

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 'DWELLING PLACE' THROUGH REPRESENTATIONS
OF MEMORY IN THE CARTER FAMILY FOLD

BY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Carter Family Fold CFF

Birthplace of Country Music Museum BCM

ABSTRACT

This is an interpretive oral history project that relies upon the methods of ethnographic fieldwork (interviews, participant observation, and library/archival research) in order to understand how the Carter Family Fold (CFF) functions rhetorically as a site/sight of memory and history. Moreover, the CFF functions as a second-home or “dwelling-place” (Hyde; 2004) to those who gather each week. The CFF is a “pilgrimage destination” (Edensor: 1998) for tourists interested in Appalachian history, Southern culture, and traditional music. It also serves as a “memory place” (Dickinson, Blair, and Ott: 2011) for local residents and musicians who value the CFF as an authentic reflection of an endangered culture. This project engages community members, musicians, and tourists by focusing on the unscripted narratives and rhetorical interventions that emerge “organically” through the performances of oral history, culture, and the rhetoric of place. Unlike other analytical methods that require only library research or textual analysis, the interpretation of oral history and performance requires the engaged presence of the ethnographer so that s/he may comprehensively document and analyze how “past and present, text and context, pleasure and power ... ” (Pollock, pp. 2-3: 1998) operate across multiple valences of subjective experience.

"My writing style is my writing style, whether it's in the service of fact or fiction: a pileated woodpecker is a pileated woodpecker no matter if it roots with the ducks." - Tom Robbins¹

¹ Robbins, *Tibetan Peach Pie: A True Account of an Imaginative Life*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how the Fold functions rhetorically as a “dwelling place” or second home to those who gather there. The notion of dwelling place is derived from the ancient Greek term “*ethos*” which, although commonly translated as ethics or moral character, originally means habitat, an environment that serves as a home for its inhabitants, where they dwell socially with associates and friends and where they develop their moral character. Concerned as I am with the rhetorical function of this domain, I will speak of the “ethos of rhetoric” that informs the Fold’s livelihood. The ethos of rhetoric constructs a narrative for how both tourists and regular visitors interpret the identity of the Fold. Understood in this specific way, the ethos of rhetoric, according to Hyde,

directs one’s attention to the “architectural” function of the art; how, for example, its practice grants such *living room* to our lives that we might feel *at home* with others and our surroundings. The ethos of rhetoric would have one appreciate how the *premises* and other material of arguments are not only tools of logic but also mark out the *boundaries* and *domains* of thought that, depending on how their specific discourses are *designed* and *arranged*, may be particularly inviting and moving for some audience. The ethos of rhetoric makes use of our inventive and symbolic capacity to construct dwelling places that are stimulating

and aesthetically, psychologically, socially, and perhaps
theologically instructive.²

I have spent a considerable amount of time at the Fold; hence the ethnographic and auto-ethnographic nature of this project. My approach is intended to help readers experience “the feeling” of the Fold, almost as if they were there or had attended the place in person. Also and related, my approach enables the inhabitants of the Fold to have a voice. Their voices supply some of the rhetoric that helps the Fold function as a “dwelling place”, a home with a distinct character. The Fold is a habitat where the ethos of rhetoric is hard at work.

People visit the Fold not only to honor the original Carter Family, but also to hear music reminding them of the past. The Fold functions as a memory place. According to Dickinson, “Memory places cultivate the being and participation together of strangers, but strangers who appear to have enough in common to be co-traversing the place.”³ The memory place of the Fold is also contextualized by its location in Appalachia. My discussion of the significance of this location is presented as I share my ethnographic research in chapter 3. Chapter one offers a discussion of this methodological approach to my subject matter. Chapter four focuses on the implications of my research for the field of rhetorical studies. When all is said and done, I hope to have offered a study that contributes to the literature in communication studies concerned with how the ethos of rhetoric plays a role in the construction of memory places—those habitats that I believe contribute to the moral character of human beings. Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci

² Hyde, *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, xiii

³ Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 27

find such a habitat in the presence of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where visitors pay their respects, remember, and meet and talk to strangers doing the same.⁴ The Memorial is a “dwelling place” where visitation, memory, and communication work together to define a moment of morality taking form. I find the same thing going on with the Fold, although; thank goodness, in a much more joyful way.⁵

⁴ Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype,” 263-288

⁵ Throughout the thesis, I will be consulting the work of Carole Blair as a primary resource. However, I also consulted the works of: Bradford Vivian, Kendall Phillips, Marita Sturken, Gregory Clark, Allison Landsburg, Victoria Gallagher, Margaret R. LaWare, Eric Aoki, Paul Connerton, Greg Dickinson and Brian L. Ott.

CHAPTER ONE: METHODOLOGY

The Carter Family Fold is a place I have been visiting since 2011. I became interested in the Fold when I was an undergraduate at Appalachian State University. Living in the mountains peaked my interest in my father's heritage. As my interest developed, my family and I took road trips to my father's childhood dwelling place. This is when I felt an immediate connection to both the land and the people. It is a three hour drive from the Winston-Salem area of North Carolina to the Fold. Upon arriving and having the chance to "check out the place," I was mesmerized. As I opened the driver door and placed both feet firmly on the gravel, I began taking in the aesthetics of the place I was now going to study. Standing on the street, I noticed that there was one main building, bigger than the rest. This is the music hall (see image 1). In the middle of the structure there is a sign acknowledging that it is in fact, The Carter Family Fold. On this sign, it also mentions the names: A.P., Sara and Maybelle Carter. Confirmation that I am in the right place was a guarantee to walk towards the center. Immediately, a male parking attendant, wearing a yellow-green reflective vest, greeted me. Before I could open my mouth to exchange "hellos," he asked me a question: "So, where 'ya from?" It was this instance when I realized a project would come to fruition.

That simple question of "where 'ya from?" would haunt me, still to this day. The gears in my mind were quickly turning. I wanted to know *why* that question was the first statement uttered by almost everyone I met who gathered at the Fold on a regular basis.⁶

The Fold is unique for many reasons, first being its operating hours. The standard

⁶ This question of *why* is the driving force of my interest with this project. In order to understand why knowing where someone is from is critical, I found myself looking at many texts about cultural identity. Primarily, I consulted an anthology titled *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape Design* edited by Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn.

operating hours of the Carter Family Fold are Saturdays, beginning at 6pm. Additionally, the museum, cabin, and memorial music center opens at 6pm. During March of 2014, a new set of shows were added on the second Friday of each month through October called “Footstompin’ Friday’s.” I visited the Fold many weekends throughout the years to understand and see *what* it is like to *dwell* there. While I may not be considered a “regular,” I have established significant credibility because the local citizens and the volunteers understand I am interested in their culture, the people, the music, and more importantly, the message of this place.

PERSONAL METHODS

Institutional Review Board training offered through Wake Forest University was required to ensure I met ethical standards when interviewing participants. In order to be certified by the Institutional Review Board I had to complete several modules online. The interviews I conducted were recorded with a digital audio recorder and were later transcribed. Only a few questions were pre-planned prior to the interview. First, “Tell me about yourself.” Second, “What does this place mean to you?” The questions were left intentionally vague so the interviewer would not unintentionally lead the interviewee in a certain direction. The interviews can be described as providing “the opportunity for a meaningful and sensual communicative exchange in which to share stories, feelings, experiences, physical ailments, [and] living conditions” which affect the decision-making regarding how and why they relate to The Carter Family Fold.⁷ The participants signed a consent form, indicating whether or not they wanted their name to be used in the study. Forty-five interviews were conducted at the Fold from December 2013 through April

⁷ Pezzullo, *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice*, 23

2014. Forty-two of the interviewees were local citizens. I chose people at random while walking up and down the aisles of the memorial music center.

Interviews were a significant component of the process. Trying my hand at something new, I constructed a site (see image 2) encouraging attendees to write down their thoughts and/or feelings when I was not present. I decided to try this in case my presence was overwhelming or intimidating. I purchased an easel, which contained a pad of twenty blank paper sheets. On five of the sheets I wrote in black Sharpie Marker, “What Does This Place Mean To You?” I placed the easel on a table to the left of the stage. Rita Forrester, the owner of the Fold, made an announcement drawing attention to the easel board and encouraged everyone to participate. I also left five different colored markers and four pens in a black cup. That way, attendees could write in a medium they were comfortable with. I left the easel up for a total of four weekends: February 1, 2014, February 8, 2014, February 15, 2014, and February 22, 2014. February 8, 2014, the show was canceled due to inclement weather. Hence, no results were recorded that weekend. I was present February 1, 2014 and February 22, 2014 to encourage attendees to participate in the data collection process.

ALTERNATIVE DATA COLLECTION

The easel, a good idea mentally, was not as bountiful as I had hoped. I generated much more interest and response when I would stand by the easel and encourage attendees to talk to me. This procedure was more considerate of the aging population. The attendees said they wanted to participate, but they were more comfortable having me writing down the answers. Numerous people stated they were self conscious of their

handwriting or their spelling and grammar. This was a great lesson in communication. I was able to ease their fears and explain that I appreciated their honesty. I was more than glad to write down their responses so they could be a part of the data. This revelation bridges nicely with the main point of the thesis research. Those who gather there each week strive to be a part of the ever-changing “dwelling place”. The attendees want to help others who may be considered a part of their community or may be considered a tourist. It is important to these attendees to show they have a familial bond without consciously realizing they are embracing this attitude. This is what makes the Fold unique. They welcome visitors and take an interest in getting to know them. Often, they extend an invitation to share a meal or attend a church service with them the following day.

WRITING A “NEW” ETHNOGRAPHY

H.L. “Buddy” Goodall’s *Writing the New Ethnography* is the primary methodology behind my research.⁸ Goodall states, “Great writing is naturally *dialogic*. It is a medium, a message, that furthers our journey.”⁹ To get acquainted with this methodology, I decided to try some of the writing experiments Goodall suggested. The first writing experiment encouraged the ethnographer to get acquainted with their self. By this, Goodall wants the ethnographer to find their voice. When there is an authentic voice behind the writing, the reader can *feel* the passion the ethnographer has for the research. Goodall argues that ethnographic writing is a telling of a story. In order for that story to resonate with the readers, the ethnographer “must use the *material of [his or her] life* to

⁸ H.L. Goodall is a primary source for the methodology section

⁹ Goodall, *Writing the New Ethnography*, 42

find the *material for a story*. ”¹⁰ Once the material for a story is gathered, the proper formatting for producing scholarship begins.

Goodall acknowledges the predictable pattern of writing found in academia. This pattern of writing includes the introduction, body, and conclusion. Simply, the introduction grabs the attention of the audience; previews the main claims, makes an argument, and states what will be advanced by this study.¹¹ The body reviews the literature identifying the gap, which needs to be closed. Then the body discusses “important” or “significant” findings from the study completed.¹² Finally, the conclusion reviews what has been said throughout the previous writing and offers leads for further research.¹³ What lacks in this traditional model is the ability to tell a story or produce a narrative that truly entices the reader. Furthermore, the traditional model does not allow for the ethnographer to establish credibility or trust. An ethnographer’s work is personal, gaining credibility and trust by documenting their experiences through words. Goodall then points to a metaphor of seeing “creative scholarship as conversation.”¹⁴ He deepens his explanation for why the metaphor of conversation is beneficial. Yes, it cultivates credibility and trust but it also helps the ethnographer identify the gap in the existing literature. Creative scholarship is metaphorically related to conversation because the ethnographer should be asking questions in all aspects of her research. The ethnographer should be reading as much literature as they can upon the given topic. The reading is necessary to procure the next step, which is reflection. A good ethnography should have an autobiographical angle. After reflection, the ethnographer should “begin to see an

¹⁰ Ibid, 48

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid, 51

emerging story—or stories—about representation in the specific area of [his or her] research quest.”¹⁵ Additionally, the ethnographer “will begin to see there is a gap—something missing or something not being told or something that is completely wrongheaded—that [they] want to address.”¹⁶ This is the point where scholars feel and find the motivation to join the conversation.

DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE READER

Goodall states that his ability as a writer “depends on how well [he] develop[s] a relationship with the reader, which is largely determined by the *character* [he] reveal[s] on the page.”¹⁷ Goodall cites Kenneth Burke when discussing the ability to persuade. Goodall writes, “persuasiveness is based on the ability of readers to *closely identify* with [him], [his] perception of others, and [his] description of contexts, within an overall story structure that moves from *desire* to *satisfaction* of that desire.”¹⁸ To achieve the satisfaction of desire, Goodall states that an ethnographer must incorporate the following three attributes for success:

1. Vividly and dramatically arouse a reader’s interest in the topic
2. Deploy language to shape the account into a coherent narrative unity that resonates with the life experiences of the intended reader
3. Move the reader to a sense of completion, to a conclusion that satisfies the reader’s original quest for the experience of reading, or knowledge, or both¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid, 58

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid, 60

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid, 62

Goodall then moves the conversation to the various forms of ethnography. For instance, when writing ethnography, the ethnographer should establish a clear voice. Goodall suggests the following to strengthen a personal ethnography:

- First-person narratives that establish intimacy with the reader
- Strives to persuade reader of the human qualities and frailties of the fieldworker
- Writer develops the attitude of a student toward members of the culture studied; task is to learn from the culture rather than interpret it
- Writer/fieldworker attempts to normalize her or his presence in the activities of the culture
- A general etiquette of acceptance by the natives
- Displays empathy and involvement with issues in the members' everyday lives

Confessional Form (with emphasis on the fieldworker's point of view)

- Inclusion of autobiographical details
- Story focuses on the character-building conversion of the writer from an academic who sees things one way to a sympathetic participant who sees things another way
- Shifting points of view, depending on the activities engaged in or described

Natives and Cultures as "Naturally Occurring"

- The text provides a sense that the account is reasonably uncontaminated by the author's intrusion²⁰

²⁰ Ibid, 72

To present doing the fieldwork, Goodall suggests you incorporate the following:

Textual Identity and Dramatic Control

- Standards for the text construction are literary rather than disciplinary
- Form of the narrative is dramatic recall
- Story stands alone without elaborate theoretical framing
- Productive use of maximally evocative language
- “Shows” rather than “tells about” the experience
- “You-are-there” feel to the telling of the events; a kind of “organized illusion” of participation in the culture
- Tension is built, then released, the surprise ending is not given away but may be later found in earlier clues
- Events move back and forth in time to give rise to later understandings

Artistic License to Experiment with Narrative Forms and Rhetorical Structures (emphasis on fragmented knowledge)

- Cultural knowledge is slipped into the story rather than separated by category
- Narrative displays the learning process used to acquire knowledge of the culture and people

Experimental Characterizations of Natives and Cultures

- Writer’s individuality is expressed; she or he becomes a character in the story rather than its teller²¹

²¹ Ibid

FIELDWORK TO FIELDNOTES

According to Goodall, “A new ethnography is a story based on the represented, or evoked, experiences of a self, with others, within a context.”²² The theme of the story being told through ethnography should be a persuasive expression of an interpreted culture performance. The rhetorical structure of the story should be “constructed out of ordinary and extraordinary everyday life materials, that from a reader’s perspective, allow meaningful patterns to emerge and from which a relationship develops.”²³ Using that definition, this strengthens my claim that studying the notion of “dwelling place” within The Carter Family Fold is relevant. Simply, I will be re-telling and re-creating an experience through my eyes, strengthened by data collection so readers can *feel* what it is like to step foot on the ground.

After reading Goodall, it is important to record everyday details even if it seems mundane. It is important to show how things can be *interconnected* throughout the process. Also, it helps to remember that fieldnotes are the “raw data” or the “grammar” of ethnography.²⁴ When practicing how to write a new ethnography, I kept the following steps in mind:

- Hanging out with others in their local contexts
- Engaging in verbal exchanges with them
- Sharing and learning about their everyday practices
- Digging back into our own—and their own—memories for likely antecedents for current practices

²² Ibid, 83

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid, 84

- Jotting down notes, or tape recording interviews when possible
- Returning to our offices/homes/rented rooms to write out representations of field experiences
- Engaging in armchair, after-the-fact-self-reflection, analysis, and editing of the fieldnotes into a narrative²⁵

A common question with those who are unfamiliar with the practice of ethnography is what happens to the fieldnotes, why are copies not included in the published or written work? I believe the above bullet points address that. When the fieldnotes are translated into a narrative, it not only increases the credibility of the ethnographer but it makes the work *interesting* for the reader. Moreover, a translation of the fieldnotes translates into one of Goodall's main points, which is *slow down*.²⁶ The ethnographer should take great care in writing. Slowing down allows the ethnographer to ask themselves questions and put them back in the experience. When the ethnographer is back in the experience mentally, the language can be strengthened, more descriptors can be added, and an interpretation can be clarified.

Fieldnotes are part of the experience, rather than the proper text. Furthermore, as you translate the notes into the narrative, it is important to remember this: "the story you write will be part of the larger story of who you are, where you've been, what you've read and talked about and argued over, what you believe in and value, what you feel compelled to name as significant."²⁷

²⁵ Ibid, 85

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ibid, 87

FIELDNOTES TO STORIES

Verbal exchanges were a significant component of my research. These exchanges were recorded using my iPhone and an audio recorder. Goodall outlines three stages involved in creating and reflecting upon verbal exchange fieldnotes:

1. *Write* down precisely what gets said (including nonverbal cues and pauses) between the speakers
2. *Code* (that is, determine the generic type) the conversation for analysis
3. *Reflect* on the meaning of the conversation as a “type” of communication (the coding), as an episode with the evolving story you are encountering, and (perhaps, if it seems appropriate) as it interacts with your personal experiences²⁸

Often, I found it helpful to write down particular details after-the-fact when I was engaging in an interview. For instance, if my interviewee was wearing a red cowboy hat or had warm hands when he shook hands as an introduction, I would add that in the margins of my fieldnotes. As you will see in chapter 3, one of my interviewees, Rita Forrester paused when she was speaking. I made sure to include the pause in my narrative because it helps readers feel as if they were *participating* in the conversation. The generic types of conversation Goodall suggests to use include:

- *Phatic communion or ritual interaction*: class of routine social interactions that are themselves the basic verbal form of politeness rituals used to express social recognition and mutuality of address.

²⁸ Ibid, 98

- *Ordinary conversation*: Patterns of questions and responses that provide the interactants with data about personal, relational, and informational issues and concerns, as well as perform the routine “business” of verbally acquiring, describing, analyzing, evaluating, and acting on information in everyday life.
- *Skilled conversation*: These exchanges represent a “higher” or “deeper” level of information exchange/discussion, usually attributed to professionally trained communicators, negotiators, ethnographers, and commentators.
- *Personal narrative*: conversation can be marked by the presence of individual or mutual self-disclosure, wherein the episodes of disclosure are used to situate, coordinate, detail, and explain or retell pivotal events in personal or organizational life.
- *Dialogue*: Conversations (fairly rare) can reveal a kind of spiritual or unordinary “meaning” in which the talk moves from exchanges of information and the coordination of new understandings to a higher level of spontaneous mutuality.²⁹

As noted earlier, this project took initial form when I was asked, “where ‘ya from?” Now, that statement can be seen as phatic communion or ritual interaction. Moreover, most of the verbal exchanges, which have been translated into stories, were either ordinary conversation or personal narrative. Any dialogue, which was subsequently translated into a story, was included to add detail and provide *feeling* for the reader. I often found myself reflecting upon the type of communication discussed after I had

²⁹ Ibid, 104

experienced it. I would write notes in the margins of my notebook detailing what I felt when I re-read my writings.

ETHICS AND TRANSLATION

Additional rhetoric is created after the ethnographer has written down, edited, connected and self-reflected on what Kenneth Burke refers to as the “thisness of that, and the thisness of this.”³⁰ My job as an ethnographer is to translate my fieldnotes and my experiences into a story that is pleasurable for the reader and to describe my experiences truthfully and ethically without marginalizing or passing judgment on a culture that I have saturated myself in for years. Goodall addresses fears I had regarding the ethics of translating my fieldnotes into stories. Moreover, he emphasizes what is and is not appropriate to edit.

Some ethnographers find themselves concerned with whether or not they should “expose” themselves as an ethnographer. I was very transparent regarding the fact that I was there to research. However, I emphasized that my research involved participation and I would need help from the attendees. In order to increase my credibility and gain trust within the community of the Fold, it was necessary that I visited without doing research. It was also important that I brought my friends and family members to gather there and experience what I would be writing in this thesis. As a result, when I was conducting my research, it became easier to interact because I was respected within the community. I found that, through word-of-mouth, regulars would be curious as to when I was going to return. Regulars began approaching me, asking about my project and if they could participate.

³⁰ Burke, *Symbols and Society*

Growing close to the regulars in the community, I became hesitant on what to include and what not to include. Here is a brief list that Goodall offers of what *can* and *should be* edited:

- Any *factual information* that was inaccurately reported or inadvertently omitted, but that contributes significantly to the truth or value of the tale
- Any *interpretation, attribution of cause, motive or significance* that results from editing the factual information
- Any *poorly constructed passages* that are unintentionally ambiguous, awkward, or irrelevant to the plot, or that may be simply unclear
- Overly *long sentences*
- Grammatically *incorrect usage*
- *General formatting* for consistency
- *Aesthetic formatting* for eye appeal³¹

SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY

In addition to the methods outlined by Goodall, sensory ethnography plays a significant role in understanding the methodology of my research. In order to understand sensory ethnography in detail, I utilize the methodology outlined by Sarah Pink. She states, “by a ‘sensory ethnography’ I mean a process of doing ethnography that accounts for how this multisensoriality is integral both to the lives of people who participate [*sic*] in our research *and* to how we ethnographers practise [*sic*] our craft.”³² Sensory

³¹ Ibid, 166

³² Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, 1

ethnography is critical because it encourages the ethnographer to participate in the experience.

Typically the term ethnography refers to a range of qualitative research practices. Similar to Goodall, Pink also articulates the need for “participant observation, ethnographic interviewing, and a range of other participatory research techniques that are often developed by specific research projects.”³³ The researcher is allowed to participate in the fieldwork and have certain experiences guided by the individual project. For instance, many attendees at the Carter Family Fold enjoy flatfoot dancing which can also be labeled as clogging. Employing the methodology of sensory ethnography, the research does not feel this pressure that they are ethically bounded to just watch and ask questions about the experience. The researcher is permitted and encouraged to participate. The experience can thus be authenticated and described in a reflexive way.

It is important to obtain another working definition for ethnography. Once the definition for ethnography is established, the definition can be applied to the sensory practice. Pink suggests:

Ethnography is a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture, and individuals) that is based on ethnographers’ own experiences. It does not claim to produce an objective or truthful account of reality, but should aim to offer versions of ethnographers’ experiences of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, negotiations and intersubjectiveness through which the knowledge was produced.³⁴

³³ Ibid, 8

³⁴ Ibid, 22

Similar to Goodall, ethnography can be thought of as a type of storytelling. However, Pink encourages the sensory details to be described. The researcher signals an enhanced “interest in the senses [which] can lead to an appreciation of what is important to others.”³⁵ Consequently, in sensory ethnography the ethnographer becomes the sensory apprentice.

ROLE OF ETHNOGRAPHER IN FIELDWORK

Traditionally, the ethnographer plays the role of an apprentice who learns about another culture through participant observation and interviewing. Often there is debate about the ethnographer submerging him or herself in the culture; however, sensory ethnography encourages the ethnographer to be an active participant. Active involvement is the ideal way to *learn how one learns*’ [sic].³⁶ Participation in the actual environment or field encourages other *ways of knowing*. Moreover, sensory ethnography helps readers understand how participants have come to learn the given activity.

Physically connecting with others in the field of study is critical when conducting sensory ethnography. In data collection it is important to discuss the relationship between the researcher and those who are being researched. Pink suggests walking with those you are going to interview. Citing the work of Katrín Lund, an element of performance studies is critical when engaging in sensory ethnographic methodology. To both Lund and Pink, walking can be seen as bodily movement, which does more than just connect the body to the ground. Further, Lund elaborates by stating “different postures, speeds, and rhythms shape the tactile interactions between the moving body and the ground, and

³⁵ Ibid, 59

³⁶ Ibid, 69

play a fundamental part in how the surroundings are sensually experienced.”³⁷

Consequently, this interactive experience allows the ethnographer to see the space from a different perspective. Trying to avoid clichés, a good sensory ethnographer aims to *learn how one learns*’ [sic].³⁸

Developing this connection between the ethnographer and the participant is critical when collecting data. When transcribing field notes it is important to articulate the pausing, the gestures used and facial expressions. It is important to note the time of day, weather, smells and sites/sights. It is important for the reader to understand interviews and participant observation is a *representation* of an experienced reality.³⁹ Often, critics of ethnography may discount its authenticity as being credible data. Critics argue ethnography serves as a *representation* rather than a realistic account of an objective reality.⁴⁰ To refute that potential fear, it is important to remember Goodall and his claim of creating a narrative. Additionally, ethnography should be seen as a reliable account of events that happened and persons who existed.⁴¹

To summarize, sensory ethnography is not only about representation, rather it is also about convincing. The purpose is to engage the audiences to understand what may be considered *the other*. Another way to view *the other* is to think that the readers may not be members of this community or culture. Thus, the purpose of ethnography is to engage audiences in a way, which will enable their sense of *knowing*. The exposure of a new idea

³⁷ Lund, “*Seeing in Motion and the Touching Eye: Walking over Scotland's Mountains.*” 28

³⁸ Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*

³⁹ While Goodall and Pink were the primary sources of ethnographic methodology discussed, I would like to list other scholars I consulted. The list includes: D. Soyini Madison, Della Pollock, and Dwight Conquergood

⁴⁰ I am speaking to critics such as: Roy Bhaskar and Martyn Hammersley

⁴¹ To avoid redundancy and boredom, I suggest consulting Pink’s *Doing Sensory Ethnography* summary found on page 81.

or a new culture “invites new forms of ethnographic knowing and routes into other people’s experiences.”⁴² Furthermore, from an ethnographic lens, the data provides both the ethnographer and the audience “with ways of responding to researching questions that involve focusing on forms of intimacy, sociality and emplacement.”⁴³ As a result, new layers of *knowing* come to fruition, which perhaps can challenge forms of traditional scholarship.

PERFORMANCE STUDIES AND ETHNOGRAPHY

Performance studies are also a component. Della Pollock argues, “Performative writing spins, to some extent, on the axis of impossible and/or regressing reference and yet out into new modes of subjectivity and even referentiality.”⁴⁴ While the writing in this thesis is not evocative like most performative writing, this thesis is meant to show a story that I experienced while visiting and interviewing at the Fold. To analyze rhetoric, Gerard Hauser claims, “Rhetoric opens inventional spaces: places where ideas, relationships, emotional bonds, and courses of action can be experienced in novel, sometimes transformative ways.”⁴⁵ It can be argued that the rhetoric regarding the Fold is done in a performative manner.

Researching a site does not need to be exclusively verbal. Phaedra Pezzullo states, “Issues and attitudes are expressed and contested in dance, music, gesture, food, ritual, artifact, symbolic action, as well as words” and this is significant because the Fold

⁴² Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*, 153

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Pollock, “Performing Writing. Readings on Rhetoric and Performance,” 116

⁴⁵ Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*, 33

is a place, which embodies these concepts.⁴⁶ When you get out of the car, you realize the Fold is not a memorial to the Carter Family, rather it is a local gathering spot. For instance, music is an integral part of the Fold; it is not, however, the only focus. Traditional Appalachian flatfoot dancing is equally as important to the weekly event. Consequently, the ethnographic fieldwork, particularly interviewing, is important because it is the only way to understand how the Carter Family Fold functions rhetorically as a sight of memory and history, but more importantly, as a “second-home” or a “dwelling place.”

MEMORIALS, MEMORY AND MEMORY PLACE

Memorials encompass a particular rhetoric since they are often associated as a place of public memory. One would assume that the rhetoric regarding the Carter Family Fold is fixated on the memories that Janette Carter (the founder) is trying to preserve. One would assume the Carter Family members and attendees of the Fold are not going to discuss the problems that the creators faced when trying to preserve this history. Looking at rhetorical invention, for instance, “It would suggest that there is no “pure” articulation of the past, but that the language, structural elements, arguments, tropes, narratives, justifications, and such in which the event is cast—as well as the availability of knowledge to the event to being with ---are inventional resources available in a culture.”⁴⁷ If the resources of the Fold are invented to function rhetorically, this can alter the perception and the historical impact regarding the meaning of the Fold.

⁴⁶ Pezzullo, “Resisting “National Breast Cancer Awareness Month”: The Rhetoric of Counterpublics and Their Cultural Parts”, 324

⁴⁷ Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 13

As the inventions of memory may be created, they are articulated to the audience positioning one point of view, rather than encompassing the true narrative. When a memory is false and there is only one interpretation, it is going to change significantly the meaning of that place as well as re-define the local culture this place is trying to represent. Differentiating between a “space” and “place” is critical when trying to understand the Carter Family Fold since they are typically defined as being interchangeable. Depending on experiences provided, “a place that is bordered, specified, and locatable by being named is seen as different from open, undifferentiated, undesigned space.”⁴⁸ Based on this definition, the Fold would embody the definition of a place since there is a definite location for it. Some look at it, however, within the broader context of Appalachia, defining it as a space. This lack of clarity affects the meaning of public memory and public culture while affecting the authenticity as many narratives are projected, altering what it means to a community.

While the Fold is aiming to achieve the status of being a memorial, it can be argued that it is more of a memory place. Thus, “Memory places cultivate the being and participation together of strangers, but strangers who appear to have enough in common to be co-traversing the place.”⁴⁹ Arguing that this place is unique since it serves as both a memorial and a memory place complicate the meaning. Articulating memories is a task that is very interpretative, but it is imperative to understand the role that the Fold plays in the public sphere. The Fold is pertinent because of what it means and how it functions. By definition, a fold is “a group of people or institutions that share a common faith,

⁴⁸ Ibid, 23

⁴⁹ Ibid, 27

belief, activity, or enthusiasm.”⁵⁰ Additionally, this is a site that encompasses both local, frequent visitors, and tourists who are perceived as strangers. The rhetoric that is intended to be historical in nature is lacking at the Fold. By this I mean there is an understood assumption you know who the Carter Family is. This place functions as a site and sight rhetorically of both memory and history. While presenting itself as a memorial, it provides strangers with the opportunity to pay homage to the legendary country icons. This is not a place to come for biographical information. The nature of what the Fold means constitutes its preservation. The mission of the Fold is to preserve the ritualistic performance of old-time music.

Functioning as a memory place, strangers are interlocked with local citizens conversing, at first glance, about a commonality, which is the Carter Family. Looking deeper, one realizes a sense of nostalgia and memory has drawn the group together. Discussing individual stories with people you do not know is part of the experience. Suddenly, the line between your experience and an experience you heard about is blurred. Retelling the stories that you heard becomes a part of the preservation process. Many do not realize the memories may not be their own because they are captivated by the memorial nature of this place. As a result, “Almost all memorials (and other memory places) use words, inscribed and/or spoken, as part of an interpretive program...A memorial may or may not have a special exhibit with historic photographs or films of its own construction or events that have occurred on its grounds.”⁵¹ The Fold is thus positioned as a memorial. Yet, its dualistic relationship with a memory place is affecting the narratives of construction and the collective memory pertaining to the local

⁵⁰ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, “Fold”

⁵¹ Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 29

community and the broader context of Appalachia, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: APPALACHIA IN THE BROADER CONTEXT

In this chapter I will be discussing the region of Appalachia. It must be clear that this region is extremely diverse spanning from southern New York to northern Mississippi. The area I will be focusing on is the community of Hiltons, Virginia, which is located in the southwestern part of the state. As a result, the definition of Appalachia I discuss is in reference to this particular region.

The typical stereotypes of Appalachia are that of a region highly dependent on coal and known for storytelling, which ultimately establishes both the place and authenticity of the region. For this reason, according to *The Appalachians*, “The best way to understand Appalachia is to listen to its people. Appalachians are master storytellers. They can sit on a porch or at the kitchen table and artfully demonstrate the oral tradition of preserving history.”⁵² Recognizing the sociological aspect of defining Appalachia is applicable to understanding the authenticity of a rhetorical performance. To illustrate, “Appalachians have a remarkable knack for recollecting years gone by. They can call up important incidents, crotchety neighbors, births and deaths, Saturday nights, the family dog, even an old pair of shoes, with the detail of a poet.”⁵³ Reciting the lyrics from the music of Appalachia defines the region and place that enables people to identify themselves, providing authenticity for the recollection of stories from the past.

⁵² Warren, Santelli, & George-Warren, *The Appalachians*, 107

⁵³ Ibid

THE INFLUENCE OF MODERNITY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF ROOTS

Modern society tends to depict the region of Appalachia unfavorably. The poor depiction confounds the expectations of tourists because they are anticipating the arrival to what they would consider an outdated region. Disregarding the stereotypes, understanding historical, sociological and political concepts will help a new, favorable depiction of Appalachia come to fruition. Through my readings, I discovered a defining point of the region is the introduction of folk music revivals allowing music to be broadened beyond church hymns. Establishing a place of that region and defining the term folk, revivals attained a sense of identity for the people of Appalachia. This facilitated rediscovery in the future and spawning commercial success, providing authenticity for the region. Now, the significant recurring theme of mountain preaching and revivalism has spread from being limited by geography and religion to something local citizens could identify with.

Establishing the cultural roots of Appalachia through revivalism, people of the region began making connections with others who lived outside their immediate town or surrounding areas because they, too, had a common connection through music. Folk songs encompass the definitions of a generic phrase applied to all traditional songs or make use of a term used to distinguish between a narrative and a non-narrative song.⁵⁴ Researching folklore and folk music, we can define a ballad as a traditional song, which tells a story.⁵⁵ Many researchers prefer to focus on the identity of ballads because they encompass a narrative. Misunderstanding the definition of folksongs anticipates them

⁵⁴ Olson, *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, 1159

⁵⁵ Ibid

having no shape or meaning. This is inaccurate.⁵⁶ Here we see that “Folk songs are organized around a central idea or ideas, and thus the stanzas in folk songs are arranged purposefully.”⁵⁷ Establishing a concrete meaning and tracing the origins of folk music is a time consuming task, open to many perspectives since many of the songs are thought to be “recently vintage,” showing their origins being no more than one or two centuries old.⁵⁸ Revivalism and establishing the cultural roots of Appalachia accentuate six primary categories in folk music: love, religion, history, intended for children, songs of celebration and lastly, humor.⁵⁹ Narrowing research to distinct categories and definitions of folk songs allow scholars to study the music and study the heritage, rather than inflate the stereotypes, which have already been embedded in society. Cultivating the folk songs through the oral history and defining cultural roots through revivalism is a significant identifier of the region.

CONSTRUCTING AN IDENTITY

Understanding the region of Appalachia can be a complex, yet, intriguing adventure. The concern here is defining a place or constructing the identity of a given artifact, such as the Carter Family Fold. Regarding the broad concepts of public memory and public culture, identifying a tangible object is crucial. Tangibility is the narrow process of constructing an identity for an artifact that has various meanings; yet, few think of ideas as a construction of an identity. Tangible objects do not solely define public memory and public culture. They are also defined by the construction of various

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid, 1160

⁵⁹ Hufford, *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, 843

ideologies, such as the rhetoric presented in folk music or the rhetoric of a place deemed to be a memorial. Constructing an authentic rhetorical performance propels a place of rhetorical production making authenticity exist. The performance and preservation of collective memory in contemporary American culture with a specific focus on places that have been “left behind in modernity” is relevant and important to the concept of community. Focusing on the ways a community represents itself to the outside world allows other questions to be asked based on the portrayal through media, memorials, museums, and tourist destinations. The question worth researching is exploring how a memorial, the Carter Family Fold, located in Hiltons, Virginia, functions as both a site and sight of memory and history by exploring the location through both ethnographic field work and relating it to various research already conducted in the field.

STEREOTYPES FACILITATED BY POPULAR CULTURE

Often, folk music is perceived to serve as a text to the often-stereotyped region fueling the notion of “illiteracy” for the people of Appalachia.⁶⁰ To clarify, look at popular culture. For instance, think of the movie *Deliverance* from 1972. Briefly, the film followed four businessmen, Ed, Lewis, Bobby and Drew, from Atlanta who “escape” to the wilderness of northern Georgia for the weekend. Immediately the four men are drawn to a young boy seated on a raised porch with a banjo in his arms. Drew is a musician and took out his guitar to see if the boy could match his talent. Much to his surprise the boy, labeled inbred, played the banjo phenomenally. Drew and the boy find themselves in a harmonious musical duel. Soon, the three remaining men clap and make “yee-haw” sounds as they slapped their knees to the beat of the dueling instruments.

⁶⁰ Abramson & Haskell, *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, 7

Soon, the getaway weekend became a nightmare as they are exposed to “God’s Forgotten Creatures” in the backwoods of Georgia. The men previously acknowledged the inbred nature of the region to each other as they parked their cars thus facilitating the stereotypes for the audience of the film. Moreover, the stereotypes of Appalachia were amplified when the “squeal like a pig” male rape scene occurred.⁶¹ Before the mountain man raped Bobby, Ed was tied to a tree and forced to watch. Lewis and Drew were upstream in their canoe. When Lewis and Drew arrived, they constructed a plan to save their friends and seek revenge. As a result, the mountain man was shot from a distance with an arrow and subsequently killed by Lewis. After the murder, the men discussed what to do next. The dialogue was as follows:

Lewis: What are we gonna do with him?

Drew: There's not but one thing to do. Take the body down to Ainty. Turn it over to the Highway Patrol. Tell 'em what happened.

Lewis: Tell 'em what exactly?

Drew: Just what happened. This is justifiable homicide if anything is. They were sexually assaulting two members of our party at gunpoint. Like you said, there was nothin' else we could do.

Ed: Is he alive?

Lewis: Not now. Well, let's get our heads together. *[To vengeful Bobby]* Come on now, let's not do anything foolish. Does anybody know anything about the law?

Drew: Look, I-I was on jury duty once. It wasn't a murder trial.

Lewis: A murder trial? Well, I don't know the technical word for it, Drew, but I know this. You take this man down out of the mountains and turn him over to the Sheriff, there's gonna be a trial all right, a trial by jury.

Drew: So what?

Lewis: We killed a man, Drew. Shot him in the back - a mountain man, a cracker. It gives us somethin' to consider.

Drew: All right, consider it, we're listenin'.

Lewis: Shit, all these people are related. I'd be god-damned if I'm gonna come back up here and stand trial with this man's aunt and his uncle, maybe his momma and his daddy sittin' in the jury box. What do you think, Bobby? *[Bobby rushes at the corpse, but is restrained]*⁶²

⁶¹ In the scene, one of the “mountain-men” makes Bobby squeal like a pig before he is raped

⁶² Boorman, *Deliverance*

In the scene above, the men facilitated the stereotypes further. The citizens of the Appalachian region are referred to as “mountain men.” Moreover, Lewis once again alluded to the inbred stereotype of the region suggesting they would not have a fair chance with a jury because everyone judging them would be related to the man they murdered. It should also be noted the music playing during this scene and subsequent scenes is the same banjo rift that Drew and the young boy were playing before the men went on their canoe trip.⁶³

While this depiction of Appalachia is a perceived stereotype, folk music is another avenue of popular culture, which is one way of people depicting the past, regardless if the information is correct or incorrect. The folk music serves as a powerful rhetorical device maintaining the heritage of the region. The Carter Family Fold is a location which attempts to preserve the old-time tradition of the region through both rhetoric and performance. Preservation then translates to no electric instruments during a performance encouraging the participants to dance. Appalachia is a region plagued by stereotypes and the Carter Family Fold is a memorial that perpetuates a particular narrative helping sustain the this specific region of Appalachia and the heritage it is trying to maintain and preserve for this particular community. Often, older generations, and regular attendees at the Fold fear that this location will dwindle in popularity due to the regular participants dying and future generations no longer having an appreciation for what the Fold has attempted to create and maintain. Questioning what the Fold means results in understanding the meaning of it from the people who visit consistently. This is a place which propels both public and collective memory. Regardless of how sustainable

⁶³ For clarification, I suggest conducting an Internet search for “Dueling Banjos- Deliverance” if you are unfamiliar with the tune

this location is, at this particular moment in time, it means something to the people who pilgrimage to this destination as tourists and the local community who have been visiting since it opened. Understanding the history of the Carter Family, the culture of Appalachia, and the importance of folk music is crucial. Once that understanding is established it will be easier to understand how the Fold functions as a rhetorical device of preserving both memory and history to the region.

HISTORY OF FOLK MUSIC

Serving as a text to an often perceived illiterate culture in Appalachia, folk music is what is passed forward through generations affecting public culture and public memory. Understanding folk music can be an aesthetic commitment. Understanding the history of folk music is important. The book, *The Basics: Folk Music*, by Ronald Cohen serves as a foundational text for understanding the concept and creation of folk music as a performance and a performance of authenticity in the United States. Exploring what folk music means to the people who are living in a specific area, Cohen has a way of making the information relatable to the culture of Appalachia.

Beginning with the nineteenth century, moving into the commercialization period, while exploring how music affects people in various decades and offering perspectives as to why music is of cultural relevance during times of struggle, Cohen examines folk music in a variety of contexts.⁶⁴ Setting the scene, one can view Appalachia as an area plagued by struggle and the cyclical nature of corruption between class, culture and politics. Listening to the music that is commercialized becomes an

⁶⁴ Contexts examine the rise of folk-music beginning with the 19th century in Great Britain and America.

important factor because of the many different and unique interpretations by people who rely on music to serve as a text and cultural link to their family history and ties to the region. Depicting a certain stereotype of the region that is passed down through generations, and having little variance in the lyrics of the music, establishes the foundation of the music that is one representation of authenticity throughout a unique region. The Carter Family symbolizes Hiltons, Virginia because they were one of the foundational creators in the recording of what we now know as old-time music. Decades later, the Carter Family is still memorialized in their hometown and people of all ages are flocking to the location to pay homage or get a deeper understanding of what they did to shape the music we know today. Understanding the historical aspect of folk music is crucial to understanding the foundation of why music serves as a representation of authenticity and, more importantly, as a text to an illiterate culture.

Publishing most of his work in the 1960's and before, George Korson, although an older source, is still relevant today. Conducting research in the Appalachia area, Korson compiled many songs from various regions. Interviewing many miners netted him a unique perspective and his work can be found in the Library of Congress. Using oral history, Korson was able to physically record the works that had been sung for many generations. Recording the songs by hand and having them published allow the songs to remain in archival history. Retelling an oral history while allowing more research to be done when future generations can analyze the variances in the music that he published from people at the time, Korson is acknowledging the historical tradition and sense of pride that is passed on through many generations. Works Korson published include: *Coal Dust on the Fiddle: Songs and Stories of the Bituminous Industry* and *Songs and Ballads*

*of the Bituminous Miners.*⁶⁵ Compiling these songs emphasizes the importance of heritage and culture that are found within the Appalachian region. Showing how songs are passed through generations in a traditionally illiterate culture is affecting public memory and public culture. It also serves as a performance of authenticating the Appalachian region. Gaining both an understanding and appreciation of the region are important when visiting the Fold. The Carter Family Fold memorial is designed to preserve the tradition of the region. The people who embody the location are there for the same purpose. While the older generations of the local community may have not received the same level of schooling that is now common today, they are willing to share their stories. The personal narratives help perpetuate the region because there remains a sense of importance based in the traditional culture and heritage. The songs sung in the Fold are both modern and traditional, but often they are songs the audience can sing along with and these songs usually encompass a sense of nostalgia from when they were growing up in the same community.

The PBS documentary, *The Appalachians* serves as another reference articulating how folk music is passed on through generations affecting public memory and public culture.⁶⁶ Focusing on the publications of different perspectives of the culture ranging from grassroots movements to mainstreamed movements affecting people on both a local and a national level, include interviews from community activists and celebrities who call Appalachia home. Relating this to the Fold, music icon, Johnny Cash was a frequent visitor of the Fold since his wife, June Carter, is related to the original Carter Family. Through ethnographic work, many who regularly visit the Carter Family Fold have a

⁶⁵ Respectively, the texts above were published in 1965 and 1947

⁶⁶ *The Appalachians* Documentary also published a companion piece of the same name which is cited in this thesis

memory seeing or meeting Johnny Cash while non-regular visitors may associate the location as something that is both a memorial to the Carter Family and pays homage to Johnny Cash since he heavily funded the renovations and preservations. Incorporating the indigenous history of the folk music and explaining how the historical roots articulate a common culture of the present clearly depicts the feelings of the region. Keeping the region alive and relevant in society, the music perpetuates the region and helps fuel interest on a mainstream perspective. Articulating and constructing their narratives, the ancestries of the people are not forgotten; rather they remain alive and relevant in society by present day inhabitants. Relying on song allows people a sense of pride and something they can relate to as a local or a regional community. Allowing them to feel connected to the region, to which they have strong historical ties, the music is depicting a certain image of their culture and authenticating it as a place of public memory and public culture.

FOLKLORE AND APPALACHIA

The book, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music*, by Benjamin Filene, analyzes the issues in Appalachia regarding music and public memory. Identifying Appalachia and the heritage that the music has in the region, the contents of this book analyze and discuss creating and mastering the cult of authenticity. To clarify, the cult of authenticity signifies a particular level of creativity or a “thicket of expectations.”⁶⁷ An example would be when a folk singer or a group is trying to determine specific expectations of what they want their sound to be or how they want to market themselves. In the instance of the Carter Family, it could be said the Carters

⁶⁷ Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music*

mastered this “cult of authenticity” because their music was transformative. Initially in the 1927 Bristol sessions, they recorded gospel tunes.⁶⁸ When it was determined that A.P. had written his own songs in addition to collecting songs of the mountains, a new expectation was created. Record labels could now turn profit by marketing music of Appalachia to its own citizens. The recording of the original songs helped change the face of music at the time and the Carters were labeled the “first family of country music.”⁶⁹ Music is a form of communication. This book is relevant to the thesis that folk music serves as a text to the illiterate. Recognizing music has the ability to send messages to all people; music is a version of a text. Establishing a place where outsiders and insiders can see the culture, class and political struggle that plagues the region creates authenticity.

Mastering the cult of authenticity, a culture of folklore is created and the folklore culture becomes American culture having an effect on people at both a local and national level.⁷⁰ I am referring to making the government aware of certain flaws that are causing problems with the current system by encompassing other philosophers such as: Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, and Friedrich Nietzsche and their concepts of power and community. Carrying this powerful message, Filene also mentions that ballads and protest music are relatable and can reach people at all levels affecting public memory and public culture. Relating this notion to the Carter Family, it was well known that A.P. would go on “song finding trips” through the mountains of Virginia. There, A.P. would

⁶⁸ BBC, *History of Country Music*, Segment 1

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ The “cult of authenticity” is a term that is used frequently throughout Filene’s book, *Romancing the Folk* and needed some clarification in this section

collect ballads, which were specific to that mountain community.⁷¹ A.P. gathered a treasure of literature “where people talked about their life, the way life was, the way it is, their experiences, their loves, their losses in this beautifully clear totally heart-on-their-sleeve poetry.”⁷² Creating culture through folklore and reconstructing memory affects how culture is depicted and stereotyped at a national level along with making it relatable when researching how folk music serves as a text to the illiterate and is passed on from various generations. While some may argue there is a disadvantage when a location, such as the Carter Family Fold, remains true by preserving the past and not keeping up with modernity, others will state that this preservation of the original maintains a sense of nostalgia that helps fuel tourism at both a local and national level. Stereotypes may be advantageous when tourists come to see what they expect to see. Deliberately acting in a stereotypical fashion is an example of exploitation for financial gain and this is not the purpose or motive behind the Carter Family Fold. Simply, the Carter Family Fold is unique; it is not commercialized such as Pigeon Forge, Dollywood, or Graceland. In the case of exploitation, citizens are no longer remaining true to their heritage but are portraying the region based on predetermined stereotypes in efforts to gain more recognition from the outside communities.

DEFINING APPALACHIA

Complicating the idea of “defining” Appalachia, the term folklore is often used when reconstructing memories of the past. Often the term folklore is identified with nostalgia, and when people hear the term folklore they think “outdated” or “out of place.”

⁷¹ BBC, *History of Country Music*, Segment 1

⁷² Ibid

As a result, there is no consideration that folklore also embraces the current or modern time period. The various vernaculars of Appalachian music may have shaped a particular identity, but we can argue including folklore is an essential part of the culture. Looking at the sociological perspective, folklore can be perceived as a negative connotation by a narrow-minded person. Having an open mind, the various ideologies and constructs of Appalachia can be established by acknowledging that folklore is a term that has many definitions. To some, folklore describes the romantic nature of a place that has been established through music.⁷³ Appalachia is a place “where people know their neighbors, value their elders, live close to the land, and preserve old-time craft, music, and stories.”⁷⁴ Appalachia has gained authenticity through the use of storytelling, particularly through the expression of oral history through song or spoken word. Using song as a means of expression for storytelling, oral histories are passed on from generation to generation, thus creating a cohesive identity for a particular place. For example, relate the above discussion to our grandparents talking about their younger days. We have all heard the stories and are either captivated or bored to tears. The commercialization of folksongs became crucial when the region of Appalachia was being established because it was the catalyst serving as a performance of rhetorical authenticity in regards to establishing a particular place. Rhetorical authenticity could be a depiction of place without a heavy bias of mainstream or modern stereotypes. As a result, narratives produced remain consistent and influential when constructing the identity. In this case, narratives of the Fold help construct identity on both a personal and a collective level.

⁷³ Hufford, *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, 843

⁷⁴ Cohen, *The Basics: Folk Music*, 29

FOLKLORE, FOLK MUSIC AND ORAL HISTORY

Passing on these oral narratives enhances the rhetorical performance and the region is continually establishing authenticity. Portraying the narrative that Janette established was crucial to the foundations. This is a place about the preservation of memories. I cannot stress enough that hearing the oral histories can be seen through music so modernity does not overwhelm the humble society staying true to their historical roots. Shaping the public culture by the stories, which are passed on from generation to generation, establishes collective memory because the citizens of that region are hearing the same stories. This perpetuates recollecting the same memories heard throughout society.

The perception of this particular Appalachia region remains filtered through the commercialization of folk music. It is filtered to be acceptable at a national level. Translated into real terms, “Our perception of a place is filtered through this spatial mapping as grains of coffee are filtered away before drinking a cup of coffee.”⁷⁵ Filtering information becomes significant when you are trying to identify Appalachia as a place. If information is filtered to be nationally acceptable, then the public culture and collective memory have been manipulated, thus affecting the impact of modernity. Eliminating certain issues from mainstreaming, the story has been manipulated and shaped a particular way. The process of forgetting becomes an issue. Preserving oral histories becomes a topic that is of utmost importance. Considering how to define a space or place is complicated.

Dwindling in population, Hiltons, VA faces the possibility that the preservation of the Fold may be lost. Experiencing firsthand the stories of the local citizens is important

⁷⁵ Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets*, 50

to the memory and history. Failure to save these experiences illuminates the possibility that a future generation may not be able to grasp who the Carters were and what they meant to the local society and the broader context of Appalachia. While there is no arguing that future generations can read biographies about the Carter Family, there is a sense of nostalgia and tradition that can be lost when the oral histories of the Fold are lost forever. This would result in diminishing the pride associated with that region. Again, the definition regarding the place of Appalachia changes because a “place is never a fixed spatial entity but always a social process in transformation.”⁷⁶

The various folk songs depicting Appalachia keep the place transforming because of the storytelling told within the lyrics. Comparing songs from previous generations, one can see textual differences that portray a particular moment in time. Thus the lyrics of folk songs fluctuate rather than remain fixed in society. For example, the Carter Family recorded a variation of a Christian Hymn in 1935 titled “Can The Circle Be Unbroken?” They modified from a Hymn written by Ada R. Habershon in 1907 titled “Will the Circle Be Unbroken?” Consequently, few similarities exist between the two songs thus showing the differences amongst generations, genres, and regions. Highlighting the differences I have included two stanzas of both songs below.

Will The Circle Be Unbroken?

There are loved ones in the glory
Whose dear forms you often miss.
When you close your earthly story,
Will you join them in their bliss?

Will the circle be unbroken
By and by, by and by?
Is a better home awaiting
In the sky, in the sky?

⁷⁶ Ibid, 51

Can The Circle Be Unbroken?

I was standing by the window
On one cold and cloudy day
When I saw the hearse come rolling
For to carry my mother away

Will the circle be unbroken
Bye and bye Lord, bye and bye
There's a better home awaiting
In the sky Lord, in the sky

After reading the lyrics of both songs it should be noted that topically the two relate. The lyrics use different grammar and vocabulary to tell a story. The Carter's incorporate the Lord into the lyrics showing their creativity and their ability to blur the line between gospel and commercial country.

Recalling the constructs of public and collective memory, folk songs emphasize the rhetorical nature of the Fold. The passing of ballads and hymnals to subsequent generations allow a collective memory to be available to the general public that is reconstructed and may differ from the original story. The past becomes the present and a new memory is created. For instance, an attendee of the Fold may have grown up listening to one version of a folk song and a band performing the song may cover it a different way lyrically. The message may be similar but the grammar and vocabulary differ leading to a dissonance in memory. The process of forgetting is always involved in this seemingly cyclical process. Benedict Anderson discusses simultaneous change when mass media is introduced and his idea can be applied to the transformation of Appalachia in the concept of modernity.⁷⁷ While the Fold is making little to no financial effort to modernize aesthetically, that is the emphasis of its charm. As commercialization through

⁷⁷ Ibid, 81

methods of mass media is increasing, society begins to transform, thus a new place is continually being created.

MEMORY, PLACE, AND THE FOLD

Constructing memories affecting public culture and collective memory is important. We must admit the construction of these memories also affects the authenticity of a space, place or region. While the preservation of the Fold may be relevant to modernity, post modernity may have a different idea regarding authenticity. While nostalgia is an important element to the Fold, distinguishing between the natural and artificial becomes challenging. In the text *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* written by Allison Landsburg claims that a new form of cultural public memory has emerged with the advancement of technology. In her writings she utilizes scholars such as Jean Baudrillard and claims that “the proliferation of different media and mediations-- ‘simulations’—has dissolved the dichotomy between the real and the simulacrum, between the authentic and the inauthentic, between the natural and the artificial.”⁷⁸ The Fold may not be traditional media, but the environment still is media-based and can be recorded for people to purchase the experience, to watch and re-watch at any given date.⁷⁹ Encompassing the nostalgia within the place, one may not be able to distinguish between an artifact authentically deemed Appalachia and a stereotypical artifact of Appalachia, placed for the intended audience to experience. An example would be the moonshine still. This

⁷⁸ Landsburg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*, 32

⁷⁹ Anyone can purchase a copy of a live performance at the Fold. After a fee of \$10, unlimited viewing is permitted for one month. < <http://www.carterfamilyfold.org/>>

exemplifies Baudrillard's claim, in the contemporary world "people are hopelessly detached from the 'real'."⁸⁰

Experiencing the Fold, traditional media is not embodied, but the concept of the real is still debatable. Relying on memories does not allow authenticity to present itself. Confusing images of stereotypical Appalachia with what they experience at the Fold has complicated the relationship tourists are expected to enjoy. Images rooted in media surface in the memory of visitors. First time visitors to the Fold are experiencing something that will create cognitive dissonance. Expecting to see images of Appalachia depicted through the media will create tension between their experience and what they assume to be the real. Striking up a friendly conversation and interviewing volunteers at the Fold, it was described that there had been a resurgence of visitors from a younger generation due to images in popular culture. Admittedly, some were disappointed because it was not what they expected.⁸¹ Conflicting narratives present themselves to the visitors because they do not know which version of Appalachia is the truth. For instance, a tourist may venture to the Fold so they can see the popular culture depiction of a negative stereotype such as a hillbilly. The vision of a hillbilly may include characteristics such as: missing teeth, poor hygiene, and being uneducated. Rather, the Fold contains people who are clean, welcoming, and eager to talk about their heritage. Expecting something based on the media perception may provide an inauthentic experience for some due to the inability of associating meaning with the symbols presented to the visitors.

⁸⁰ Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*

⁸¹ Hensley, "Interview"

As personal memories become important to the preservation of the Fold, evoking a real history becomes the focus. The Fold becomes a place some people visit to experience live history based on the stereotypical images they have seen through the media. As the media presents images affecting the broader context of Appalachia, the ideology of the Fold becoming a memory place becomes more pertinent. Contrasting with the ideology that the “real” is dead, experiential sites are gaining in popularity.⁸² While the Fold is not a popular place nationally, it is offering a strategy to turn history into personal memories.⁸³ To illustrate, experiential sites, “provide people with the collective opportunity of having an experiential relationship to a collective or cultural past they did not experience. They evince a popular desire to experience and live history.”⁸⁴ The experience of the Fold may not be authentic in regards to what the Carter Family lived through or the hardships the Carters overcame. Yet, the crux of the location is built on the emotions that the visitors feel while there. Understanding history is important when looking at memory in both a personal and collective nature.

Historians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen examine the role of history in the lives of Americans to understand that, “In an age of commodification the fear that memory is often an obstacle to, rather than a catalyst for, politics and collective action is more than just the conceit of a science fiction film.”⁸⁵ Inferring that Americans are ignorant to the role that history plays in personal narratives⁸⁶ complicates the idea of how memory is constructed and why it plays an important role in defining a specific place or

⁸² Lansburg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*, 33

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Ibid, 142

⁸⁶ Ibid

region. For example, “Many respondents [of Rosenweig and Thelen] blurred the line between “personal” and “national” pasts. Some turned national events into settings for personal stories.”⁸⁷ When experiencing the Fold, the primary way to gather historical information is by having one-on-one conversations with the local visitors. When connecting the experience of the Fold, tourists may have the tendency to incorporate their personal narrative with a narrative they heard while at the Fold, thus blurring the lines between authentic and inauthentic. As these differing narratives perpetuate throughout the region and resonate on a national level, the meaning of the Fold is always changing and people will fail to distinguish the real based on this experiential artifact.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NARRATIVE

Differing narratives perpetuating the meaning of the Fold may diminish the actual meaning that Janette Carter was trying to create. Since the narratives are now becoming more personal due to the attendees re-telling stories of experiences with the Carter Family rather than guided by what the place was trying to create, the memories are entering the realm of commodification. The Fold, focusing on offering an authentic experience to the visitors, may be failing in the aspect of constructing a concrete narrative. The personal narratives, which perpetuate the meaning, substantiate the experience. Moreover, “If people engage, discuss, use, and interpret the past while watching movies and reading books, they grapple even more directly with the past when they investigate family history or do other things that require (rather than just permit) them to confront memories and artifacts.”⁸⁸ Now the question is, how sustainable will the

⁸⁷ Rosenweig & Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*, 22

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 24

Fold be in the future? Interpreting the past through the media becomes important now when trying to define authentic and understand the “real.” If that does not exist, then the Fold would have no meaning.

The idea of collectivity becomes important because of how individuals view cultural identity. Hence, “For many respondents cultural identity became more powerful over time.”⁸⁹ Needing to identify collectively becomes part of the experience of the Fold. The site is focusing on how collective, cultural identity shapes the region since “Such observations about how popular history makers use the past and what they share with professional historians may contradict the conventional wisdom. Yet they are also commonsensical; anyone who reflects on his or her own experience of family and holiday gatherings—or indeed everyday life—will realize how the presence of the past saturates all of us.”⁹⁰ Focusing on how the past saturates the present is important when understanding the region. The media is encouraging people to create a personal connection to experiences that are not theirs by promoting certain ideals that may or may not exist in “real life.”

Personalizing a national narrative deems the location inauthentic in the eyes of some. The need for a personal understanding to resonate becomes the focus of creating a collective and cultural identity. Identifying with a region becomes important regardless of the stereotypes the media portrays because many blur the lines between a personal experience and a memory they experienced through the media to be similar. Experiential places appear to fuel the narratives that the media establishes, rather than creating an oppositional narrative. Briefly, *Prosthetic memories* complicate the distinction between

⁸⁹ Ibid, 56

⁹⁰ Ibid, 178

memory and history.⁹¹ In the case of prosthetic memory, history and memory are, oppositional, meaning they in no way should be related. Often critics of Landsburg state that history and memory are entangled rather than encompassing two different notions. Moreover, *Prosthetic memories* have an experiential quality that shapes the individual's subjectivity and political consciousness.⁹² As a result, there are four distinct characteristics summarized below:

1. They are *not natural* (e.g. the product of a lived experience) but the result of an engagement with a mediated representation
2. They are *experiential* in that they are sensuous memories produced by an experience of mass-mediated representations
3. They are *commodities*, which makes their images and narratives available to people from different national, ethnic, racial, religious, and social backgrounds thus, their social meaning is always being negotiated, and even constructed
4. They have a *pedagogical component* in that they influence the individual's subjectivity and political consciousness, thereby producing a mediated collective identification and the production of potentially counterhegemonic public spheres⁹³

Looking at the four characteristics labeled above, these qualities can be related to the rhetorical nature found at the Carter Family Fold. The created memories are separate from the traditional notions of history. Establishing a commonality allows visiting the

⁹¹ Landsburg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*, 19

⁹² Ibid, 20

⁹³ Ibid, 20-21

Fold easier for tourists, as a sense of nostalgia and tradition has already been created. The idea that memories are commodities or prosthetic, is still pertinent. When the memories become commodities they are relatable to a vast amount of people. Leading to the pedagogical component, the memories, which are now commodities, produce a new form of collective memory that differs from the memories in the past or in history.

Fueling the need for experiential places to depict a favorable image of an experience may or may not connect to a visitor personally. Similar to the ideology of commodification that Karl Marx presents, some argue that memories are following a similar route.⁹⁴ It is stated, “Prosthetic memories are indeed ‘personal’ memories because they derive from engaged and experientially oriented encounters with technologies of memory.”⁹⁵ As personal memories encompass the memories of technology, the experiences of experiential places are deemed unauthentic since it is hard to distinguish between what is real and what is not. It can be argued that “As products of a capitalist system, the images and narratives of the past made available by mass culture are themselves commodities.”⁹⁶ The question persists in regards to the importance of preservation. Rhetorically, the narratives from the creators, the locals, and the tourists construct an identity for this place and its function both inside and outside of Appalachia. I argue this place, the Carter Family Fold, serves as a “dwelling place” for those members of the local community who gather there each week. I am not suggesting that a non-local could consider this home. I do suggest that a visitor needs to submerge him or herself in the culture so they can understand or create their own meaning for this place. Part of the experience is interacting with the local or regular attendees. Interacting requires not only

⁹⁴ Ibid, 143

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ Ibid

talking to them, but sauntering upon the dance floor and trying your hand at clogging.

After a few interactions or a few times in attendance, the Carter Family Fold begins to feel like a place you would like to gather regularly. While some may be mesmerized by nostalgia and trying to experience the feelings of the past, it is important to see how this place functions in the present. The local citizens volunteer their time. A “first-timer” can see how the locals act as a team and encourage fellowship amongst everyone. It is as if this place knows no strangers.

CHAPTER THREE: ATTENDING THE FOLD

As the sun began to disappear behind the mountains, I quickly glanced at the surroundings for familiarity. My grip tightened on the black steering wheel of my Altima and I nervously looked down at my phone. *Okay, great, my 3G service is gone*, I sighed. I was convinced that I had not seen another car in at least 15 minutes. As I forged ahead, I began to calm my nerves by appreciating the aesthetically pleasing surroundings. To my left, there was a stream, which was small, but I envisioned it to contain a multitude of wild life. To my right, I noticed rows of budding trees, and blooming wisteria. I cracked the driver-side window to get some fresh air. Suddenly, the aroma of crisp, mountain air filled the cabin of my car. The cold air was relaxing, as I no longer noticed the heat radiating from my face.

The two-lane road dipped and contained sharp curves as I ventured into what I later learned were part of The Clinch Mountain range. As the road curved to the left, I noticed a crossroads, with a white house sitting at the split. Unfamiliar with the complexities of the road, the sharp curve was hardly noticeable, providing an allusion to both drivers and passengers that the road leads directly into the picturesque house. I am fairly certain someone lived there or at least called that place home at one time, due to the faded red bows tied along the porch. The red contrasts sharply with the white paint. It was refreshing to finally see a sign of civilization.

The road began to open-up, and I saw lighting in the distance. I crossed a bridge and suddenly noticed a small, green sign (see image 3) stating The Carter Family Fold is to my left. I slowed down and turned left, on the road called A.P. Carter Highway. There was no indication for how long this leg of the trip should take me. I do not remember it

being a far distance. The sun had disappeared behind the mountain range, but I noticed a post office to my right, as well as what appeared to be an old factory. As I drove down the highway, there were houses on both my left and my right, yet there were no streetlights. Most of the homes sat on the tops of hills, and I found myself wondering what their winters were like. No more than five minutes later, I had *finally* arrived. My destination was on the left and parking was available on the right. I parallel parked my car onto the gravel strip, to the right of A.P. Carter Highway, careful to make sure all four tires were on the gravel and not the road.

As I opened the driver door and placed both feet on firmly on the gravel, I began taking in the aesthetics of the place I was now going to study – The Carter Family Fold Memorial Music Center. Standing on the street, I noticed the one main building, bigger than the rest with a rustic exterior. This is the music hall. In the middle of the structure there is a sign acknowledging that it is, in fact, The Carter Family Fold. On this sign, it also mentions the names: A.P., Sara and Maybelle Carter. Confirmation that I am in the right place was a guarantee to walk towards the center. Immediately, a male parking attendant, wearing a yellow-green reflective vest, greeted me. Before I can open my mouth to exchange “hellos,” he retorts by asking me a question: “So, where ‘ya from?” It was then I made the decision to pursue this as a project for my thesis. Little did I know I would be greeted with this phrase until I became familiar to the attendees similar to that of a family member.

THE CARTER FAMILY FOLD MEMORIAL MUSIC CENTER

The question remains: What is The Carter Family Fold Memorial Music Center? For the duration of this thesis I refer to The Carter Family Fold Memorial Music Center as the CFF, which translates to Carter Family Fold. The CFF is arguably a tourist destination, which has the intention of being a memorial to pay homage to the original Carter Family music trio. The Carter Family is often recognized as "the first family of country music" and the trio consisted of: Alvin Pleasant (known as A.P.), Sara, and Maybelle Carter. Sara and Maybelle were cousins, and A.P. was married to Sara. The trio is an American Folk group who began recording in 1927, and officially disbanded in 1944. The Carter Family went on to embrace a second generation, consisting of Maybelle and her daughters. While the second generation of the Carter's are important and a focus of the place; the primary intention is to understand how influential the original trio was to the development of commercialized country music.⁹⁷

The CFF opened their doors in 1974 and began hosting music shows on weekends at A.P.'s country store, which is also located on the land and within a short walking distance to the music center.⁹⁸ The country store is now a museum and is open prior to the show and during intermission. Admittance is by donation only. Janette Carter, the daughter of A.P. and Sara Carter, established the CFF as a deathbed promise to her father, A.P. Unfortunately, A.P. did not see the project come to fruition, but Janette made sure his memory and the memories of the original trio lived on. The music center was built in 1976 by local community members and financed by musician Johnny Cash. Founder Janette Carter passed away in 2006, but Rita Forrester, Janette's daughter, now

⁹⁷ The second generation is often referred to as "The Carter Sisters." The group consisted of Maybelle, and her daughters: Anita, June, and Helen

⁹⁸ A.P.'s Country Store is now the Museum which can be seen in image 8

runs the CFF. Weekly, Rita introduces the musicians who come to perform and is often available to chat with tourists and locals for casual and academic conversation. Most notably, Rita can be seen during every performance sitting behind the musicians on the same bench that her mother once sat for the duration of the show (see image 4).

The place boasts an image of authenticity by depicting an image of the region similar to the day when the Carter Family was flourishing. When understanding the Carter Family, one needs to recognize they are an anomaly in old-time music because of the connections they have with the land, people, community and national influence. Before even entering the music center, the land captivates a visitor, and the focus tends to be the preservation of maintaining a heritage, rather than learning about the success that the Carter Family achieved. While there is no denying that there are symbols which represent the family, artifacts tend to be the primary focus in the old country store, now museum, and the original cabin of A.P. Moreover, when tourists hear the term “museum,” it is often assumed that this is a “place” where you can learn more about the family or the matter of interest. The artifacts, which create the space, often do not contain narratives and can simply be seen as “just old stuff.” Consequently, this is not a place someone would go who is unfamiliar with the Carter Family or a place to consider doing archival research about the place or the region of Appalachia. As a result, a visitor must rely on the personal narratives constructed about the family and then differentiate facts from fiction. Recalling stories from memory is an interesting concept because it is hard to envision the past and the storyteller’s conception of what the Fold is supposed to stand for. As different narratives are presented to the public, collective memory is

affected. Collective memory is altering the perceptions of the Fold and the community situated in the greater context of Appalachia.

Recall that the purpose of this thesis is to show that heritage and memory are important aspects of sustaining the CFF, thereby creating a dwelling-place. The rhetoric constructs a narrative for how both tourists and regulars interpret the identity of the CFF. Crafted initially as a memorial, the CFF has now flourished into more. While people still attend the grounds to honor the original Carter Family, they also attend to hear music reminding them of the past. This is where I embrace the phrase “ethos of rhetoric”: “the way discourse is used to transform space and time into ‘dwelling places’ where people can deliberate about and ‘know together’; some matter of interest.”⁹⁹ Keeping this definition in mind, I argue that this place, the Carter Family Fold functions rhetorically as a “dwelling place” or a “second home” to those who gather there.

RHETORIC, CREDIBILITY, AND DWELLING PLACE

Weekly, citizens and tourists gather at the CFF, engage in fellowship and share experiences, which help construct identity, both personal and collective. The second part of the definition of “ethos of rhetoric” states, “such dwelling places define the grounds, the abodes or habitats, where a person’s ethics and moral character take form and develop.”¹⁰⁰ Specifically, I would like to note the latter part of the sentence discussing ethics and moral character. I have been attending semi-regularly since 2011 observing and interacting with attendees in hopes of gaining credibility as a writer. This signals that this study involves both ethnography and auto-ethnography. This choice was made so readers can “experience” the feeling through text and give the citizens a voice. I am

⁹⁹ Hyde, *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, xiv

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

repeating memories told to me and interpreting it academically. Rhetoric is the primary and guiding focus for how this place sustains as a site/sight of memory and history, but most importantly, as a “dwelling place.”

The CFF is a memorial and a “dwelling place” that functions as a second “home” for the local citizens who gather there each week. The CFF is important to study because it is aiming to achieve the status of a memorial with the incorporation of the historic photos and events that took place at the CFF. Currently it functions more as a memory place because “Memory places cultivate the being and participation together of strangers, but strangers who appear to have enough in common to be co-traversing the place.”¹⁰¹ Articulating memories is a task that is very interpretive, but it is imperative to understand the role that the CFF plays in the public sphere. While presenting itself as a memorial, it provides strangers with the opportunity to pay homage to the legendary country icons. The nature of what the CFF means constitutes its preservation. While the mission of the CFF is to preserve old-time music, it is full of symbolism. Functioning as a memory place, strangers are interlocked with local citizens conversing, at first glance, about a commonality, which is the Carter Family. Looking deeper, one realizes a sense of nostalgia and memory has drawn the group together. Discussing individual stories with people you do not know is part of the experience.

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING THE CFF

The CFF is the epitome of the preservation of the legacy of the Carter Family and their music. This is a place and space that can be interpreted from many perspectives. Janette Carter is the founder of the CFF as well as the daughter of A.P. and Sara Carter,

¹⁰¹ Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, *Places of Public Memory*, 7

two of the founding members of The Carter Family. As the music became a defining characteristic in the community, performing at the store A.P. once owned was no longer an option. Janette began building benches and bleachers to accommodate guests. Plunging into debt, she asked her mother Sara to loan her money. Sara refused.¹⁰²

In *Living with Memories*, Janette speaks openly about her rebellious nature. Regardless of her lack of support, an effort was made in establishing a memorial since it was a promise to her father.¹⁰³ Music began on August 24, 1974 at the old store.¹⁰⁴ Local media had published stories about the new event. The remainder of the advertising was left up to her.¹⁰⁵ Anxiously waiting the evening, Janette had a certain mission in mind for the location, a mission that is still in place at the present time. To illustrate, she promised her dad, A.P. “If it be thy will, God, let me succeed. I promise you I’ll keep rules to keep the shows orderly—no drinking, no profanity. They will be a memorial to my family, the Carters, and to their kind of music.”¹⁰⁶

The memorial is a place to preserve memory of the legacy that the Carter Family left. The old-time music the Carters had established still leaves a lasting impact on society since they are iconic figures that the community can still identify with. Even when I visited the CFF, I can now say I have my own set of memories regarding this place. Growing crowds encouraged Janette to expand the music location. Regardless of criticism she faced when opening the CFF in the small community, the music hall, which

¹⁰² The exact story can be found in Janette Carter’s *Living with Memories*. The story will be on page 72 but was summarized for this thesis

¹⁰³ Carter, *Living with Memories*, 72

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

is now used today, was opened in 1976.¹⁰⁷ Seeing the stage decorated commemorating the accomplishments that both generations of the Carter family achieved brings a smile to faces of the audience members.

Promising to preserve heritage is a daunting and stimulating task; outsiders wonder if the preservation is authentic or if the narrative being presented is only formulating the ideal. Janette Carter openly discusses in her book, *Living with Memories*, the struggles she ensued personally and professionally. Overcoming her tumultuous obstacles, she states, “Financially speaking, my greatest help is Johnny Cash. But there’s other help besides money. I’ve always had so little, yet I feel I’m the richest woman in Poor Valley.”¹⁰⁸ Circulating memories symbolize the importance of maintaining the CFF. The primary focus on narratives presented in the CFF embodies personal successes, failures and memories pertaining to the Carter Family. Some wonder if the CFF is a capitalist venture, while others truly believe that the CFF is doing everything it can to maintain the heritage true to Poor Valley, situated in Appalachia.

Re-evaluating the aspect of tourism, Johnny Cash, an iconic musician was married to June Carter.¹⁰⁹ June Carter was the daughter of Maybelle, a founding member of the first generation of the Carter family. Connecting with the heritage of Poor Valley, Johnny Cash financially supported the CFF. His presence did more for maintaining the heritage and increasing tourism of that region.¹¹⁰ “Johnny Cash elevated the level of the Fold with his presence, his name, his talent, and his money. He gave full performances

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 78

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 79

¹⁰⁹ Zwonitzer & Hirshberg, *Will You Miss Me When I’m Gone?*

¹¹⁰ Carter, *My Clinch Mountain Home*, 39

through the years, including his last one and would never take a dime for it.”¹¹¹ While Cash did not intentionally use his celebrity to take away from the meaning of the CFF, some tourists do connect the Carter Family Memorial to his presence. Acknowledging that the Carter Family is pertinent shows that the narratives presented about the memorial vary, based on the individual perspective of the tourist.

A PLACE OF HERITAGE AND MEMORY

The CFF serves as a memorial to pay homage to a legendary old-time music trio while trying to maintain authenticity by depicting an image of the region similar to the day when the Carter Family was flourishing. Clearly then, "The Carter Family never realized what an impact they had on the music world. All they were trying to do was to provide for their families, but they brought happiness beyond measure to millions of people, both here and the world over.”¹¹² Unlike traditional celebrity status, the Carter Family did not aim to achieve iconic musician status and to some this may be their appeal.

As different narratives are presented to the public, this is affecting collective memory. Collective memory is altering the perceptions of the CFF and the community situated in the greater context of Appalachia. Focusing on memory, people have different expectations, and with the local population decreasing there is fear that the memories will be lost or the oral histories will be translated incorrectly. As imperfections begin mounting, rearticulating the history and memory of the CFF, one may wonder why this place aims to be a “step back in time” rather than focusing on modernizing aesthetically

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Galloway, "Home Of The Hoedown: Carter Family's Fold Is The Core Of Country Music."

or creating one narrative to present to the local culture and tourists, thus changing the meaning and purpose of the CFF.

In order to preserve old-time music, Janette maintains, “Daddy didn’t want the modern, It’s all right for others, but not for us. That’s not our purpose here. I believe that Daddy’s kind of music brings out the true talent of an artist. If you’ve got an electric instrument you can cover up a lot with all that racket.”¹¹³ Defining talents in terms of old-time music may be a limiting construct. To musicians who still practice old-time music, playing at the CFF is an achievement. Regardless of how much or little money you make, standing on stage, at the memorial of musical influences, is a pivotal moment in a musician’s career. Feeling the emotion throughout the music allows a sense of fellowship and most importantly an increased sense of heritage.

While at the CFF, looking around the room, seeing the smiling faces of the patrons, I could not help but think, *oh how my Granny would have loved this place*. Janette claims, “People like the old music because it’s real and sincere. It’s not something where you keep repeating the same words for four or five minutes. Songs first of all is poetry. Then you put the poetry to music. The songs my Mommy and Daddy and Maybelle sang had depth to ‘em, they had feelin’ behind ‘em. They meant what they sang.”¹¹⁴ Relating to the music embodies a sense of connection and feeling to the location. Deriving meaning from particular narratives complicates the meaning of the CFF. There is no true meaning of what the location means since it means something different to every individual who passes through the doors. As the meaning is constructed individually, the impact it has on collective memory is worth exploration. The CFF is a

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Ibid

place memorializing the Carter Family. The legacy the family has left in American music may never be fully understood.¹¹⁵ As the local population declines, there is fear that the stories will no longer be expressed and the meaning of the location will lose the symbolism. As oppositional narratives regarding the CFF are found in society, this memorial, now turned memory place, will situate itself differently in the broader context of Appalachia.

TOURISM AND THE CONSTRUCT OF PLACE

A visitor to the CFF is important when defining what the place means in relation to memory. The location is essential to the experience of the CFF since the experience is a culturally defining concept. Here we see that “Cultural industries are concerned in part with the re-presentation of the supposed history and culture of the place.”¹¹⁶ While the CFF is a memorial to the original Carter Family and the sites on the property, which preserve the history by incorporating actual artifacts used by the family, some would argue that the memorial concept created by the CFF is substantiating commercialism. Reviewing the mission of the CFF, there is an effort trying to keep the heart and heritage alive. According to the local citizens and some tourists, this place has done its best to keep commercialism out by relying on the artifacts of memory to incorporate nostalgia and tradition. The re-presentation of the culture is set to invigorate the visitors so they feel a personal connection to their heritage and their roots. The feeling of connection validates that the incorporation of various artifacts articulating nostalgia is authentic.

¹¹⁵ Carter, *My Clinch Mountain Home*

¹¹⁶ Urry, *Consuming Places*, 154

The re-presentation of history becomes important when looking at the actual architecture of the CFF. While the land is restricted to a small stretch of road on Clinch Mountain, the conservation of the land and incorporation of using this land as a memorial becomes significant.¹¹⁷ Thus, “Normally conservation is sought in relationship to some aspect of the built environment which is taken to stand for or represent the locality in question.”¹¹⁸ The locality of the CFF remains true to the narrative presented to tourists. While the town where the CFF is located is Hiltons rather than Maces Springs, the original settling place of the Carters, this does not devalue the experience of the CFF. Primarily, the visitors are local and engage with the community on a personal level. They are born there, go to the same church for their entire lives, and are buried in a local family cemetery in that town. After my first visit, I was more than willing to mingle and listen to what people had to say. I was eagerly inquiring about why this held so much meaning for them. Furthermore, the CFF was built to extenuate the values of the community in efforts to preserve heritage and maintain the legacy the Carter Family left.¹¹⁹ Encompassing the narrative the CFF created, local citizens can share their experiences with tourists who are unfamiliar with the area. There is a common bond between the citizens and the tourists. I believe this common bond is the idea of tradition and nostalgia.

People unfamiliar with the CFF believe this site is solely a memorial and/or a museum and the information presented should incorporate only the mission of Janette Carter. While visiting the CFF, it became evident that the attendees play a significant part in constructing the memory and the history of the CFF. The attendees and volunteers want to talk about their personal connection to the Carter Family and recall stories from

¹¹⁷ Urry, *Consuming Places*, 154

¹¹⁸ Zwonitzer & Hirshberg, *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone?*

¹¹⁹ Carter, *Living with Memories*

their youth. Simply, the stories go beyond the mission set forth beyond Janette Carter. If one was to write a historical perspective, talking to the regular attendees and volunteers is a must because this place is full of oral history. The CFF incorporates nostalgia and tradition to entice visitors to gather and participate on Saturday evenings. Part of the experience is the feeling that you are stepping back in time, experiencing things generations before may have experienced. The architecture of the building is simplistic, embodying the framework of a standard barn. The décor, including pictures of the Carter Family and old signs depicting the change in price, allows the visitor to feel they are experiencing something authentic. Thus, “The enduring significance of symbols of place and location particularly with the decline in the popularity of the international modern style of architecture and the emergence of local and vernacular styles; and the resurgence of locally oriented culture and politics especially around campaigns for the conservation of the built and physical environment.”¹²⁰ The narratives of Janette Carter, the people who gather there, and first-time attendees are what enhance the authenticity of the environment. Since a connection of nostalgia and tradition has already been established, the tourists can identify with the local culture because this is part of the expectation. The museum on the land represents the history of the Carter Family. The actual CFF itself represents something much more. Moreover, “Much of the ‘nostalgia’ and ‘tradition’ may in fact be invented by these conservation groups who articulate a set of particular aesthetic interests often based on the concept of ‘community’.”¹²¹ The CFF, the stage for the music playing, helps keep the tradition of old-time music alive. It is also reinforcing the tradition of the local community and the broader context of Appalachia. Suddenly,

¹²⁰ Urry, *Consuming Places*, 153

¹²¹ Ibid, 157

this location is much more than a memorial and a memory place because some individuals can relate to this location differently as it is focusing on the broader context of traditions in Appalachia and how the community remembers.

The CFF is not a place where tourists are worried about fitting into the tradition of the region because they visit this place to understand the memory and the history associated with this land. The Carter Family did not aim to achieve celebrity when they were creating music.¹²² Achieving iconic status was unexpected and the family continued to live their lives modestly. A.P. maintained a small store in the community and some would refer to him as a recluse, thus reiterating his humble behavior and attitude.¹²³ The Carter Family has achieved iconic status in both the local community and the region of Appalachia. The preservation of their memory and history is pertinent to the collective memory and identity of the region.

The collective memory and public culture that has shaped this region acts as a bond between generations. Understanding folklore allows scholars to understand different aspects socially, politically and historically of this region. This tells us that, “Ultimately American folklore will take its place alongside American literature, American politics, the history of American ideas, and other studies that illuminate the American mind.”¹²⁴ The various images of Appalachia may be romantic in a sense. Many believe the images illuminate the American mind. Folk music serves as a text, which identifies Appalachia as a place and serves as a rhetorical performance, justifying authenticity of that region. Singing the lyrics speak to public culture and collective memory through commercialization both on a local and a national level. Generating commercial success,

¹²² Zwonitzer & Hirshberg, *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone?*

¹²³ Ibid

¹²⁴ Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory & American Roots Music*, 167

the songs have complicated the identity of Appalachia because they are continually offering a vast array of people a perspective that they will interpret differently. There are variations in the interpretations of the songs, thus complicating the role of the songs in which the people of Appalachia will identify with. Since the songs of Appalachia have both commercial and regional value, there may be differences when the people are identifying with the region of Appalachia itself.

Celebrating heritage is something that all generations can appreciate regardless of the interpretations depicted about the region. While some may visit the CFF because of mainstream depictions, their expectations may not be met since they encounter a humble crowd eager to discuss their personal connection to the CFF and the Carter Family. Embodying the ideology of what it means to be hard working, the connection between the tourists and locals is crucial for success. The songs played in the CFF can resonate directly with the local citizens and the tourists. Encompassing a broad topic such as love or heartache generates commercial attention, which people on a national level can identify with. The regional success or a local success of songs may be site-specific dealing with issues of family feuds between two neighbors or something as simple as a missing family pet, yet it will be poetically portrayed.

In order to have a deeper understanding of how the CFF functions as more than a memorial brings me to a primary focus of my thesis. Examining how the CFF functions as more than a memorial, the readers will be introduced to local citizens, family friends, members of the Carter family and first-time visitors to understand what this place means to them.

SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY IN PRACTICE

The road narrowed, and the sun was setting behind the Clinch Mountain Range. It was early evening. Fresh rain and the smell of mountain dew filled the open car windows. Driving down the two-lane, narrow road, right-hand on the steering wheel while the cool wind was blowing through the fingers on the left hand, which was sticking out the window. *This drive could not be more peaceful.* Familiarity soon ensued as I saw the parking attendant waving me into the gravel lot right in front of the memorial music center. Stepping out of my car, I could soon feel the dampness from the gravel on my thin flat shoes. Camera and digital recorder in tow, I was ready to begin the interview process.

. The memorial music center is brightly lit. The smell of homemade food and seeing friendly faces eager to engage in conversation is welcoming. The windows can be raised during the summer months to provide additional seating or cool air. Often, regulars will remark about how this *place* did not have air conditioning so the tourists should consider themselves *lucky*. Remarks such as that are pivotal when understanding the meaning behind the CFF. It shows the transgression and re-development. However, it shows that longevity is *normal* for regular attendees.

Wood floors help project the sound of the double steel taps on the Cloggers shoes. Clogging is just as much a site when visiting this place. Whether it is your first time clogging or your hundredth, regulars are more than willing to show you a basic technique.

Hands sweating and body temperature rising, I made my way down to the floor.

The floor, conveniently located in front of the stage would diminish attention of my horrible dancing. I approached the man wearing the red cowboy hat. “Excuse

me sir, I stammered, would you mind showing me some moves?” Next thing I knew, he grabbed my hand and led me to the floor.

Looking around, it is easy to notice all of the memorabilia, covering the walls. This memorabilia helps construct an identity for this place but most importantly helps strengthen the familial bonds. The name Janette Carter can be seen from the mission statement, which is placed on the left of the stage, or her name can also be seen on the signs, which once likely lived outside. This sign sticks out because it is handwritten. The writing offers a sense of personality but it shows the level of personal investment when creating or shaping the identity of this place.

On two walls within the memorial music center there are signs, which are hand painted on wood. They state, “Janette Carter, Olde-Time Music – Every Saturday.” Prices ranged from one dollar for children up to four dollars for an adult. There is a sharp contrast from past to present considering the fee is now ten dollars for adults. The signs are damaged from the weather but offer a certain amount of charm (see image 5). The worn wood tells a story similar to the story described in the first chapter. The signs could be representative of the hardships Janette Carter faced while constructing the CFF.

The stage is the focal point of the memorial music center. It is your typical theatrical setting. The chairs are stuck in the ground, one row rising above the other. However, the decoration of the stage is given special attention. Aside from the musical equipment, a bench lines the back of the stage. Occasionally, one of Rita’s dogs, named Lefty, can be seen sleeping on the bench while the music is playing and the musicians are jamming on the stage.

“I recall the days when Momma used to sit on that bench, there. If the musicians got rowdy, Momma would hit them in the back of their legs with ‘er cane.

Everyone knew Momma meant business when they were set to perform on this stage”¹²⁵

Memories such as this help facilitate the memory and identity of the CFF. More importantly, memories such as this one help visitors and the younger generation of locals to construct their own narrative of what this *place* is. Most importantly, memories help construct this place as a “second-home” because it shows the level of comfort regulars have not only with each other, but also with the musicians who are there to entertain.

While the stage is a critical fixture of the CFF, the decorations, aside from the bench are equally important (see image 6). The walls are lined with personal photographs consisting of the original Carter Family trio: A.P., Sara, and Maybelle. The photographs show the progression of the future generations including but not limited to: Maybelle’s daughters, June, and Anita, Johnny Cash, Marty Stewart, and others. Behind the personal photographs is a silhouette painting of A.P., Sara, and Maybelle Carter. To the left of the stage is a silhouette painting of Janette, the founder.

ATTENDEE PARTICIPATION

Rita Forrester announced my interactive station during the introductions. She stated that a “young girl” was working on a college project and help from the Carter Fold Family would be appreciated. The word *family* emphasizes why this place holds such significance and importance within the Appalachian Community. Rita announcing my

¹²⁵ Rita Forrester is the daughter of Janette Carter. Janette Carter was the founder of the Carter Family Fold. This is a direct quote from an interview conducted by Lora Smith.

project made attendees and tourists aware that a bond had been built here. Since these people are genuinely interested in maintaining the traditions and values, holding onto these traditions shows the importance of nostalgia when looking at how this place is constructed. Memories of both the past and present influence the meaning behind this place. Simply, acknowledging me as a new family member to the CFF accomplished the setting of a bond amongst the local citizens and the tourists who gathered that week and in week's prior.

My interactive station was set up and remained on a table designated by Rita with hopes of generating attention netting results. The table holds the Bible of Janette Carter as a tribute to her. While my interactive station did generate attention, attendees were hesitant to write their thoughts and/or experiences. Recall, the question posed was "What Does This Place Mean To You?" Mostly attendees were curious of what others had to say and would confirm a memory to me verbally. For instance, an attendee wrote he recalls when "Mother" Maybelle would play the harp with "some kinda' feather – musta' been a turkey."¹²⁶ Watching a musical performer use a bird feather would leave quite the impression. Contrasting or disconfirming the memory, Rita Forrester read that statement and laughed. She stated. "No, I don't think that's correct. I couldn't picture Aunt Maybelle doing that. But, I could see Grandma Sara doing that. You know, she did raise some peacocks on the farm."¹²⁷ Instances such as this emphasize the old fashioned charm

¹²⁶ This is another direct quote from an attendee at the Fold. The quote was added as emphasis to prove that memories differ from person to person.

¹²⁷ This is a response formulated by Rita Forrester, responding to a memory that proved to be false. The response is included to show the difference amongst memories between individuals. While the context is accurate, it should be noted that small details differ. This helps emphasize the notion of how collective and individual memories help construct the identity of the CFF.

of this place. Memory is a significant factor and memories help construct the meaning that construct this place on both an individual and a collective level.

As attendees would read other written messages, some felt compelled to write. Others waited until my return so they could ask more detailed questions about this project's purpose. I found myself asking attendees if I could write down their responses on the interactive station and most of them said they would prefer that. This brings me to a brief discussion about not considering my audience. While their memories are important, I did not think attendees would be hesitant to record their own memories. Attendees were more confident having me, the "primary investigator," record their answers often in short hand, rather than write them down or be recorded.¹²⁸ While I was not concerned with grammar, or spelling, the fear of "miscommunication" guided the attendee's decision. It was heartbreaking to hear that my college education was intimidating. Trying to humanize myself as much as possible, I explained that I had family from the Appalachian region and I found this *place* by chance. I knew this *place* was something special so it was my goal to record their thoughts and memories to see how this functions as a "second-home." After this explanation, people became more confident with communicating face-to-face. I still recorded their answers on my interactive station, however. While I was recording their answers, it is important to note that I did my best to engage them in the process. I would ask the attendee if they would like their answer recorded in marker or pen. If it was marker, I asked if they had a color

¹²⁸ I am not speaking to the level of intelligence or making judgments about the demographics of the region. I am expressing a valid concern with as much care as possible. It should be noted that I have nothing but respect for these individuals and have spent a significant amount of time interacting and getting to know them on a "deeper" level.

preference. Surprisingly, every interviewed attendee was willing to give me a color preference. In case there is any lingering curiosity, red and blue were the most favored.

The answers recorded on the interactive station followed a theme. Several answers referred to this *place* as a home. Other answers, often repeated are listed below:

- *Watch flat-foot dance*
- *Us regulars like to keep up with everyone*
- *The music 4 the people*
- *Fellowship – life-long friends and good music*
- *Family friends & fun dance times!*
- *Love Cater Folde becuse bring memery*
- *To keep the tradition alive*
- *Love the Carter's and Johnny Cash!*
- *C good people – something fun to do. All about family thanks – roy*
- *Used to not been covered been coming since "ground"*

In order to keep the authenticity, these are exact quotes, copied and pasted from the interactive station.¹²⁹ The aforementioned ten statements were chosen because they encompass the feelings or the main points of the other responses. Some responses were not included because I could not read the handwriting. The interactive station also included some scribbles, a few line drawings, and a few items that were crossed out. Some of the crossed out items were names or were improper spellings.

Additionally, it should be noted that two statements appeared to come from “first-timers” or tourists. One stated that the CFF was “found by luck while driving” and the

¹²⁹ These quotes were chosen because they represented a majority of what was said on the interactive station. The grammar and spelling is exact.

other stated “found it by Google the carter’s.”¹³⁰ Again, the spelling and grammar are exact. While it is a clear assumption that these responses were in fact tourists or “first-timers,” it is important to note they could have been reflecting on their first time. Often attendees would specify how long they have been coming, but I do not want to assume. This information only adds to the construction of the identity created when visiting this *place*. It shows that a level of individualism helps construct this as “home.”

While the interactive station was not as fruitful as I had hoped, it still provided insight to attendee’s thoughts and feelings when I was not present. Moreover, it provided answers to strengthen my claim of why this *place* is or ought to be considered a “second-home” or “dwelling place” to those who gather each week.

RITA FORRESTER

Driving to the CFF, I knew this time was going to be different. Tonight was the night I was finally going to land my interview with Rita Forrester. Persistence has to pay off eventually, right? I have had a few conversations with Rita, the now-owner of the CFF, but never had the opportunity to interview her for this project. Let us be honest, never had I worked up the courage to ask!

Stepping onto the gravel, I checked to make sure my car tires were off the road. I acknowledged the parking attendants with a quick smile and walked into the memorial music center. Immediately, I walked out. *I can’t do this, not now*. Pulling myself together, I moseyed out to the museum. Maybe if I talk to a familiar and friendly face my confidence will increase. Sure enough, I open the door bypassing the request for

¹³⁰ Spelling and grammar are exact. This interview was found by “luck”. I was approaching people in the audience, asking, “what does this place mean to you?” This couple told me it was their first time and that they found it via Google.

donations and am greeted by Ray Carter. Ray celebrated his 82 birthday in March 2014. Since my first visit to the CFF with friends in 2011, I have always made sure to visit Ray. Ray Carter is arguably one of my favorite people who volunteers at the CFF. We make eye contact, “well look here, come sit with me and let’s chat.” We made our way to the white rocking chairs, which are usually outside on the porch (see image 7). Tonight the rocking chairs are inside the museum because of the inclement weather this season. Ray usually does not sit down during his shift at the museum, but the museum was empty tonight (see image 8). Slowly my anxiety diminished and I asked for advice about how to talk with “Miss Rita.” Ray laughed and said, “Honey, you jus’ gotta go talk to her. I known her my entire life – you’ll be fine.” Reassured, I left the rockers and headed out the front door.

Telling myself, “Deep breaths Lora, talking to “Miss Rita” is going to be fine,” I see another familiar face, Peggy Hensley. She is another person I tend to gravitate towards. She is a local and volunteers each week. We have corresponded a few times via email for this project throughout the years, but we have also developed a friendship. Peggy is the perfect person to establish a connection with to “land” my interview with “Miss Rita.” Sure enough, Peggy pointed me in the right direction. Relieved, I would finally get a half-hour, one-on-one with “Miss Rita” after she introduced the show. She kept true to her word and we entered her office, which is on the right side, behind the stage. Music playing in the background, and iPhone audio recording, my long-awaited interview would come to fruition.

Reflecting on my experience, it now seems childish to get nervous when interviewing the now-owner. Recently, the Fold came under some controversy and this

will be discussed in the conclusion. However, I believe this controversy and lack of communication on my part made landing this interview much more difficult than needed. Once I explained that I was not there to “critique” the Fold or criticize the people and their archival practices, the conversation flowed. I explained I am here to understand how this *place* functions as a “second-home” to those who gather here. I could see her eyes light up and her shoulders began to relax. The pre-approved thirty-minute discussion turned into an hour-long discussion. Do take note of the shift in language. It was no longer an interview but a discussion reflecting upon memory and nostalgia. Most importantly, it was an opportunity for her to tell me what this *place* means to her.

When I was small, people would knock on our door constantly lookin’ for the Carter family. And I grew up thinkin’ that, that was probably the way everybody was, that was the case with all the rest of our neighbors—but it wasn’t. You know? These people were lookin’ for the history and the roots of the music. And if you think about what the Carter family did, they laid the groundwork of American music¹³¹

Occasionally pausing, a nostalgic expression appeared on her face. Her eloquent words show the similarities between her narrative and the narrative of those who gather there each week. Whether you are a tourist or a regular, people come for the music and the history. It is an added bonus when you make friends with other attendees and build a familial bond. The history and the music are the initial factor, which drives people to gather here. Rita continued to discuss the significance of her family, but began to discuss how the Carter’s were ahead of their time.

¹³¹ This is an exact quote from Rita Forrester. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s iPhone and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

What my family did was so unique and so unusual for mountain people who live such an isolated life. To go out in to the world and do what they did, and you think about women in the twenties...They didn't have careers outside the home, especially not in this part of the country, back in the mountains. My grandmother Sara and Maybelle were the first two ladies to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame and that's quite a statement ¹³²

I particularly enjoyed this statement because it shows the tenacity this family had to pursue their dreams of country music. Attendees would joke how the Carter Family almost did not become a musical trio due to unforeseen circumstances when they were headed to Bristol to record. The journey was 30 miles from Maces Springs to Bristol, mostly on unpaved roads. Maybelle was eight months pregnant and A.P. had to persuade her to participate and emphasized that her attendance was pivotal. Not only was Maybelle uncomfortable, but adding to her stress they had two flat tires. Every thing that could have gone wrong, did.¹³³ The trio persevered and now has received iconic status decades later. Continuing with the reflection of how the trio came to fruition, Rita and I began discussing, *how* Janette decided to start Saturday music shows.

We spent a lot of time entertain' the folks that would come to visit us. And mom said, she waited until after my brother and I had graduated high school, because she was a stay-at-home-mom and raised us as a single mom. But she said, 'I'm gonna' fulfill that promise that I made to my dad' and all she had was the little store that he ran which was *the* grocery next door that's now the museum. So she

¹³² This is an exact quote from Rita Forrester. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith's iPhone and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

¹³³ This is a story commonly re-told by many attendees both family and friends at the Fold. It can be found in various biographies of the Carter Family. I chose to include the story from my memory, trying my hand at offering an auto-ethnographic lens.

just decided to have music shows on Saturday, and we all thought she had lost her mind, completely.¹³⁴

This memory was one of the last recorded during my time with Rita. I could hear myself laughing quietly when Rita said she thought her mother had lost her mind to establish these music shows. A fear was that this project would not be successful because *how many people are really going to travel deep in the mountains to see music?* Little did they know, decades later, that this place would become a “dwelling place”, or a “second-home” to those who want to enjoy fellowship, history, and music.

Rhetorically, Rita constructed a similar narrative for the CFF that her mother and founder Janette did. Rita saw her grandfather A.P. as a father-figure rather than the iconic musician he was. In numerous interviews she states, “I really...pause...just really worshipped practically, my granddad.” Consequently, to Rita, this place does serve as a second-home or “dwelling-place.” She watched her mother build the CFF from the ground up so the symbolism of the CFF reminds her of her childhood and the memories of the past. Rita refers to the CFF as *home* for the simple reason of food and home cooking. Recalling the memory of her mother, Rita states, “Mom was a firm believer in...food as a way of making everyone feel welcome and loved.”¹³⁵ To Janette food was something people could gather and enjoy fellowship around as it was a commonality that would bring people together. After all, people did have to eat. Incorporating the notion of *home* further, Rita said,

¹³⁴ This is an exact quote from Rita Forrester. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s iPhone and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

¹³⁵ This is an exact quote from Rita Forrester. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s iPhone and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

Food was an essential part of...making that experience [of visiting the CFF] warm and welcoming – she kind of wanted the music shows to feel like you were coming into the Carter Family’s house, into their home and you know you don’t come into a home unless there’s food too.¹³⁶

As a result, the notion of *togetherness* when creating an environment to play and perform music became critical. In order to create an environment that felt like *home* Rita explained, the CFF needed to allow

Families [to] come...everybody from Grandma, Grandpa, right down to the little babies in arms. And everybody be in a safe and happy place and that it be affordable so families could make it here...together...everybody could come together.¹³⁷

Proudly, Rita explains that the CFF is a safe environment where everyone looks out for each other because blood or not, they are *family*. While Rita is the executive director of the CFF, she practices great humility. Rita is a strong woman who is keeping the memory of her family alive by not only cultivating a memorial but by crafting a memory place that has turned into a “dwelling place” for the community.

RAY CARTER

I recall my first visit to the Fold – it was winter 2011 and my former roommate Amber came to visit. I was trying to find a new academic project but I was having a bad weekend. Two days earlier, I received my first rejection letter from a doctoral program at my dream school. Trust me, the last thing I wanted to do was go to middle-of-no-where-

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

Appalachia and introduce myself to *strangers*. After some persuasion and the promise that we would not stay *long*, Amber, my current roommate Hayden and I began the journey on U.S. Route 421.

After the ritual of being asked where we were from twice, we made our way into the museum. Amber pulled out a ten-dollar bill and slipped it into the jar mouthing, “I got this dude” as the money fell to the bottom. Standing awkwardly at the front door, we looked around in awe. *Where do we even start? Who are the people in the pictures?* I make eye contact with this man; he is fairly skinny, probably in his early seventies and a smile slowly purses across his lips. “Oh LORD, what did *I* do to deserve this? Three gorgeous women have entered the museum coming to see *me*? Come on o’er here, young ladies!” the man exclaimed.¹³⁸ This was the moment we were formally introduced to Ray Carter.

Biographically, Ray is 82 years young, a former military man and married for several decades (see image 9). Ray left the Clinch Mountains but came back soon after “the war” because it was *home*. I label him as the storyteller because not only does he know a great amount of historical information about the Carter Family, he has so many personal narratives that he is willing to share. Ray jokes, “that’s another reason they put me out here – they know I’ll talk to anybody that wants to talk.”¹³⁹ When he speaks, you can see the passion in his eyes and hear the love for both the people and the community in his voice. To him, the CFF is *home*. It is a place where he can reminisce and “make up

¹³⁸ Carter, “Interview”

¹³⁹ This is an exact quote from Ray Carter. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on March 29, 2014.

for the years he lost.”¹⁴⁰ In 1972, Ray came back to the states but he has only been opening the museum for the last 5 years. When you ask him how long he has been volunteering his time, he is quick to mention “but I been comin’ over there (pointing his hand towards the location of the music center) long before that.”¹⁴¹

The memories that Ray discusses with the attendees of the CFF help label it as a memory place. His memory relies on his symbolic support with the language and his recollection of the ritualistic performances. Recalling performances before the music center was built, Ray explained, “we’d lay carpet pieces on the ground and [be] sittin’ on the things...pause...but I had two white lawn chairs, one for me and my wife...pause...and when it would rain outside the water would come in between your feet.” Needing some clarification, I asked, “Wait, the music wasn’t in a building? Did it have a roof?” Ray explained that the music center did have roof but “it [the music center] was a shed mostly with a little stage, pot heaters on the floor which would get shut off when the dancers came on—so ya know the rest of us would be freezin’ sittin’ up there watchin’ the band.”¹⁴² I was later told the floors were laid in 2004 or 2005.

After many visits to the CFF, I developed a friendship with Ray. When I would take my friends and family members to this place, a visit with Ray was always on the list. Recalling one of the many interviews I did with Ray, I asked him to re-tell stories to my mother. As music from the Carter Family was playing in the background, I asked “do you

¹⁴⁰ Throughout the many visits to the CFF, Ray would mention he missed home, inferring volunteering was a way to “make up” for the time he spent away

¹⁴¹ This is an exact quote from Ray Carter. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

¹⁴² This is an exact quote from Ray Carter. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 1, 2014.

think you could tell my mom that one story about how the Carter's used to come play at your school?" As the smile widened across his face, Ray began to speak,

Yeah...at my elementary school, they [the Carter Family] used to come o'er and play [music]. My grandfather was the superintendent and he'd ask my mother to feed 'em [the Carter Family] every time they come o'er --- and she'd do it...pause...until I was twelve years old, they'd be comin' o'er...¹⁴³

Knowing that I would ask him to elaborate on this memory, Ray then followed up by stating, "and that's the reason I open this [the museum] up...Because I knew their family, and I explain about their family—somethin' most people can't do probably."

Seeing the Carter Family perform in the schools was one thing, but laughing about the time A.P. Carter visited his home was more monumental.¹⁴⁴ Casually mentioning his mother's eagerness to quickly provide dinner by capturing a yard chicken to cook for dinner and then complaining about how she wished she had more time, shows the humble nature of this iconic family.¹⁴⁵ Rather than retelling the same story of who the Carter Family was and why they are important, Ray provides insight to his personal experiences with the Carter Family. Focusing on personal interaction, rather than music, provides a different context for the meaning of the CFF. Recalling memories from his childhood seems natural. Rather than questioning the validity of his memory, I admit I was enticed because of the passion evoked when reminiscing. Rhetorical narratives

¹⁴³ This story was re-told to my mother, Cindy Smith on March 29, 2014. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith's audio recorder and later transcribed

¹⁴⁴ Ibid

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

provided by Ray enhance the meaning of the CFF and help construct its identity not only as a memory place but as a “dwelling place” or *home*.

SECONDARY INTERVIEWS

Since my first visit, Ray is *always* the first person I visit. I, myself, partake in a particular ritual during each visit. To account for this the remaining interviews will be done in a particular order representing the order in which I visit them. Starting at the museum with Ray, followed by a quick walk to visit Barney at A.P.’s cabin, and then back to the main music center to purchase my ticket from Peggy. When intermission approaches, I walk to the souvenir stand to speak with Flo and then begin searching the crowd for both regulars and those who look like they are first time attendees.

BURDETTE “BARNEY” MCCONNELL

Strolling across the gravel parking lot, I walk along the edge, slightly in the grass to avoid contact with the moving vehicles. Looking around, I stop to take a picture of the blooming flowers growing up the backside of the cabin (see image 10). *This is my favorite time of year --- spring*. Fresh rain has dampened the ground. Suddenly, a wet nose hits the palm of my left hand, which I have kept at my side. I look down and it is Lefty, Rita Forrester’s dog. Lefty can often be seen sleeping on the bench, located on the stage while the musicians are performing. Rolling my eyes but glad for the familiarity, I reach down and pet him. *Boy, you really do smell like a stinky, wet dog*. As Lefty trots off in search of more human affection, I realize I am at my destination – the cabin of A.P. Carter.

I met Barney in 2012. Rocking back and forth, proudly wearing a Carter Family Fold Volunteer Identification Tag, he greeted me (see image 11). I asked him his name and he mumbled it – it was not until several visits to the Fold where I learned Barney was his nickname. I explained that I was a student doing research and asked if I could interview him. He hesitated and said I could write down his answers but I could not record him because it would make him nervous. I appreciated the honesty. During the first interview, he explained that he had only been a volunteer for a short time but enjoyed it. He was a good friend of Joe's. I did not realize Joe was the brother of Janette until much later. He explained, "Well ya know, Joe and I were great buddies ya see --- up until the very end. I do it [volunteer] for him and just because I known their family for so long."¹⁴⁶ As Barney mentioned Joe, I could tell I hit a soft spot with him. His already quiet voice became almost a whisper as he explained why he volunteered.

A few weeks later I returned to the CFF with a friend. Immediately as we opened the door, the smell of old wood greeted us. I like to compare the smell of A.P.'s cabin to the smell of opening an old library book. It is a scent that you cannot necessarily describe but it never leaves you. Smiling at Barney, he smiles back and sharply glances at my friend, "Young man, come o'er here" he booms, as his voice echoes through the cabin. The gaze of Barney's eyes met my friends as he asks, "Do you know who Johnny Cash is, young man? (my friend nervously glances at me) Don't look at her, we all know *she* knows who he is but I'm askin' you." My friend replies that he has in fact, listened to Johnny Cash. Barney smiles and says "Well then, you sit here, this used to be Mr. Cash's chair and we let people actually sit in it --- (pointing at me) you can take a picture o' him

¹⁴⁶ This is an exact quote from Barney McConnell. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith's audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on March 3, 2012.

if ya want, we allow pictures.”¹⁴⁷ I do as I am told and snap a picture of my friend sitting in the chair (see image 12). This interaction was pivotal. I realized Barney was more inclined to talk in a more natural setting and since I had been attending shows for several months, I had established credibility with the regulars.

Rocking back and forth in his chair, Barney looks at me and asks, “Did I ever tell you how I got my name? I think that’s somethin’ you can include in that paper yer writin’.”¹⁴⁸ Excited, I replied, “Give me a second,” so I could get my notebook and pen in order. Putting my camera bag down on the ground and sitting cross-legged on the floor, I looked up at him and said “I’m ready when you are.” He prefaced by pointing to his hat, which was dark-blue and had the logo of the CFF on it.

Joe gave me this hat here, I wear it all the time when I volunteer – Joe and I were great friends; you know I helped him move this cabin across the mountain – it wasn’t always here. We had to go break it down and carry it piece-by-piece to move on o’er here so people could see where A.P. lived. That’s how I got the name Barney – I even have a sticker at home on one of my hats – sayin’ Barney on it. We [Joe and Barney] was both strong men – but Joe was taller and skinnier and I am shorter and bigger. So people started callin’ us Fred and Barney because we was always together.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ This is an exact quote from Barney McConnell. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on April 7, 2012.

¹⁴⁸ This is an exact quote from Barney McConnell. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on April 7, 2012.

¹⁴⁹ This is an exact quote from Barney McConnell. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on April 7, 2012.

While I would consider Barney less of a storyteller in comparison to Ray, it is evident that the CFF holds a very personal meaning to him. He volunteers at the Fold regularly because it is something to remember his friend by. While the CFF may be originally seen as a memorial for the original Carter trio, Barney views it as a place to memorialize his friend Joe. Moreover, the majority of his memories when asking him his meaning of the CFF involve Joe and this is a place where he can dwell and reminisce in the comfort of those he considers family. Consequently, this is another instance where personal rhetoric provided by individuals help craft a different meaning for this place, allowing it to be considered and labeled as a memory place and a “dwelling place”, rather than just a memorial or a museum.

PEGGY HENSLEY

Peggy Hensley is a distant relative of the Carter Family yet she would rather consider herself a “closer family friend.” This distinction speaks to her sincerity and the humbleness you immediately feel after meeting her for the first time. Numerous times, I have found myself in a heart-felt conversation with Peggy, explaining my minuscule stresses-of-the-moment (see image 13). At the end of each conversation, she asks if she can pray for me. Although I am not religious, I find this fact comforting for the simple reason, this emphasizes that the CFF has turned into a second *home* for me as well. In fact, everyone I bring to the CFF must stop and meet “Miss Peggy” – as I so fondly call her. More often than not, my family has ventured out to the CFF with me so part of my ritual includes picking up my already-paid-for-ticket from her at the entrance.

Swinging the doors open, I am soaking wet. *Ugh, I should have brought that umbrella.* I am standing in the vestibule, trying to get myself together before I enter the main music area. Peeking through the window, I notice the CFF is particularly crowded. I can hear attendees giggling and sympathizing with my current condition. *Great, I am supposed to do research tonight and I look a mess. What a great first impression I will leave.* The door to the main music center opens and I hear a familiar voice, “Honey, come on in here where it’s warmer and dry off – you look fine – your momma got your ticket already.”¹⁵⁰ I lower my shoulders and crack a half smile as I dawdle into the main entrance. Leaning over the table, I watch Peggy organize the money and tickets; we engage in our usual conversation. I ask how her job is and how her pets are. She asks me about school, always reminding me how proud they are of me which is encouraging.

Throughout the years, her answer to “what does the Fold mean to you?” has never changed. Peggy states, “To me, the Fold is home- it is a place where I can see my friends and family weekly – we can engage in fellowship.”¹⁵¹ Often, she explains that she and Rita are great friends, and she has been there since the beginning. For instance, “My dad would help out here when Janette was building this place, so I was always around, helping in one way or another—not quite since the beginning but pretty close.” I once asked her if she only took tickets and if so, why she enjoyed it. She explained that she had experience working with finances and was well organized so the job made sense for her. Moreover, “I enjoy gettin’ to see all the faces that come through these doors. Sometimes I see people I haven’t seen in years so it’s great to catch up.”¹⁵² If you ask her

¹⁵⁰ Quote is recalled from memory. It occurred the evening of February 1, 2014

¹⁵¹ In order to substantiate this claim, I referenced fieldnotes from May 2012, August 2013, and March of 2014. The meaning stayed consistent each time she was asked.

¹⁵² Ibid

why she thinks people attend the CFF as tourists, she will likely talk about the dancers. Once she stated, “Well I think people come here because they want to see the dancers...pause...hearing the music is one thing but it’s the dancers people want to watch. For most it reminds them of their past and their childhood.”¹⁵³ It becomes abundantly clear this place really is *home* for Peggy. Rarely do I hear her talk about the original music trio, rather, she talks about this place in the context of what it means to *her*. As a result, this is a guaranteed opportunity for her to be social but it is also an opportunity for her to engage in conversations about nostalgia allowing the CFF to function as a memory place. For Peggy, the CFF represents *home*.

FLO WOLFE

Speaking with Flo Wolfe, the oldest grandchild of A.P. and Sara, one can understand the family connection with this memory place.¹⁵⁴ Flo has been there since the beginning, when the music was being played in her grandfather’s country store. Always observing, Flo can be found sitting or standing behind a raised counter at the front of the CFF. Selling nostalgic memorabilia to visitors and local citizens is a job she took on after the passing of her parents.¹⁵⁵ Today, Flo and her husband, John Wolfe, “work the souvenir table at the Fold, where they celebrate the Carter legacy by selling Carter Family CDs, T-shirts, and copies of *Recipes from Carter Country*, a collection of recipes

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ The daughter of Gladys, and A.P. and Sara’s oldest grandchild, Flo has been involved with the creation of the Fold since she has been a young child. Now, she carries on the job that her dad had by selling nostalgia to the visitors. She is also the primary person to consult when asking about the history regarding the Fold

¹⁵⁵ Ibid

from Carter family members and friends.”¹⁵⁶ Keeping true with the idea of food being important to constructing the CFF as a “dwelling place”, Flo made a few contributions to the cookbook, including recipes for fruit salad, rhubarb jam with pineapple, and her Quick and Easy Small Cake.

I label Flo as the historian because she is the “go-to” person when students come in to do research. Knowledgeable about the history of the CFF, Flo can provide a detailed narrative about the history and Janette’s challenges to open the CFF. Flo can recall the financial struggles her “Aunt Janette” faced when trying to open this place. Flo recalls, “I’m not a music person, I cannot carry a tune, but this place is a *home* to our family.”¹⁵⁷ Weekly she enjoys listening to the bands perform not for their melodies but rather their lyrics. Smiling, Flo explains, “I’ve always been interested in the lyrics—they tell a story and it’s often a story I relate to growin’ up here in the mountains.”¹⁵⁸ Similar to the narrative Peggy constructed, the CFF is a place substantiating fellowship amongst friends and a celebration of heritage, rather than a place created for profit.¹⁵⁹ Flo and her husband volunteer because they are partaking in a tradition. However, they are getting to know new attendees and pass their knowledge on to later and outside generations so the memories can be preserved and not forgotten. Acknowledging that the CFF is a memory place is relevant and Flo’s personal experiences of the CFF are significant as well.

¹⁵⁶ This is a direct quote from a secondary interview conducted by southernfoodways.org < <http://www.southernfoodways.org/interview/flo-wolfe/>>

¹⁵⁷ This is an exact quote from Flo Wolfe. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on October 19, 2013

¹⁵⁸ This is an exact quote from Flo Wolfe. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on October 19, 2013

¹⁵⁹ In order to substantiate this claim, I referenced fieldnotes from May 2012, August 2013, and October of 2013. The meaning stayed consistent each time she was asked.

JACK AND DORIS PATTON

Where to begin with these two? Easily, they have been distinguished attendees of the CFF (see image 14). They have been attending performances for about 24 years. Jack says, “we used to come quite a bit...pause...well, we come maybe 2-3 times a year now – we got other places to go to.” Doris chimes in, “we’ve been comin’ for a long time...we had exchange students—we brought them up here, different ones (pointing in front towards the stage).”¹⁶⁰ I recall this night. There were several students, all dressed in yellow shirts, who were politely sitting in the wooden seats until this older couple called them down. I learned at this moment that the older couple was Jack and Doris Patton. After more conversation I learned that Jack and Doris are teachers of dance in Townsend, Tennessee and at the Pigeon Forge, Tennessee Welcome Center. When I asked if they taught clogging he looked at me with surprise. “Cloggin’? Well, we don’t call it cloggin’ – call it what you want to though – see, we do a bit of everything...cloggin’, boat dancin’, flat-foot dancin’, we do it all” -- Jack smiles as Doris exclaims “we do a two-step also!”¹⁶¹

Naturally inclined to ask more questions, I want to know *what* made them attend the CFF for the first time 24 years ago. Jack happily replies, “Well we had a favorite [old-time] band play here in 1990 and well...this was the only place where we seen some o’ our friends.”¹⁶² Again, this commonality of friendship and fellowship appears in yet

¹⁶⁰ This is an exact quote from the conversation between Jack, Doris, and myself. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 22, 2014

¹⁶¹ This is an exact quote from Jack Patton. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 22, 2014

¹⁶² This is an exact quote from Jack Patton. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on February 22, 2014

another interview. Jack raised his arm and placed it around my shoulder. Smiling, I ask him if they make the drive based on the band or based on seeing friends. Jack laughs,

No, no, it [the band] matters. I had not seen this band [Junior Blankenship Band] before---heard they got a real good fiddle player. If they [the band] ain't got a good fiddle player...I ain't comin' up here.¹⁶³

Next thing I knew, the band began to play. Jack leans over to Doris and tells her – “I’m going to show this young lady how ta’ dance.”¹⁶⁴ Truthfully, I have limited dancing ability but a good ethnographer practices what they research so I was academically obligated, right? Attempting a two-step (see image 15), the impromptu interview had now turned tables. Jack began asking me questions about my research and schooling. The Patton’s were more than happy to answer my questions about what the CFF meant to them. Again, their rhetorical narrative was fixated on their personal memories rather than the CFF acting as a memorial to the original Carter Family trio. The Patton’s drive over seventy miles to dance, celebrate the heritage of Appalachia and see their friends. These road trips are something they can do as a couple; ultimately strengthening the love they have for each other and the love they have for their heritage. Although they only visit the CFF a few times a year, their meaning of it would still be considered a second *home*.

OTHER INSIGHTS TO THE MEANING OF THE FOLD CHAPEL HILL AND THE ISSUE OF PRESERVATION

I had the privilege to be granted an interview with a one-time-regular performer.

The controversy surrounding the tapes has changed their memory of the CFF, as they will

¹⁶³ This is an exact quote from Jack Patton. The interview was recorded on Lora Smith’s audio recorded and later transcribed. The interview occurred on March 1, 2014

¹⁶⁴ March 1, 2014, I, Lora Smith attempted a two-step. Naturally, I have documented this in both my thesis and on various personal social media accounts

no longer perform there. It is important to generate an understanding for *who* these people are and what this *place* means to them. Eager to share their story, the narrative provided by the Sheets Family offered a new insight, creating an oppositional narrative to the carefully crafted statement written by the CFF.¹⁶⁵

Initially creating a place keeping true to the heart of the music, the CFF serves as a memorial to the iconic Carter Family. This place holds importance in both the local community and the broader context of Appalachia. Oppositional narratives are serving the construction of the CFF due to the fact that personal narratives perpetuate the validity of the space. Having the opportunity to interview volunteers and a musical group no longer performing at the CFF offered a new perspective regarding differing meanings substantiating the CFF. This in turn affects collective memory and public culture.

Prior to the passing of Janette Carter, the CFF used to be a substantially different place according to the Sheets Family. Randy, a native of Virginia, and his wife Deborah Jean were frequent performers at the CFF.¹⁶⁶ While they were never “headliners” they frequently performed during the intermission. Attending the CFF now, a musician playing during intermission is rare. In my many visits, I have only seen this happen one time. Deborah Jean stated, “As an old-time performer, it is a great honor to play in a place that memorializes the founders of country music—even if it just for fifteen or so minutes.”¹⁶⁷ Both Randy and Deborah Jean explained that they heard of the Fold from their friends who were also musicians. Not to mention, the Sheets family lives in Watauga County, North Carolina so the CFF is under two hours drive time. Friends with

¹⁶⁵ Deborah Jean Sheets, and Randy Sheets, musicians who were frequent performers at the Fold during the Intermission segment were interviewed by Lora Smith, at The Jones House, Boone, NC on April 4, 2013

¹⁶⁶ Ibid

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

Janette's son, Dale, also a musician, the controversy surrounding the preservation of tapes sent to UNC have been a defining point in why the Sheets no longer perform at the CFF.¹⁶⁸ In short, Dale Jett, a member of the board and the son of Janette Carter gave tapes of live performances to the Southern Folklife Collection at UNC in 2007.¹⁶⁹ Immediately following the transfer the other board members claimed this was not authorized by them, Jett had no right to authorize, and demanded the tapes be returned the Fold. Responding to this controversy, Jett claimed "My only concern was to preserve them [the tapes] for the ages. And it should be the Fold's [only concern]. The tapes don't belong to the Carter Fold, they belong to the people that are on them."¹⁷⁰ The tapes were returned to the CFF in 2010 and are stored in a climate-controlled facility. As a result, alliances amongst musicians have been formed, creating oppositional narratives. Out of respect, I will not dwell on something that has been put to rest.

Randy eloquently paints a picture based on memory, his words flowing naturally, recounting a different version of the CFF, contrary to the version you would see in present society. Looking at the ceiling, Randy recounts, "at one point, the seats were that of old school busses, no backs; they made the musical experience a little less comfortable, yet still fun."¹⁷¹ Smiling Deborah Jean emphasizes, "Intermission was a performance in itself, not an additional thirty minutes for the museum and cabin to be open --Intermission was the pivotal time for the us [The Sheets Family] to perform and

¹⁶⁸ Ibid

¹⁶⁹ The official press release can be found here
<<http://www.carterfamilyfold.org/pr/20111123.pdf>>

¹⁷⁰ This quote from an article titled "Donated Performance Tapes Are At Center Of Disagreement" which was published by *The Bristol Herald Courier*, April 5, 2008

¹⁷¹ Sheets, "Interview"

personally engage with the audience.”¹⁷² Due to this rift regarding preservation, the Sheets’ claim they will never be back. While they miss their friends that still attend the CFF, they will not step foot on the ground because “it’s not what it once was – it’s turned into an environment we don’t even recognize when we hear stories.”¹⁷³ The CFF used to be a place representative of a *home* for them. It was a day trip—a pleasant drive, fellowship with friends and celebrating heritage. Recalling memories involving Randy’s aging mother, both Deborah Jean and Randy recall her passion for the music at the CFF and the significance of dancing.¹⁷⁴ They lament that they can never take her back to see the old-time dancers. Clearly, the CFF *was* doing its intended job of preserving memory and history.

Primarily, the CFF consists of local citizens and volunteers who have a personal connection with the family, while the performers view this venue as iconic. Performing at a memorial, capturing the essence of old-time music, is a pivotal moment in a career, regardless of the finances involved. As oppositional narratives are created fueling the controversy between preservation, these narratives are constructing the meaning of the Carter Family Fold. The oppositional narrative to which I am referring is the narrative provided by the Sheets family. Personal reasons are what captivate the individuals to return regularly or allow some to remain ethically bound to never returning unless changes are made. As collective memory is constructed throughout the region of Appalachia, the public culture is also being affected.

Experiential places, fueling their existence based on memories that become personal pave the pathway for the place to create an inauthentic experience. This begs the

¹⁷² Ibid

¹⁷³ Ibid

¹⁷⁴ Ibid

question, can the narratives be separated and distinguishable from the personal and what was heard? The population visiting an experiential place or a memory place becomes part of the system since their memories allow a collective and cultural identity to resonate. Commodifying memories creates an alienating factor for the local citizens and the tourists who visit the CFF. Certain memories regarding personal narration about this memory place become important. The other memories become glamorized. The social meaning and identity of the CFF begins to constantly change as different memories are increasingly becoming manipulated to accommodate the primary narrative that the CFF represents. As more narratives dominate the primary ideology, personal memories are persisting. This memory place is deemed worthy of preservation based on emotional attachment and communal belonging thereby creating a “dwelling place” or a “second home” to those who gather there.

CHAPTER FOUR: IMPLICATIONS

LIMITATIONS

Every study has limitations and this study is no different. In theory, my research should have been collected every day for a given period of time. Perhaps this research should have been collected daily for a year. However, the Carter Family Fold is only open on Saturday evenings. Moreover, the Fold is located in Hiltons, Virginia, which is about thirty minutes from Bristol, Tennessee. With the location only being open limited hours, it was simply not possible for me, the ethnographer, to collect field data daily. Furthermore, the drive one-way from Winston-Salem, North Carolina to Hiltons, Virginia is over three hours. As a result, I visited the Carter Family Fold nearly fifty times over a three-year period.

Although I spent this time trekking to the Carter Family Fold, not every visit resulted in an interview with the attendees, hence another limitation. To compensate, I would spend my time in the audience listening to the music, jotting down notes, and engaging in participant observation. Often, I would take friends with me to the Fold so I could better establish what it was like for a first-timer. *Will they notice things I often overlook?* In my field notes, I would write down items such as the weather, the crowd, and different rituals and traditions at the beginning of the show. Although other student's have researched the Fold, I needed to prove that I harbored no ill will or criticism towards the attendees. I was not there to criticize their culture, rather I was there to submerge myself in it, best I could, to understand *why* this *place* is so meaningful.

As stated earlier, Rita Forrester, the now executive director of the Fold and daughter of original founder Janette Carter, was initially hard to land an interview with.

Wrongfully so, I took her reserved attitude personally. I communicated with others who have done research on this place and they would explain to me, “it is just how she is” or they would mention others who “burned” the Fold in their writings. *I was not out to get them, why couldn't I land this one interview?* I am sure I found Rita's presence intimidating, but landing that *one* interview was not my sole purpose. I also wanted to make sure I followed an ethical principle I found in many readings which essentially states, leave the *place* in the same condition you found it.

I recall one Friday afternoon at my apartment in the early spring of 2014. Boldly, I dialed the number for the Fold on their website.¹⁷⁵ *I am just going to tell whoever answers; I want to talk to Rita Forrester tomorrow when I visit. I am going to find a way to get a hold of her even if it's just through email.* Initially, I decided to preface the phone call with a conversation regarding the weather. The phone rang twice and much to my surprise, Rita Forrester answered. Shocked, I stammered through the initial greeting, confirming that I did dial the right number to ask some questions about the show the following day. After I calmed my nerves, I quietly asked if I was speaking to “Miss Rita.” Once she replied “yes,” I went into an explanation about who I was and how speaking with her was essential to my study. Without hesitation she agreed. *Yes! Miss Rita and I are now locked in.* Jokingly, I say to my friends and family, “Miss Rita” and I are *locked for life*, meaning we have established a bond. Although it took me over a year to land that interview, I believe a potential negative limitation has turned into a positive.

¹⁷⁵ The CFF is a not-for-profit organization; therefore, the board of directors volunteer their time on weekends to host the music shows weekly

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

While other research has been done in the past, my study aims to accomplish something new by adding the construct of dwelling place.¹⁷⁶ I argue that the Carter Family Fold functions as a second home to those who gather each week. Moreover, the Fold is not only a landmark in the community of Hiltons but helps others recognize the preservation of Appalachian heritage and tradition. Initially, there was hesitation amongst many that this project would not produce fruitful information. Hesitation may have developed because the Carter's are often *forgot about* or unknown. Hesitation also may have developed because the region of Appalachia is often marginalized. I often joke that academic papers, which generate significant accolades or attention, discuss *sexy, popular* topics, not topics I tend to write on. Within the past decade, the Carter Family has gained notoriety. *Walk the Line*, a film produced in 2005 documenting the life of Johnny Cash, incorporated the later generations of the Carter Family.¹⁷⁷ The film incorporated Maybelle and her husband Ezra (brother to A.P.) and their daughter June (who was married to Johnny Cash).

A friend and I were visiting Nashville, Tennessee and he suggested we go visit the Johnny Cash Museum located downtown.¹⁷⁸ At the very least we would enjoy each others company but we both had an inclination that the Carter Family would be present--

¹⁷⁶ Dissertations utilizing the Fold have been completed by Hannah Blevins Harvey (UNC-Chapel Hill), and Jessica Anderson Turner (Indiana University). Also, articles have been published. For more specifics an Internet search would suffice.

¹⁷⁷ The film features Joaquin Phoenix as Johnny Cash and Reese Witherspoon as June Carter. The film was released after the deaths of Johnny Cash and June Carter.

¹⁷⁸ The Johnny Cash Museum opened in 2013. More information can be found <<http://www.johnnycashmuseum.com>>

perhaps they would even mention Johnny Cash's final performance at the Fold.¹⁷⁹ While the final performance was not mentioned, the Carters were a significant part of the museum (see image 16). Not only did the museum acknowledge that the Carter Family had a significant influence on Johnny Cash but they also had artifacts such as an Autoharp once played by Maybelle and family photos (see image 17). *He was right! This was worth my time. Just the motivation I needed to continue writing something new.* Pointing to the unlabeled image on the wall, I pointed out each Carter sister by name. Leaning over my friend's shoulder, I found myself recalling stories that I heard while visiting the Fold. "Once when I was visiting the Fold, I had a lengthy conversation with Jay, the son of Anita – sometimes we exchange email messages," I stated.¹⁸⁰

Glancing behind me, I noticed a small crowd had gathered. A few were leaning in and you could tell they were listening. Naturally, I wanted to continue telling my friend some of the stories I had heard. "See that Autoharp? Sometimes Maybelle or Sara, I can't remember whom, would play with a peacock feather. Sara raised peacocks on her land"¹⁸¹ I exclaimed! A smile lit across my face as I overheard a woman say to another woman, "I wonder if she's one of them, should we ask?"¹⁸² It was at this moment I reaffirmed to myself that my research does matter. People were interested the Carter Family and obviously more could be said.

¹⁷⁹ The final performance of Johnny Cash occurred at the CFF on June 15, 2003. The show was word-of-mouth only. The show was "sold out" as people were sitting outside the building and in the windowsills. Videos of the last performance can be found on YouTube.

¹⁸⁰ This quote was recalled from memory as it was later written down in the note section of my personal iPhone

¹⁸¹ Ibid

¹⁸² Ibid

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

I believe that additional research on this place can be expanded. Briefly, in the text *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone*, Mark Zwonitzer states that he wishes to create a documentary about the Carter Family. While the documentary would primarily focus on the family, the Fold would be incorporated. I personally understand “such loyalty to a place may account in large part for the development and vitality of mountain music. It gave the singers, listeners, and pickers a way both to codify their roots and to mentally leave their circumstances behind for a bit.”¹⁸³ Since people gather at the Fold under the guise to hear music each week, it is also necessary to point out that Bristol, Tennessee is labeled as the “birthplace of country music.” A museum named Birthplace of Country Music, Bristol, TN/VA, will be opening in August 2014. The museum is also referred to as “BCM” according to the website. BCM “will tell Bristol’s story as the home of the Bristol Sessions through permanent, technology-infused exhibits, a special exhibits gallery, educational programs, multiple film experiences and a theater dedicated exclusively to live, year-round music performances.”¹⁸⁴ Many scholars are interested in the Carter Family and their 1927 recordings which are widely known as The Bristol Sessions.¹⁸⁵

Further research, along with more time spent, may provide a solid mechanism for an opportunity to allow visitors to have more of an experiential experience by preserving the oral histories and exemplifying the traditions and culture. Rather than relying on the media to paint a picture for what is to remain true, it would be beneficial to utilize

¹⁸³ Warren, Santelli, & George-Warren, *The Appalachians*, 221

¹⁸⁴ < <http://www.birthplaceofcountrymusic.org> >

¹⁸⁵ I was first informed about the significance of the Bristol Sessions when I was a panelist with Ted Olson at the 2013 Appalachian Studies Association Conference. Ted Olson and Charles K. Wolfe are the two primary scholars I suggest referencing for further research

interviews provided by both tourist and locals to see how their experiences correlate to the meaning of the Fold. Pointing to a place on a topical map can now be defined by sociological means as well. Looking at Hiltons on a map, one cannot imagine the stories perpetuating the region or the meaning of the place. Translated into real terms, welcoming me, a non-local with open arms and the eagerness to share their stories, should embody a sense that preservation of oral history is necessary to memorialize the legendary Carter Family. The Carter Family Fold is a “dwelling place”, or a “second-home” to those who gather each week due to the collective memory, the symbols that construct this dwelling place, and the narratives of the regular attendees and first time visitors to the Fold which facilitates its being.

CONCLUSION

While I was an undergraduate at Appalachian State University, I developed an interest in the Appalachian region. Not only was I surrounded by the mountain culture but I also learned that my father's relatives hailed from Appalachia. In an effort to understand more about my roots, and my newly discovered fascination regarding Appalachia, I found myself involved in an environmental aspect of preserving the region. Environmentally, I once thought most of Appalachia and its people were fixated on coal, mountaintop removal, and explaining heritage through those aspects. I learned that a plethora of scholars were researching on that subject and considered jumping on that bandwagon. After further research and discussions with classmates, I realized I needed to shift my focus to music and culture.

After attending various coal-related festivals in Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia, I noticed a constant theme of music, specifically folk music. I found myself leaving the festival with Loretta Lynn's, "Coal Miners Daughter" playing on in my brain. *I bet I can write a paper for school using this topic.* During a class discussion, I floated the idea about this song and how it was depicting a particular narrative and perhaps could be representative of the Appalachian culture and its people. A classmate asked me if I had heard of The Carter Family Fold. At the time, the study of folk music and the Appalachian culture was new to me so I did not feel too bad saying I had never heard of the Fold. Truthfully, I was not even familiar with the Carter Family. Yes, I had heard of Johnny Cash. I may have even considered myself a mild fan at the time. Yes, I knew Johnny Cash was married to June Carter. *Maybe he's talking about June Carters mom? Wasn't she a musician?* After class, a quick Google search captivated my interest.

Throughout the thesis, the question “where ‘ya from” sparked my interest. The question was the driving force behind my research. After my first few visits to the Fold, I found myself telling my friends and family that I never felt out-of-place at the Fold. I recall a visit in the winter 2012 accompanied by two female friends. The winding roads were particularly terrifying, as a fresh snow had fallen the night before. Between constantly checking the GPS on the phone and looking out the window, the atmosphere in the car was tense. Finally, I parallel parked my car on the gravel, and walking in single-file my friends and I headed for the main building. After exchanging a quick smile, the parking attendant asked my friends, “where ‘ya from?” Amber did most of the talking. *See, they really do ask that question every time you come. I cannot wait to research this place further.* After she stated we were students at Appalachian State University from North Carolina, we were immediately invited to stay the night and even attend church the next morning. You can only imagine the look of surprise on the faces of the three of us. Politely we declined. The point is the people who dwell here “know no strangers.”¹⁸⁶

In order to get properly acquainted with The Carter Family Fold, I needed to do primary research on both the Carter Family and the particular region in Appalachia from which they hailed. Biographies are limited on the Carter Family. I did find that a book titled *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone* by Mark Zwonitzer proved to be fruitful. Zwonitzer details a story he heard while he was researching the family. He recalls the memory told to him by Becky Bowman, a woman who grew up with the family. Bowman states, “If you were to drive up to the Carters’ house, the first thing Pop [A.P.] would say is ‘Come on in. Have somethin’ to eat. Stay all night – that’s the way they were raised.

¹⁸⁶ Pink, *Doing Sensory Ethnography*

They never treated anyone like a stranger.”¹⁸⁷ After reading Bowman’s memory and comparing it to the memory of my friends and me visiting, is another example of rhetoric supporting the notion of “dwelling place” or “second home” to those who gather at the Fold.

As a graduate student at Wake Forest University, I knew I wanted to continue and further my research of this dwelling place. Throughout the years I established a connection with the people and I looked forward to my visits with them. It was as a graduate student that I narrowed my focus of the project. The question that had been haunting my research would soon turn into developing a study based on the theoretical notions of “dwelling place.” As a result, I believe my findings confirm the motivating question for this research project. The Carter Family Fold does in fact serve a purpose more than a memorial. Although the Carter Family Fold may be posited as a memorial to pay homage to the original Carter Family trio, the people that gather here each week have helped transform the space into a “dwelling place” or a “second home” in the community of Hiltons, Virginia.

The statement above is strengthened when you re-read the interviews with the attendees. It is evident the people who volunteer their time at the Fold do so because they enjoy the fellowship and the camaraderie they have established not only with each other but also the people who are not considered regular attendees. They give of their time and do not expect acknowledgement. They care about the legacy of the Carter family. The locals are eager to share their stories and the history of the Carter Family for those who are unfamiliar. It may not be their primary intention but the locals are helping preserve the heritage of the Appalachian region. Whether it is your first and only time visiting the

¹⁸⁷ Zwonitzer & Hirshberg, *Will You Miss Me When I’m Gone?*, 300

Fold or a place you feel warrants a return visit, once you enter the grounds you feel a sense of *home*.

Recalling the definition of dwelling place from Hyde, it is necessary to “directs one’s attention to the “architectural” function of the art; how, for example, its practice grants such *living room* to our lives that we might feel *at home* with others and our surroundings.”¹⁸⁸ This quotation and notion of dwelling place speaks directly to the Carter Family Fold. The narratives provided by the regulars and the first-time attendees help establish and create an identity for this place. This identity is constructed within the context of Appalachia. To reiterate, the Appalachia I am referencing is a distinct segment within a broadly diverse culture. This segment would be the specific community of Hiltons, Virginia broadly labeled as southwest Virginia.

In this thesis, it should be clear that the Carter Family Fold *does* function as a dwelling place or as a home. While it is a memorial music center where people come to gather to hear and preserve old-time music, it is also a place of fellowship. Further, it is a place where friends create familial bonds with those who step foot in the establishment. It is their hope that all first-time attendees do become regulars, whether that be weekly visits or a few times per year. The question remains. How does one *feel* at home? To explore that concept, the methodology and practice of sensory ethnography must be incorporated. Sensory ethnography encourages the ethnographer to utilize his or her senses to describe a place. In the instance of the Carter Family Fold, walking along the gravel pathway when you park your car, smelling the distinct scent of the cabin belonging to A.P., or smelling popcorn and hearing the idle chatter of several people as you walk into the memorial music center is critical. The scents, noise, and touch become

¹⁸⁸ Hyde, *The Ethos of Rhetoric*

important to how we, as individuals, construct a place to be home. Eventually, the items described above become something you expect and become part of the construction regarding what this place means to you. You will witness the love within this community. You will witness the circle is not broken.

APPENDIX
ALL IMAGES PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR

Image 1: The Carter Family Fold Memorial Music Center



Image 2: Alternative Data Collection Center – Easel

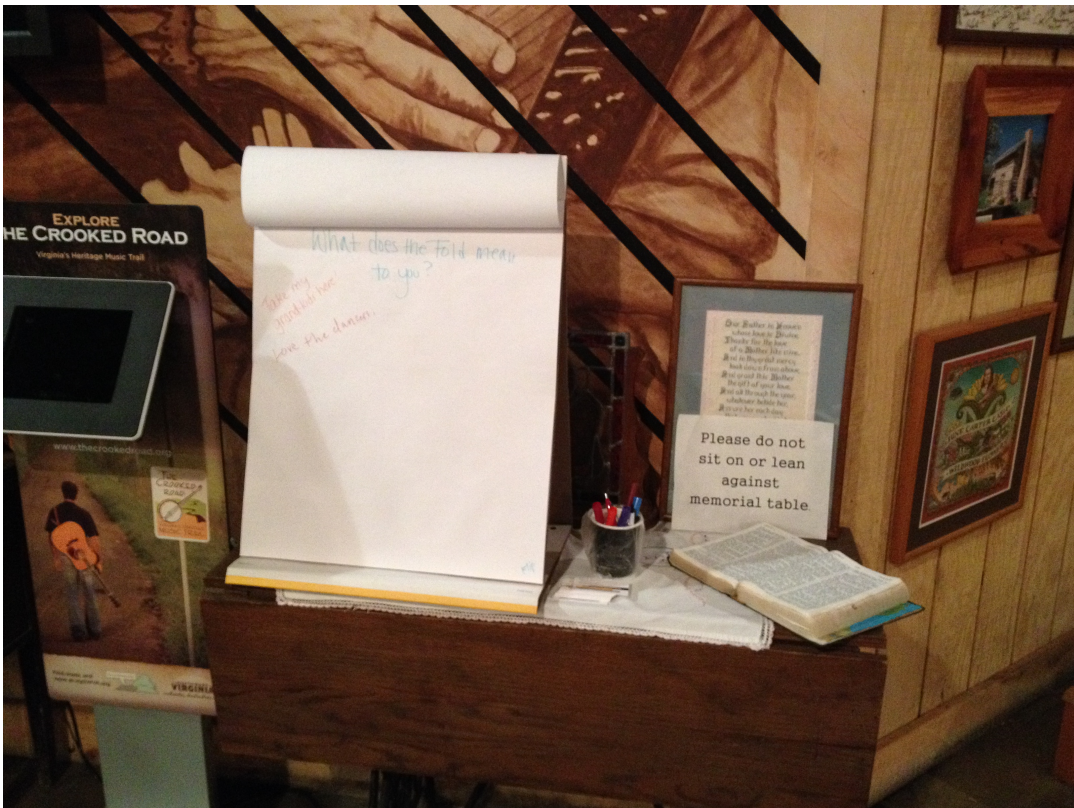


Image 3: A.P. Carter Highway



Image 4: The Stage at the Carter Family Fold Memorial Music Center



Image 5: Original Wood Sign



Image 6: Memorabilia on the Stage



Image 7: White Rocking Chair outside Carter Family Museum



Image 8: The Carter Family Museum



Image 9: Ray Carter and Lora Smith



Image 10: The Birthplace of A.P. Carter



Image 11: Burdette McConnell and Lora Smith



Image 12: A Chair once belonging to Johnny Cash



Image 13: Peggy Hensley and Lora Smith



Image 14: Doris Patton, Lora Smith, and Jack Patton



Image 15: Lora Smith and Jack Patton



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EDUCATION

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, Beginning August 2014
 Doctoral Student in the Department of Communication & Culture
 Specialization: Rhetoric & Public Culture

Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC, August 2014
 Master of Arts in Communication
 Thesis: "Exploring the Significance of 'Dwelling Place' Through Place and Representations of Memory in The Carter Family Fold"
 Faculty Adviser: Dr. Michael Hyde
 GPA: 3.8

Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, May 2012
 Bachelor of Science in Communication Studies, minor in Political Science; *summa cum laude*
 University and Departmental Honors
 Thesis: "The Carter Family Fold: Rhetoric, Memory, and Music"
 Faculty Adviser: Dr. Cindy Spurlock
 GPA: 3.9

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Rhetoric and Public Memory, Public Culture, Rhetorical Theory and Criticism, Critical and Cultural Studies, Appalachian Studies, Popular Culture, Performance Studies; Ethnography

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"The Carter Family Fold: Rhetoric, Memory, and Music." Paper presented at the Carolina's Communication Association, Aiken, South Carolina, October 5-6, 2012. Finalist for the Jarrad Undergraduate Competition.

"Finding Community through Music in Appalachia." Paper presented at the Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Boone, North Carolina, March 22-24, 2013. Finalist for the Carl A. Ross Award.

"The Importance of Community in The Carter Family Fold." Paper presented at the Equality Equals...? Conference at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, April 5-6, 2013.

"The Carter Family Fold: A Symbol of Nostalgia and a Place of Memory." Paper presented at the National Communication Association, Washington, DC, November 21-24, 2013.

"The Rhetoric within the Heidelberg Project." Paper presented at the Graduate Seminar Conference: Democracy, Publics, and Counter-Publics: Rhetoric from Within and Outside the Margins, Winston-Salem, NC, December 3, 2013.

“Marginalizing the People of Appalachia: A Closer look at *The Hog Killing '90*.” Paper presented at the Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Huntington, West Virginia, March 28-30, 2014. Finalist for the Carl A. Ross Award.

“The Power of Reshaping “Iconic Images” in *Watchmen*.” Paper presented at the Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois, April 16-19, 2014.

“Speaking Art: Performances of Dissent in Tyree Guyton’s Heidelberg Project.” Paper presented at the Eastern Communication Association, Providence, Rhode Island, April 23-27, 2014. Top Competitive Paper Award

“Picturing Appalachia: The Impact of Iconic Photography.” Paper presented at the Graduate Seminar Conference: Argumentation and Academics, Winston-Salem, NC, May 9, 2014

SUBMISSIONS IN REVIEW

“The Power of Protest in Detroit’s Heidelberg Project.” Paper submitted to the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL, November 20-23, 2014.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Public Speaking Instructor, Department of Communication, Appalachian State University, Spring 2014

- Responsible for instructing one section of a Public Speaking course
- Responsible for creating a syllabus and lectures for the full semester

Teaching Assistant, School of Business, Wake Forest University, Fall 2013-Spring 2014

- Responsible for 49 students in a section of Law, Ethics, and Conflict Management
- Assisted in preparation and grading of five written assignments

Academic Tutor, Student Athletic Services, Wake Forest University, Fall 2013-Spring 2014

- Met with students individually to answer questions and provide additional tutoring
- Supplemented class lectures for: Introduction to Communication and Rhetoric, Historical Research and Criticism in Communication, Speechwriting and Special Seminar: Where Are You From? Mobility and Identity

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Wake Forest University

Graduate Student Representative, Department of Communication, Fall 2013- Spring 2014

- Appointed as a Co-Representative by the faculty
- Attend monthly faculty meetings and address the concerns of graduate students in the department

External Relations Co-Chair, Graduate Student Committee, Fall 2013- Spring 2014

- Explore and implement activities that promote the Wake Forest University MA program to the community
- Potential activities: serve as mentors to undergraduates in the department, hosting recruiting events for potential graduate students, and organizing guest speakers

Appalachian State University

Secretary and Committee Member for a Travel Scholarship, Lambda Pi Eta, Fall 2011- Spring 2012

- Organized Lambda Pi Eta records, such as member attendance and service participation
- Managed the list-serve and updated the website to keep members informed of events and expectations

Communication Studies Representative, Department of Communication, Appalachian State University, Fall 2011- Spring 2012

- Appointed to be a Representative by the faculty
- Acted as a liaison between students, and faculty to address concerns within the concentration

President, Appalachian Communicators, Fall 2010- Spring 2012

- Appalachian Communicators was a student run organization
- Coordinated guest speakers and workshops for students who were interested in the field of Communication

Student Representative, Department of Communication Alumni Association, Appalachian State University, Fall 2010- Spring 2011

- Appointed to be a Representative by the faculty
- Communicated current needs of students within the department to the Alumni through events and conference calls

Other

Article Reviewer, Carolinas Communication Association 2013 Journal

Panel Reviewer, Western States Communication Association 2014 Conference

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

The Munich Analogy, the George W. Bush Administration, and Conceptual Change in U.S. Foreign Policy Argument. Article, APA Citations for Dr. Jarrod Atchison, Wake Forest University, 2013.

Communication Science Theory and Research: An Introduction to Advanced Study. Book, APA Citations for Dr. Marina Krcmar, Wake Forest University, 2013.

INVITED LECTURES

Keynote Speaker, Lambda Pi Eta Induction Ceremony, Appalachian State University, Fall 2012

Panelist, Department of Communication Graduate School Panel, Appalachian State University, Spring 2012

AWARDS

Highest GPA in the Communication Studies concentration, Appalachian State University, Spring Commencement 2012

Top Competitive Paper in the Interpretation and Performance Studies Division at Eastern Communication Association 2014

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Lambda Pi Eta

Carolinas Communication Association

Appalachian Studies Association

Eastern Communication Association

Popular Culture/American Culture Association

National Communication Association