RISK IF IT OCCURS. (LOW/MED/HIGH)
Fieldtrip General	Inadequate preparation for fieldtrip. Persons are at higher risk of injury, attack, loss of materials and poor response to injury due to unfamiliarity with environment. A planned itinerary may not be fulfilled, or disruption may be caused with failure to research risks.	LOW	Ensure a planned itinerary has been agreed with participants and research team. Any changes must be made as far in advance as possible to avoid disruption and agreed upon by all parties. Utilise any previous research notes regarding locations and advise on what to be aware of. Discuss with participants any environmental conditions worth noting putting in place provision to meet criteria, ie first aid kit, clothing, water, sun cream, food etc. UPDATE: See COVID-19 additions	MED
Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Driving Accident: Road traffic accident / underground accident / poor transport connections, delay / stranded during journey / location and poor weather exacerbates travel/ late night travel / fatigue.	LOW	Check traffic before leaving and periodically on route. Provide contingency time for possible road traffic accidents. Ensure safe places to park in well-lit environments. Safely store keys in a known location. Use reputable well-lit petrol stations to fill up. UPDATE: COVID-19, Avoid sharing of vehicles and wear masks in all public places where you require services. Follow local guidance and restrictions relating to public transport.	MED
Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Airport Vulnerability to attack as a lone traveller, theft, getting lost and inadvertently going into hazardous areas.	LOW	Ensure to stay in public spaces. Refrain from entering areas not accessible to the public. Stay within areas that are well lit and where other staff and passengers are accessible in case of an emergency. UPDATE: COVID-19, wear mask in airport. Follow local guidance and restrictions relating to airport regulations.	MED
Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Flight Accident: Air traffic / weather leading to significant delay in travel or return / not having access to funds to support additional accommodation and food in case of delay.	LOW	Follow the directions of airport staff. Carry additional physical money in both dollars and pounds as well as cards in case of an emergency or delay in travel. UPDATE: COVID-19, use airlines which are operating in line with current UK Government COVID-19 travel guidance wear mask on plane. Follow guidance and restrictions outlined by staff.	HIGH
Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Cancelled flight Contingencies	LOW	Contingencies must be made to deal with emergencies and possibility of cancelled flights. Accommodation may be required if a flight is cancelled. Alternative dates may be offered as a result. Discussions will need to take place between RCA, place of employment and myself in this case	MED

Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Car hire Failure to check the competence and insurers of third-party providers.	LOW	Ensure hire car is booked through a reputable operator with full insurance. Book a sat nav as part of hire. Safeguard against sat nav risk by purchasing phone add on for America to enable maps as a backup.	MED
Fieldtrip / Travel	Accommodation		UPDATE: COVID-19 ensure that accommodation is appropriately sanitised and avoid sharing rooms where possible.	
Fieldtrip / Travel	Travel guidance Failure to check up to date travel guidance leading to significant delay or cancelation of travel.	LOW	Safety advice and guidance must be obtained from relevant sources such as the Foreign Office Websites one week, two days and one day prior to departure. Consult with supervisors if changes are mandated. UPDATE: COVID-19 Guidance must be adhered to and Foreign Office Websites checked in consultation with supervisors before, during and after the fieldwork has taken place.	HIGH
Fieldtrip / Travel	Travel Insurance Failure to check insurance documents resulting in assistance being required for medical and/or welfare emergencies. Financial losses incurred running into the tens of thousands.	LOW	Comprehensive travel insurance must be arranged to ensure all activities are covered by the policy. UPDATE: insurance must include cover for COVID-19 rescue and medical services, and repatriation to UK.	HIGH
Fieldtrip / Travel	Paperwork and Visas Inability to access country due to lack of recognised and official paperwork. Stranded in foreign airport / place of entry.	LOW	Ensure all documentation from RCA supervisors on letterheaded paper is organised well in advance of visit to meet requirements of entry into the foreign countries. Be ready to present all documentation at customs along with entry visas. Digital copies and printed copies to be kept on mobile phone in case of loss of original documentation.	HIGH
Fieldtrip Transport / Travel	Contingency funds Insufficient financial resources in place to support emergency medical treatments / general needs.	LOW	Researcher to have access to sufficient contingency money to cover the full cost of emergency medical treatment should it be payable immediately. UPDATE: Researcher to have access to sufficient contingency money to cover extended stay in case of lockdown or incidents relating to COVID-19	HIGH
Fieldtrip / Health	Health Minor, major medical or welfare emergency requiring assistance.	LOW	Be aware of itinerary and lay out of visits and be familiar with the nearest Hospital / source of medical help closest to the venue / activity. Carry small first aid kit where possible. Keep a record of any incidents. UPDATE: reduce all risk of cross contamination by ensuring masks and surgical gloves are worn if first aid is administered. If persons need to visit a hospital or medical facility ensure it complies with COVID regulations and that researcher and team follow procedures.	MED
Fieldtrip / Health	Medical conditions	LOW	Researcher and team must be given an opportunity to disclose any medical conditions prior to the fieldtrip to allow time for arrangements to be made.	MED
Fieldtrip / Health	Fatigue Leading to injury	LOW	Ensure regular sustenance breaks are taken during the day and sleep patterns are considered in the devising of the itinerary. Safeguard against fatigue by not booking in any activities on the first or last day of the fieldtrip.	MED

Fieldtrip / Transport / Health	Physical threat or abuse	LOW	Leave any activity where there is a feeling of physical threat or abuse. Listen to instinct and move where possible to a public space and call the authorities. Stay on the phone with police until help arrives. Inform contact person and inform RCA supervisor. Complete any debrief on return to university.	MED
Fieldtrip / Health	Psychological trauma, as a result of actual or threatened violence	LOW	Discuss with police and/or supervisor possible support. May require support from doctor and/or counselling.	MED
Fieldtrip / Health	Risk of being in a comprising situation	LOW	Continue to check in and assess appropriate proactive strategies adopted in this risk assessment to ensure the well-being of researcher to understand risk and activity. Think about times of the day when activity is taking place, who is involved, transportation and possible risk of contamination from liquid or food with regards illegal substances. Leave any activity where there is a feeling of threat. Listen to instinct and move where possible to a public space and call the authorities	MED
Fieldtrip / Health	Emotional and physical safety considerations	LOW	Ensure the above emergency arrangements are appropriate to each fieldtrip and safeguard the needs of the researcher if needed.	MED
Fieldtrip / Weather	Weather Exposure to excessive weather patterns, duration and location of visit,	LOW	Check weather forecasts in advance and plan accordingly. Have plan for evacuation or repatriation in case of severe weather conditions. Monitor for potential and serious situations that may affect health. Heat-stroke, dehydration, sunburn, hypothermia, frostbite, electrocution, disorientation / getting lost, wind chill, eye strain, equipment blown over, etc	MED
Fieldtrip / Clothing	Clothing Inadequate preparation of clothing in the field leading minor / major injury and/or fatigue	LOW	Protective clothing to be taken for extremes. This includes sunglasses & hats to waterproofs and insulated clothing. Wear layers in case of changeable temperatures and weather conditions. Limit time in harsh weather. Be ready to cancel at any time if weather becomes a threat and do not start if participants are ill equipped.	MED
Fieldtrip / Sustenance	Liquid and food Inadequate preparation of sustenance in the field leading minor / major injury and/or fatigue	LOW	Carry adequate water supplies / hot drinks / emergency food and blankets if deemed necessary. UPDATE: reduce all risk of cross contamination by ensuring researcher / team / participants do not share liquid and food substances. Ensure all food and liquid comes from reputable sources.	MED
Fieldtrip / Equipment	Equipment Manual handling, injury, loss or damage to equipment	LOW	Where there are large amounts of equipment to be carried ensure check that the chosen forms of transportation have enough room to safety move them. Expensive should be insured against briefed the risk of theft etc Where heavy equipment is required routinely as part of a fieldtrip safe manual handling and lifting should be considered along with any aids which reduce fatigue and injury. UPDATE: reduce all risk of cross contamination by ensuring researcher and / or team are the only persons handling equipment.	MED

Fieldtrip / Equipment	Equipment Set up & take down	LOW	Care should be taken to ensure equipment is set-up on even ground where possible and measures taken to secure it. Where ground is uneven, stands / tripods should be adjusted, to operate safely. In certain circumstances the team may be needed to support the equipment. Regular breaks / changeovers should be taken and consideration to their comfort given from weather and duration. Do not setup lighting equipment etc if risk of lightning or rain. UPDATE: reduce all risk of cross contamination by ensuring researcher and / or team are the only persons handling equipment.	MED
Fieldtrip / Equipment	Theft / loss Loss of equipment. Injury from confrontation.	MED	Consider location for theft potential. Take additional crew to remain with equipment and provide support in numbers. Don't leave equipment unattended. Don't leave any equipment in vehicles, locked or otherwise.	MED
Fieldtrip / Equipment	Safety Damage due to old equipment. Fire Mechanical damage	LOW	All electrical equipment which includes batteries must be checked prior to fieldwork. All equipment must be maintained as far as reasonably practicable to prevent danger.	MED
Fieldtrip General	Location / Terrain Tripping, slipping, falls, strains & sprains, cuts, etc Equipment falling over due to uneven ground. Damage to equipment.	MED	Where possible the location should be assessed by researcher to ascertain its suitability for activity. Where possible this should be done before the day. If it can only be done on the day take advise from participants as to health and safety of location. COVID-19 UPDATE: Assess location viability for COVID-19 safety compliance. Can the location fulfil social distancing requirement, even in areas crowded with equipment and/or participants?	MED
Fieldtrip General	Public use of way Proximity to any hazardous activities taking place to practice.	MED	All equipment to be set-up properly and marked by signage or person if hidden / obscured from public view. Awareness of traffic and/or moving objects in the vicinity. Consider location, bearing in mind the potential for stepping into a road or other's path whilst focused on work task.	MED
Fieldtrip General	Conflict with public, police or security.	MED	Consider location ensuring any permissions have been obtained prior to activity. Don't trespass or damage property. Don't litter or alter locations (ie vandalise or move structures etc)…. Leave location as you found it if you do. Intervene if person comes over at first possible time to manage any questions and objections. If challenged justifiably or if feeling threatened, pack up and leave. Document any objections or accusations in notes and on mobile phone for evidence in the extreme case of this happening.	MED
Fieldtrip General	Child protection Working with under 18 participants without parental permission. Respect within the research	LOW	Ensure the age of all participants. If anyone is under the age of 18 seeks permission from parents / guardians to take part in research. Remove all trace of child if permission cannot be sought before the activity takes place.	MED

	community. Negative effect on results of research.			
Fieldtrip General	Communication Lack of communication causing confusion and inevitably causing participants' discomfort.	LOW	The researcher must endeavour to communicate Health and Safety information to all concerned in a timely manner. During the planning of fieldtrips, the researcher must encourage effective two-way communication of information between all parties involved. Where appropriate, this shall include consultation with participants of location safety.	MED
Fieldtrip General	Competence	LOW	For this risk assessment competence is described as the ability to apply a mix of knowledge, skills, experience or other qualities to a particular task. All parties should be sufficiently competent to carry out the routine actives, but also be able to cope with unexpected changes and/or situations that may arise.	MED
Fieldtrip Lone working	Researcher's health needs	MED	Lone working should only be carried out after a thorough assessment of the risks has been undertaken and a safe system of work has been devised.	MED
Fieldtrip Lone working	Communication and security	MED	The researcher should be familiar with emergency procedures and with the international emergency contact numbers. The researcher should leave a nominated contact number, written itinerary, expected duration of the data collection, with supervisors. Where possible, the researcher should contact named person and/or supervisors via email and/or call at regular intervals to check in with them. If the researcher does not phone, the contact should call the researcher to check their safety. A lone researcher should keep others involved in and fully informed of the details of each journey and of the planned research programme. It is critical that a nominated contact person is appointed who can act upon any failure to make contact. Emergency plans should be devised and these should be initiated should the researcher fail to keep to the agreed schedule. An effective means of communication should be available. Regular checks should be made on any lone researcher, by personal contact, by mobile. Communication should be maintained on a planned basis and appropriate action taken by the responsible contact person in the event of a failure to establish contact by the researcher.	MED
Research Team General	Recruiting additional research team members	LOW	Employ, where possible, participants hired through reputable companies or that are known to the researcher. Ensure they can that provide insurance, and that agreement is sought over any financial implications as well as an outline of actives to ensure reasonable working conditions are fair.	LOW
Research Team General	Risk awareness	LOW	Where there may be greater risk than usual to their daily routine, an informed decision as to whether or not to take part must take place before the activity occurs.	MED

			There is to be no element of coercion in the relationship between the researcher and the research team.	
Research Team General	Risk assessment protocols	LOW	The above risk assessment identifies significant risks that might be encountered by the researchers/ research team and what measures can be put in place to reduce the risk. The team must read the risk assessment before fieldwork commences.	MED
Research Team General	Emergency provision	LOW	When considering the risks to the team, the risk assessment should also reflect the availability and quality of emergency care available to them in the course of the fieldwork, if something did go wrong, and ensure that suitable mitigation measures are in place.	MED
Research Team General	Confidentiality	LOW	Where required, confidentiality agreements must be in place before activities can commence.	MED
Research Team General	Insurance	LOW	Employ, where possible, participants hired through reputable companies or that are known to the researcher. Ensure they can that provide insurance, and that agreement is sought over any financial implications as well as an outline of actives to ensure reasonable working conditions are fair.	MED
Research Team General	Coercion	LOW	Where there may be greater risk than usual to their daily routine, an informed decision as to whether or not to take part must take place before the activity occurs. There is to be no element of coercion in the relationship between the researcher and the research team.	MED
Interviews General	Travel to and from interview Mitigating risks arising from movement to and from location.	LOW	Avoid going by foot if feeling vulnerable. Use convenient public transport, private car or a reputable taxi firm. Plan the route in advance and always take a map.	MED
Interviews General	Dress Unwanted attention Miss reading of the situation.	LOW	Try to avoid appearing out of place. Dress inconspicuously, taking account of cultural norms. Equipment and valuable items should be kept out of sight.	MED
Interviews General	Location Implications of conducting interviews at a residence.	LOW	Prior information about the characteristics of selected participants, their housing and living environments should be discussed in advance. In multi-storey buildings, think about safety when choosing lifts or staircases.	MED
Interviews General	Personal safety of researcher and participant	LOW	Carry a safety alarm or other device to attract attention in an emergency. Never start an interview with someone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or where the interviewee or any other person present is in a disturbed, charged or emotional state. If the interviewee becomes upset during the course of the interview, offer them the opportunity to take some time to compose themselves before continuing.	MED
Interviews General	Roles and responsibilities for flagging information and taking action if needed.	LOW	Let the interviewee know that you have a schedule and that others know where you are. Strategies during the interview might; making phone calls; arranging for calls to be made to you always leaving a mobile phone switched on and checking for signal.	MED

Interviews General	Safeguarding	LOW	Assess the layout and the quickest way out. If interviewing in a private dwelling, stay in the communal rooms. If the researcher has any concerns about the situation, you should leave immediately.	MED
Interviews General	Rigour	LOW	Always carry identification, and paperwork authenticated by the head of the research organisation giving the researcher's work address and telephone number. Respondents should be invited to check the authenticity.	LOW
Interviews General	Contact	LOW	Details of the researcher's itinerary and appointment times - including names, addresses and telephone numbers of people being interviewed or called and overnight accommodation details - should be left with the contact person. The researcher should notify contact of any changes during fieldwork. The researcher should call the contact person when they arrive at the interviewee's home or non-public place and arrange a time to check in again with the contact later. Ensure I call the contact when I leave the interview location.	MED
Interviews General	Gendering	MED	The researcher and participants need to be aware of the gender dynamics of interactions and be made aware if anything feels uncomfortable. The researcher and participants need to appreciate the use of body language and the acceptability or not of physical contact. The researcher and participants need to establish the right social distance - neither over-familiar nor too detached.	MED
Interviews General	Debriefing	LOW	Participants should be provided with an opportunity to view any edits or read any material before it enters the public domain. Participants should be told that at any time they can withdraw from the research.	MED
COVID-19	COVID-19 Specific Health and Safety Awareness. Best practice in general principles for management of risk	MED	Monitoring Hygiene Following guidance	MED
COVID-19	Social distancing	MED	Adhere to social distancing wherever possible, trying to allow 2m2 space per person. Where ocial distancing cannot be upheld, limit numbers and time spent in close proximity and avoid standing face-to-face with people.	MED
COVID-19	Hand and respiratory hygiene requirements	MED	Face coverings may be marginally beneficial as an additional precautionary measure. Regularly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer, including on entering and leaving a location, and before and after eating, using toilets and handling equipment. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth as much as possible. Avoid physical contact with others (even fist/elbow 'greeting' bumps) Cough/sneeze into a tissue and immediately dispose of the tissue, then wash hands or use hand sanitiser. Carry ample sanitising wipes.	MED

COVID-19	Self-isolation before travel	LOW	Where possible the researcher should limit the number of people, they come into contact with ten days before they travel to a new location.	MED
COVID-19	Monitoring	LOW	If a participant starts to experience Covid-like symptoms, they should inform the researcher immediately and vice versa. If a researcher starts to experience Covid-like symptoms, they should inform their supervisor by email and/or telephone and begin isolation immediately. If possible, arrange for a Covid-19 virus test and report results.	MED
COVID-19	Testing	LOW	Researchers should adhere to protocols for entry into foreign countries, ensuring they meet the requirements of COVID-19 testing. Additional time and/or accommodation may be required. To help ensure the safety of everyone involved, daily checks should be made using Lateral Flow Tests to confirm that no one is showing Covid-19 symptoms.	MED
COVID-19	Participant's health	MED	Consideration of the health of the participants, especially those from clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable groups, is crucial. The research should refrain from working with clinically vulnerable participants.	MED
COVID-19	Insurance and funding	MED	In case of an emergency including change of flight due to positive test, the researcher must ensure that travel insurance will cover the cost of additional accommodation, food and change to flight. The researcher must ensure that they have adequate funds to cover the cost of the above in order to make a claim via their insurance company.	MED
COVID-19	Vaccination	LOW	Where possible the researcher will have had their vaccinations before travel to another country for fieldwork is agreed.	MED
COVID-19	Mental health	LOW	Ensure the mental health and wellbeing of all is given sufficient priority should an emergency occur.	MED

Appendix 2: Approach utilised to coding media in Photoshop:

1. Image Preparation: Photographic images - Once the images have been shot, scanned, and stored they would be prepared for analysis. This usually involved looking and altering contrast through levels and curves. No other manipulation techniques were added. Images would be laid out in Photoshop on an A0 size white background. Images would be adjusted, sized, and oriented based on the reflective considerations noted in the field. Super 8mm –Frames from super 8mm studies were captured using screen grabbing techniques. A screen grab was captured at the point when new data was introduced into view or when there was a change in scene. The screen grabs were then laid out in a timeline on an A0 size sheet of white background in Photoshop. Forming a linear chronology, the images were not adjusted. Hypermedia research was either acquired using screen grabs or downloaded from the source using video capture software. Hypermedia research often involved ethical complexities and was used to form feature identifications. However much of this work is redacted due to copyright laws. Sound files were transformed into visual representations using (ref software here). The software limits the colour range to duotones but creates and soundwave pattern from which to extract data.

2. Feature identification: Identifying features from the images involved detecting and categorising persons, objects, textures, and shapes. Feature identification was undertaken manually using a series of coloured circles to marker areas of interest. Each coloured circle was used to form categories which were labelled.

3. Feature Classification: organising and labelling data into categories based on their characteristics, the images and sound files were decluttered into groups based on their properties.

4. Pattern Recognition: Grouped properties were used to recognise patterns in the images and sound files

5. Image and Sound Analysis: Extracting meaningful information from the data the research was able to detect features, classify objects, detect anomalies, and understand relationships between data sets. Data Interpretation:

Interpreting the results of the analysis the research drew conclusions about the data inferring meaning and using the findings to inform the next iterative stage.

Appendix 3: Website documentation
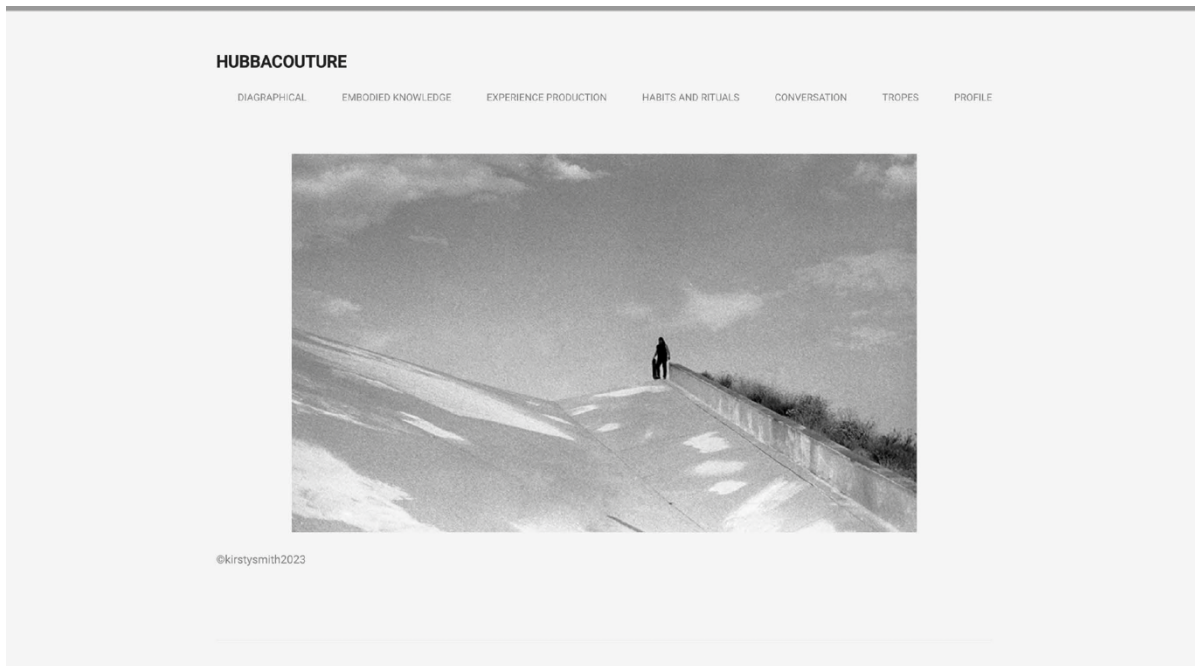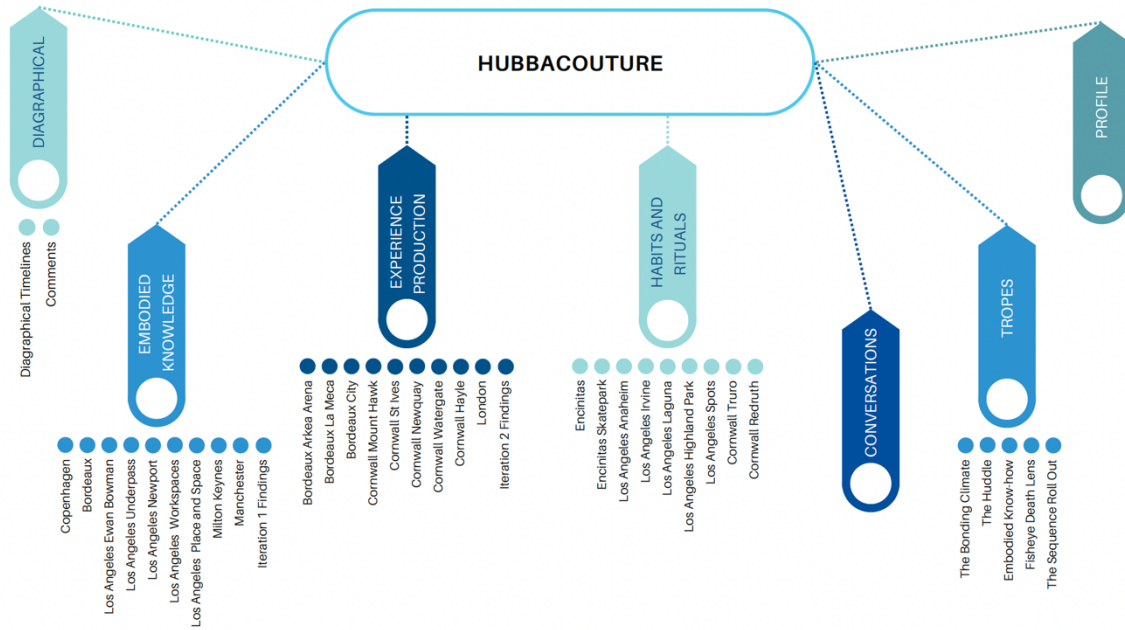
Diagraphical Timelines
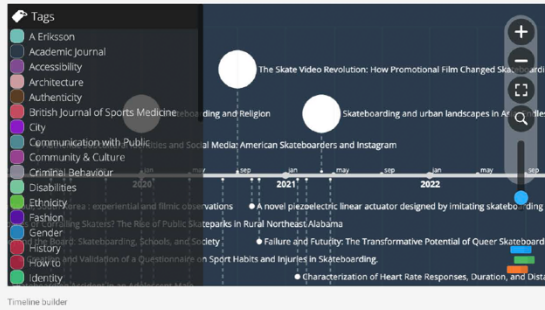
Timeline builder

HUBBACOUTURE

HUBBACOUTURE

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL   EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE   EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION   HABITS AND RITUALS   CONVERSATION   TROPES   PROFILE
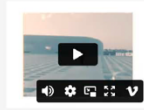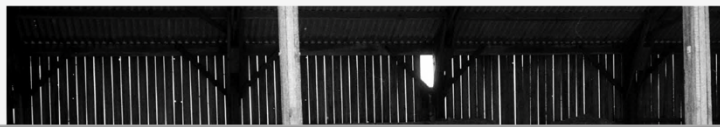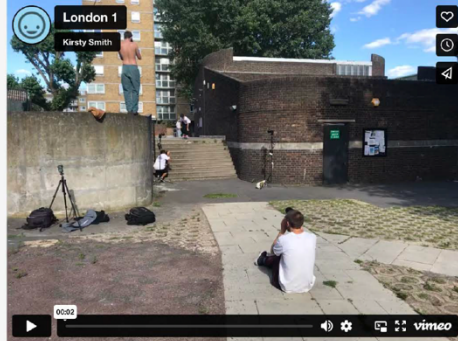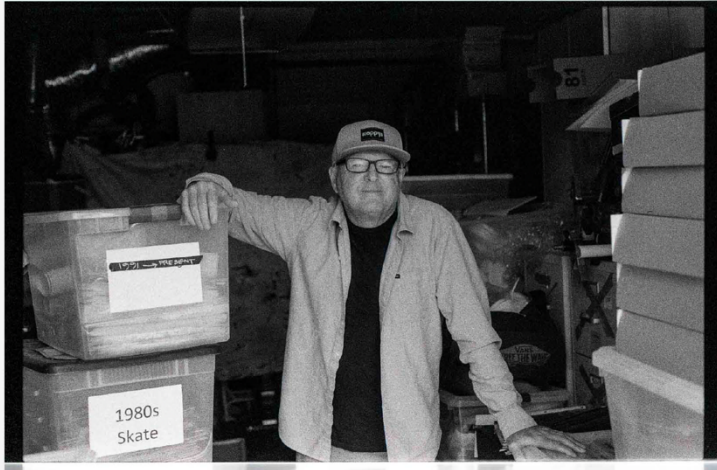

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL   EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE   EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION   HABITS AND RITUALS   CONVERSATION   TROPES   PROFILE

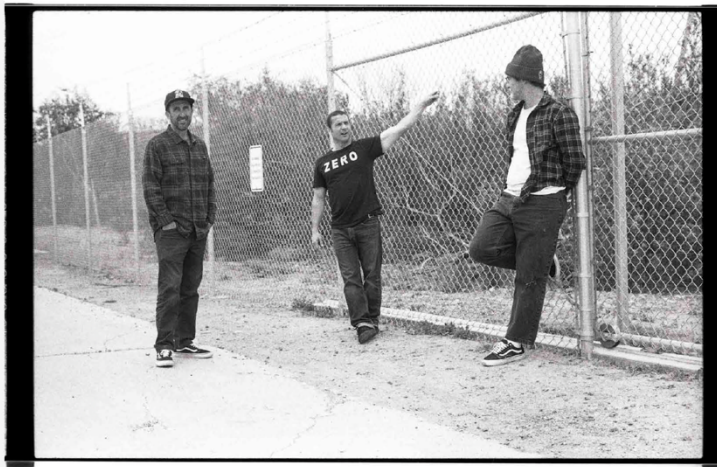Photo credit: Leo Sharp

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL　　EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE　　EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION　　HABITS AND RITUALS　　CONVERSATION　　TROPES　　PROFILE

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL　　EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE　　EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION　　HABITS AND RITUALS　　CONVERSATION　　TROPES　　PROFILE

Iteration 1 Findings

Stage One: Image Preparation and Feature Identification

Iteration 2 Findings

Stage One: Image Preparation and Feature Identification

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION **HABITS AND RITUALS** CONVERSATION TROPES PROFILE

HUBBACOUTURE

DIAGRAPHICAL EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION **HABITS AND RITUALS** CONVERSATION TROPES PROFILE

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This research established 'The bonding climate' as the collaboration between photographers, skateboarders, and videographers which depends heavily upon the level of trust developed between them. Communication is essential in facilitating these relationships, which is nurtured over extended periods of time. An indispensable part of collaborating with each other in order for the photographer to comprehend the skateboarder's desired outcomes, accurately capture media is achieved by attentively watching, listening, and offering mutual support through verbal and non-verbal means.

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The formation of the 'huddle' comprised of participants and media specialists around the camera's LCD provides an opportunity to collaborate and discuss the trick, which can improve the interpersonal atmosphere of the shoot. This communal practice not only lends itself to the exchange of ideas and opinions but also offers insight to further refine the photo or video in question. Ultimately, this helps to strengthen relations between photographers, videographers, and skateboarders, thus introducing an additional layer to the activity in the capturing of an image.

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Skateboarders and photographers often possess 'embodied know-how' and 'tacit understanding', which enables them to understand each other's intentions through non-verbal cues, such as body language, facial expressions, gestures, and verbal coaching. This assists them in establishing expectations without having to exchange explicit words.

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The fisheye and wide-angle lenses offer a unique perspective, allowing the capture of vast areas and emphasising the acceleration of the skateboarder's movement. Through compression of the background, these lenses put focus on the skater and his or her actions while magnifying their body size and allowing for extreme close-up shots. This gives filmmakers and photographers a degree of flexibility when capturing the skateboarder's motion and performance. Furthermore, particular emphasis is put on movement when filming a skateboarder, as media specialists will often move in sequence with them to coordinate the footage.

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The sequencing and rollout of photography and film emphasise the trick's creative potential. This approach reflects the skateboarder's progression, location, self-expression, and aptitude, as it showcases the momentum and flow that they take in and out of the trick, as well as the trick itself.
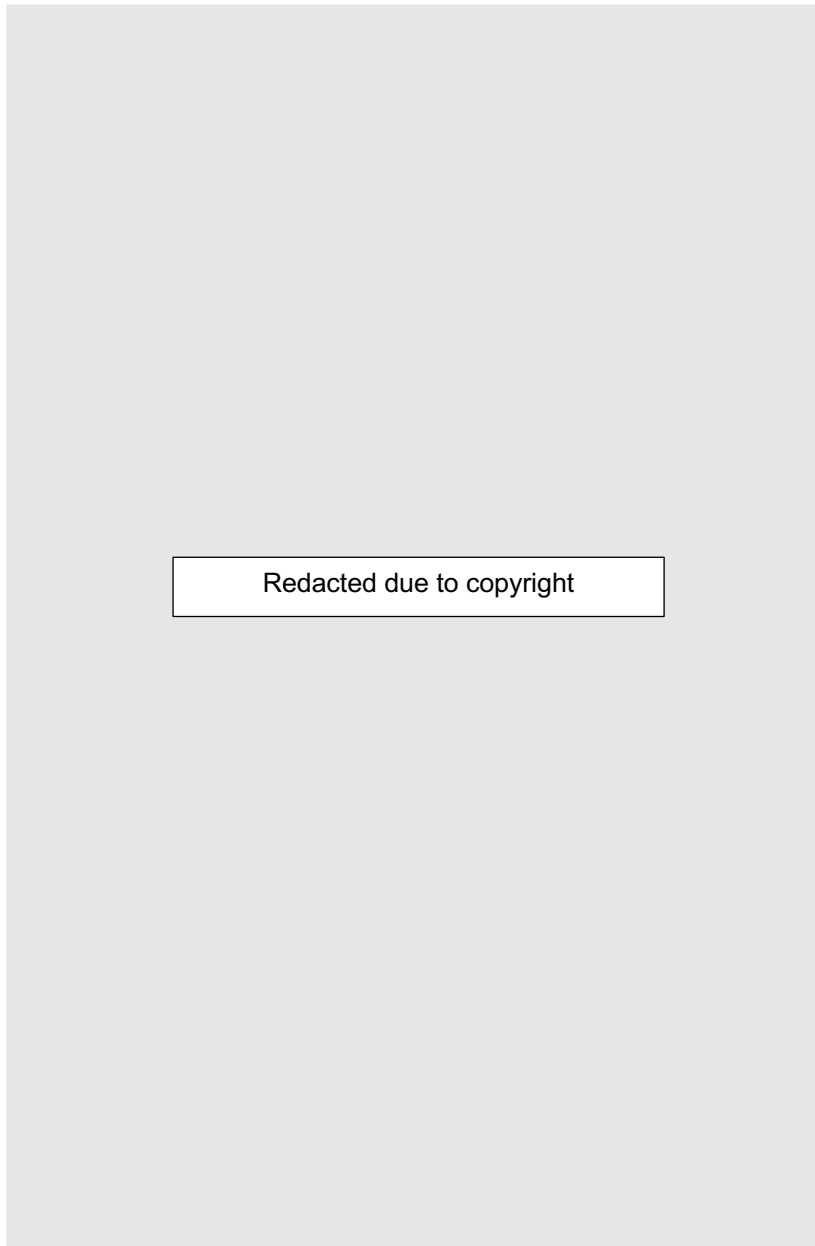

HUBBACOUTURE

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Appendix 4: N*E*R*D photoshoot with Julia Stegner by Arthur Elgort for vogue (2004)

Full spread

Redacted due to copyright

Redacted due to copyright

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