

DISSERTATION

CRYSTALLIZING CHANGE IN A TOURISM-BASED ECONOMY DURING COVID-19:
AN INTERMOUNTAIN WESTERN GATEWAY CASE STUDY OF NEDERLAND, COLORADO

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ABSTRACT

CRYSTALLIZING CHANGE IN A TOURISM-BASED ECONOMY DURING COVID-19: AN INTERMOUNTAIN WESTERN GATEWAY CASE STUDY OF NEDERLAND, COLORADO

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped mobility patterns within the tourism system uniquely stressing parks and protected areas (PPAs) and respective bordering gateway communities. Tourism research has explored changes related to PPAs since COVID-19 at the international (Spenceley et al., 2021), national (Lebrun, et al., 2021), and regional and local scales (Cavaliere & Branstrator 2023; Sohn et al., 2021). Recent scholarship in tourism has brought attention to the experiences and knowledge of residents living within communities bordering PPAs to understand the impacts of COVID-19 from local perspectives (Jones et al., 2021). However, tourism scholarship related to COVID-19 underrepresents the experiences of intermountain western gateway communities (IWGCs) - small communities within remote mountain regions bordering PPAs that often live with tourism-based economies (Stoker et al., 2021). Throughout COVID-19, IWGCs have lived through societal, political and health crises compounded by climate disasters such as wildfires and flooding. The remote geographic location and economic basis of tourism shapes the impacts, adaptations and needs of IWGCs, imperative to inform crisis and disaster management due to the presence and power of tourism-based economies. Residents from the Town of Nederland, Colorado hold lived, situated knowledge of changes experienced during COVID-19 which can further tourism scholarship of resiliency as related to the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, this research explores the relationships between changes experienced by Nederland residents hosting a tourism economy during COVID-19

through a narrowed scope of identity, affect, and technology use – each representing important components of crisis and disaster management needing further exploration.

Three objectives are established to achieve the aim of this research. First, to further the critical and affective turns within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of Nederland residents. Second, to assess the role of technology in navigating spatial and social realities of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting identities. Third, cultural realignment is used as a tool of analysis to explore processes and agents of change revealing power dynamics within Nederland including community resilience and representation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Influential literature from social-ecological and psychological resiliency, embodiment and affect, biocultural knowledge, identities, and technology underpins this research. Through an embodied approach, the worldviews of myself as researcher and Nederland residents become new contributions to knowledge by considering the body as an intersecting point between affective, biocultural, and technocultural influences.

A crystallization methodology is employed guided by a feminist new materialist epistemology to construct a robust representation of resident accounts through critical qualitative methods. Reflexive thematic analysis of semi-structured, in-depth interviews is complemented by field notes and secondary sources such as online featuring and representation of Nederland to conceptualize identities at the individual and community scale. This investigation of identities within crisis management and resiliency through the research context of Nederland, Colorado conducts holistic, empirical reflection upon resident agency and community resilience to changes during COVID-19. This methodological approach elicits rich knowledge to conceptualize identities of Nederland residents as complex, affective embodiments of multi-scalar changes mediated by tourism impacts during the COVID-19.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document is its own embodiment of the understanding, care and support I have received through the years. Like many who may read this, I did not intend to start a higher education journey, let alone a doctoral program, during a pandemic. Throughout COVID-19, I have held one perspective of change through tumultuous times in the United States. However, sharing this path alongside friends, family, and mentors has cast light during even the most somber times as each companion has helped to guide me through this arduous journey. If we have crossed paths and journeyed together over the years, this dedication is for you. I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Christina Cavaliere who has paved and shared the path since my first day, equipping me with the knowledge, guidance, and fortitude to reach this stage. I cannot thank my family enough for their patience and support as I have oscillated between radio silence and bursting with excitement at each stage of this process. I am deeply fortunate and grateful for my friends through the years for helping me to make lifelong memories and brighten any day. Finally, to my constant partners, Ryan and Aloy, who always holler me home. To all, I cherish you more than I could ever show.

Thank you to the Town of Nederland and the mountain communities of the Peak-to-Peak region for your hospitality, care, and support. Each interview, creative expression, online discussion, and meeting was a place in time where knowledge, emotions, thoughts, and experiences were shared to guide this process. This research is an expression of gratitude to the western mountain communities I have worked and growth with through the years. I would not be who I am without living in Moran, Wyoming and Denali, Alaska as a seasonal worker.

I have the privilege of writing this acknowledgement and reflecting on the changes I have experienced and witnessed around me since the start of the pandemic. During this time, my

family experienced the passing of loved ones with grievance only possible through remote channels. As the process of this dissertation grew, I found that I was grieving and healing with the research. Across countless memos, notes, and journal pages I had written, the following dedication to Sandra Mapes (1940-2023) represents my deep gratitude to the Nederland area residents for sharing in this process:

I'd like to say thank you to the town for sharing moments with residents who spoke to me in such caring and meaningful ways. I lost my grandmother today, and spending time within this interview helped me to process living with her passing.

This research is in honor of Alice and Jack Branstrator, who are at last at peace together. I also honor Sandra and Walter Mapes as a partnership of devotion that brought Sandra a life of adventure. I carry you all with me and thank you for the knowledge and love that I have been given. As I continue to learn and grow within my communities of care, I look forward to caring for those who come after me and their futures.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped mobility patterns within the tourism system uniquely stressing parks and protected areas (PPAs) and respective bordering gateway communities. Particularly within the United States, waves of domestic travelers seeking travel opportunities and respite poured into PPAs closer to home (Rott, 2020; Stadler et al., 2021) while simultaneously receding from others (Gössling et al., 2021; Naylor et al., 2021). The experiences of gateway communities have been characterized through tourism literature circulating along polarities depicting destinations transitioning from a state of overtourism to no-tourism (Koh, 2020) or undertourism (Blanco-Romero et al., 2022). Though tourism research has grown in exploring multi-level relationships of PPAs and gateway communities to tourism (Joyner et al., 2019; Panta & Thapa, 2018; Slocum et al., 2022), literature exploring the dynamic and critical relationship between tourism and intermountain western gateway communities (IWGCs) since COVID-19 is lacking (Stoker et al., 2021).

Intermountain western gateway communities are "small rural towns and cities near major public lands, lakes, scenic rivers, and other notable natural amenities" (Stoker et al., 2021, p.21; Powell et al., 2021). IWGCs are social and ecologically sensitive places within mountain bioregions experiencing rapid economic, political, social, environmental, and climate changes which have been exacerbated by tourism and amenity migration – particularly since COVID-19 (Sodja, 2021; Lynch, 2006). Stoker et al. (2021) recognize the need for research dedicated to the unique challenges of IWGCs, therefore providing a baseline description for IWGCs as, "communities of 150 to 25,000 people that are: 1) within 10 linear miles from the boundary of a national park, national monument, national forest, state park, wild and scenic river or other major

river, or lake and 2) further than 15 miles from a census-designated urbanized area by road" (2021, p.23).

Amidst the volume of tourism publications related to COVID-19, disconnects have grown between academic, public media, and industry-level depiction of gateway and destination communities through tourism-related “cultural representation, interpretation, stereotyping and branding” (Macleod, 2013, p.74). This can misalign the experiences, identities, and agency of the impacted communities with their depicted representations as places of recreation and consumption (Cheer et al., 2017; Cavaliere, Branstrator & Cheer, 2023). Tourism scholarship cannot support the social and political change needed for IWGC resilience without deeply listening to communities whose local structures and dynamics of power are intertwined with the tourism system beyond assessing resident attitude towards tourism “to bring together critical, situated, and anti-oppressive approaches to social and human inquiry in order to resist ‘singular truth interpretations’ of being and becoming” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.144). Within these disconnects, critical inquiry through qualitative research design is needed to explore the pluralism of social, biocultural, and technological realities shaping IWGC life as important areas of knowledge for individual and community resilience and adaptation to crisis.

Within global tourism system adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic and increasingly common climate-related disasters, tourism scholarship has embraced the need to reflect and act upon on the complex impacts and future of tourism. Notable agendas seek radical futures resituating power dynamics through a diversity of research areas such as representation (Boluk, Cavaliere, & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019), affective tourism (Buda, 2015; Buda et al., 2014), degrowth (Milano et al., 2019; Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023), decolonizing tourism academia (tebrakunna country & Lee, 2017), and enacting change through sociopolitical and

environmental justice (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020; Hollinshead et al., 2021; Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021). This requires collaborative work across empirical, conceptual, and philosophical perspectives connecting place-based experiences and applicable knowledge, such as gateway community representation, with global trends for multi-level social and political change.

Though studies on gender and identities continue to progress knowledge in the ethical implications of tourism (Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021; Muldoon et al., 2021; Lewis et al., 2021), critical feminist qualitative methodologies are still nascent in guiding empirical research to center the experiences of PPA gateway communities since COVID-19 to “go deep under the surface of every day events to uncover the mental models” (McCool, 2021) that discursively frame space and place (Mostafanezhad et al., 2020). Seminal literature influencing this research intertwines interdisciplinary knowledges and concepts of social-ecological systems, identities, biocultural knowledge, affect, and technology use in tourism contexts; each piece an element creating the compound structuring a research design to investigate changes as perceived by Nederland residents during COVID-19. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

A crystallization methodology (Ellingson, 2009; Hollinshead et al., 2021) was chosen and designed to effectively meet and address the research aim and objectives due to its capacity to elicit and interpret robust and complex data representing resident knowledge of changes during COVID-19. The chosen qualitative methods of inquiry include semi-structured interviews, secondary sources, field notes, and reflective journaling. Robust and rigorous reflexive thematic analysis provides resident-centered knowledge of changes during crisis as embodied phenomena in this case study of Nederland utilizing affect (Ahmed, 2004; Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2020), resident technology use (Ayscue et al., 2016), and cultural realignment (Cheer et al., 2017; Amoamo, 2017; Macleod, 2013). This academic composition is framed through a feminist new

materialist worldview bringing depth and meaning to the narratives and affective representations of resident experiences. Building within the seventh turn of qualitative inquiry and the emerging affective turn in tourism studies (described in section 2.3.2) (Buda, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), this dissertation furthers knowledge in tourism studies situating change and identity as embodied, affective phenomenon that are interconnected within social-ecological systems and bioregions (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023).

The aim of this research is met by exploring embodied change through diverse knowledge sources of interviews including participants' affective expressions (photography, poetry, emotions) and technology use to explore identities. This research situates a feminist new materialist synthesis of literature through new contextual application in Nederland, providing new knowledge through an IWGC case study. Research findings contribute to biocultural knowledge of identities as biocultural constructs comprising greater biocultural diversity and IWGC resilience, imperative for conservation social science knowledge (Cavaliere, & Branstrator, 2023). Crisis and disaster management (CDM) knowledge is expanded through critical and affective theories to understand how emotions influence individual and community resilience during compound crises and disasters.

Lastly, these findings posit new understandings of how technology use, particularly information communication technologies (ICTs), mediate technocultural change, shaping individual and community resilience during crises and disasters. A unique contribution within the approach of this research to social-ecological systems and biocultural research is the consideration of ICTs and technology use through cyberfeminist, technocultural, and cybernetic theory to consider human-machine relationships in physical and virtual spaces as naturalized, organic pieces integral to social and ecological realities. These contributions shift the gaze in

tourism research from tourist and destination-centric perspectives to reorient knowledge from resident experiences for social, political, economic, and environmental change.

1.1. Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized progressively through Introduction (Chapter 1), Background (Chapter 2), and Methodology (Chapter 3) chapters preceding a series of manuscripts as chapters exploring and fulfilling the aim and objectives of this research. Chapter 1 (Introduction) establishes the need for this doctoral work, positions the researcher in relation to the research area and field site, describes the philosophical underpinning of the research, and how the findings contribute to academic knowledge. Chapter 2 (Background) situates the field sites of Nederland, Colorado as prime case of an IWGC whose history and local values shape changes experienced during COVID-19. Chapter 3 (Methodology) discusses the methods chosen as most appropriate to collect and analyze diverse data types, and how this chosen design meets and fulfills the aim and objectives. Chapters 4-6 contain three executive summaries of articles highlighting research findings as dissertation chapters. Each chapter summary connects to the overarching aims and objectives.

A conceptual matrix of the dissertation structure is provided (see Table 1) at the end of Chapter 1 to guide the reader through the research design, aims, objectives, and resulting empirical themes. This map provides a reference point for the reader to revisit throughout this document to situate each chapter within the overarching need and contributions of this dissertation.

1.2. Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim of this research is to explore the relationships between changes experienced by Nederland residents hosting a tourism economy during crisis through concepts of affect, technology use, and identity.

To reach the aim of this research, respective objectives are set as:

Objective 1 (Affect): to further the critical and affective turns within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of intermountain western gateway residents;

Objective 2 (Technology): to assess the role of technology in navigating spatial and social realities of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on identities; and

Objective 3 (Identity): using cultural realignment as a tool of analysis to explore processes and agents of change revealing power dynamics within an IGWC including community resilience and representation during the COVID-19 pandemic

The following manuscript chapters address the overarching aims and objectives:

Chapter 4 (Affect): Affective Tourism Economies: The Affective Dimensions of Compound Crises in Nederland, Colorado

Chapter 5 (Technology): Remote Control: The Cybernetic Fold of Technoculture and Identity in Nederland, Colorado

Chapter 6 (Identity): Reflexivity and Reflections of Change Across Scales of Identities: A Case Study of Nederland, Colorado

1.3. Contributions of Study

The progression of these manuscripts organizes and unpacks nine empirical themes resulting from fieldwork in Nederland during COVID-19. Table 1 (below) provides a conceptual matrix of this dissertation to guide the reader from gaps in literature through the aim, objectives, methodology, analysis, and resulting empirical themes. These themes are described in greater detail throughout the progression of this document. A crystallization methodology featuring a suite of qualitative methods was employed to elicit and analyze rich, thick data capable of meeting and addressing the outlined aim and objectives. All nine themes communicate findings that enrich and extend ways of knowing and approaching tourism and resiliency through CDM and IWGC planning. Each theme demonstrates powerful perceptions of residents to guide future research in tourism. Two of these nine themes (*affective tourism economies* and *cybernetic identities*) fill significant gaps in scholarship with conceptual contributions revealing affective and cybernetic facets of identities and technology use as mediated by tourism economies through the context of Nederland during COVID-19. These themes are expanded upon in greater detail within each executive summary of findings, and within the cumulative discussion and conclusion of Chapter 7. Chapter 7 additionally organizes empirical themes according to the research aims within a table of contributions, outlining how the findings in detail reinforce, challenge, and contribute knowledge according to affect, technology use, and identity for CDM and resilience tourism scholarship.

The research design of this dissertation is housed within sustainable, critical, and affective tourism studies derived from crisis and disaster management and resiliency studies in tourism, and interdisciplinary theories of identity, technology, crises, and disasters. This dissertation features literature related to social and biocultural identity (Zhang et al, 2021; Tauro

et al., 2021; Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023), and adaptation and resilience through cultural realignment (Cheer et al., 2017; Amoamo, 2017; Macleod, 2013). This work additionally draws from critical feminist theories analyzing human relationships to technology through cyberfeminist (Paasonen, 2011), technocultural (Shaw, 2008), and cybernetic theory (Muri, 2003) from a feminist new materialist epistemology to assess the narratives and affective representations of ICTs as third spaces (Hanks et al., 2020) in navigating social, global political, and environmental challenges of COVID-19 (Haraway, 1991; Jack & Avle, 2021).

The results of this study may help to inform resiliency and CDM topics within tourism research drawing from the knowledge of IWGC residents to directly benefit communities, institutions, and organizations seeking new approaches to crises, disasters, and IWGC planning from resident perspectives. Additionally, by learning from the experiences of Nederland residents, a collection of counterculture and mainstream communities with conflicting worldviews regarding growth and tourism development, this research may indirectly benefit other IWGCs (Powell et al., 2021) in restructuring, adapting, or planning for the future of tourism. This research may support scholarship of alternative economic models challenging growth paradigms by centering resident perspectives and knowledge to guide the visions and processes of change (Cavaliere, 2017a; Cavaliere et al., 2023). Throughout this document, creative expressions such as photography and poetry are provided. These elicited affective forms of data contributed towards the understanding and creation of nine empirical themes. All themes are expanded upon through empirical quotes, where empirical theme emerged as findings correlating with photography illustrating the role that photo-elicitation and the incorporation of resident creative expressions as effective and affective methods of analysis. Two empirical

themes (*affective tourism economies* and *cybernetic identities*), detailed through later chapters summarizing the findings, are deeper contributions to tourism scholarship.

Though risks, opportunities, and adaptive capacities may differ, gateway communities of differing tourism geographies are gaining empirical knowledge of models of adaptation that could inform and benefit other communities of similar scales and experiences (Stoker et al., 2021). It is my intention that the results of this study may help to connect critical topics within tourism research by reflecting multiple realities of social change from the COVID-19 crisis through case study data. Specifically, by learning from residents of Nederland, Colorado, an IWGC experiencing adapting to increasing climate-related crises, this research may benefit other mountain, coastal, or geographically remote communities in restructuring, adapting, or planning for the future of tourism by informing crisis and disaster management within tourism planning from gateway resident-centered knowledge.

Table 1. Conceptual Matrix of Dissertation

Gaps	Aim	Objectives	Methodology	Methods	Analysis	Empirical themes*	
Critical, affective lenses in CDM	Exploring relationships between changes experienced by Nederland residents hosting a tourism economy during crisis through concepts of identity, affect, and technology use	Affect (Chapter 4)	Crystallization Methodology	In-depth interviews	Data collection & organization in MAXQDA	Affective dimensions of resilience	Positioning affect to explore CDM/resilience
Feminist new materialism in resiliency/CDM				Photo-elicitation	Transcription; abductive coding	Identity, belonging and responsibility	Feminist new materialism in Nederland case study
IWGC resident perspectives				Creative expression	Field site familiarization	Affective tourism economies*	Resident knowledge of CDM/resilience
Identities in CDM		Technology (Chapter 5)	Feminist New Materialist Epistemology	Deep listening	Initial base size of coded information	Remote control	Multi-scalar identities affecting CDM/resilience
Cultural (re)alignment in mountainscapes				Field notes	Generating initial themes	Involvement and participation	Feminist new materialist knowledge of technology/ICTs during crises
Technology/ICT use and IWGC resilience				Secondary sources	Reviewing and developing themes	Cybernetic identities	Technocultural change in control and power
Critical analysis of ICTs, change, and IWGCs				Reflective journaling	Affective, embodied approach	Refining, defining, and naming themes	Scales of identity
	Writing up; reflect, edit and review	Creating and keeping community	Resident identity, representation and belonging integral to CDM/resilience during crises and disasters				
					Creative expressions of resilience		

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Intermountain Western Gateway Communities

Gateway communities are important places for tourism academics to explore sustainability, resilience, and adaptation through multiple knowledge networks (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). IWGCs are communities interconnected through mountain regions of 150-25,000 residents, are further than 15 miles outside an urbanized area by road, and are located within 10 miles of parks, protected areas, and natural features (Stoker et al., 2021). Akin to many IWGCs, Nederland has experienced significant change since the start of 2020 which were mediated through a common scenario of an IWGC hosting a tourism-based economy throughout compounding crises and disasters (McGreevy & Adrien, 2023). Residents of IWGCs, one of the many resident groups underrepresented within tourism scholarship, lived and adapted through imbricated health, social, political, environmental, and economic crises/disasters shaping life today. Therefore, this research features the accounts of residents from Nederland, Colorado.

2.2. The Town of Nederland, Colorado

The destination and community of Nederland, Colorado was selected as the case study for this research given its unique history, proximity to PPAs, and evolving relationships to tourism and technology. The Town of Nederland is a small alpine mountain community in Boulder County within Northwestern Colorado. Nestled in a glacial valley, the original land stewards were of the Ute and Arapaho tribes. Chipeta, “Ute Peacemaker”, and her husband, Chief Ouray of the Tabeguache (Uncompahgre) Ute Tribe, were historical figures noted for each taking part in communication both within the Ute tribes and the United States government (Town

of Nederland, n.d.b.). The land's geographical assets drew hunters and trappers from non-natives and white settlers, forming a space for trading. The land was renamed multiple times by different economic settler powers from the early 1800s until the Mining Company Nederland bought the Caribou Mine in 1873. Reflecting the dominant establishment of the mining Dutch mining company, the town was re-established as Nederland in 1874 (Town of Nederland, n.d.b.). These extractive eras within Nederland created extreme fluxes of socioeconomic growth and decline. During mining "booms" such as the tungsten era of 1916, the town's population was reported as reaching almost 3,000 residents, while the inevitable "busts" reduced the population to the only year-round residents being workers in ranching, agriculture, or wealthy vacationers which was the town's population by 1920. This pattern of drastic population growth and decline was a repeated cycle during the mining era (Town of Nederland, n.d.b.).

Starting in the 1960s, Nederland drew in residents identifying as "hippies" who instilled a culture of music, recreation and art resettling the valley to its steady present-day population. In this transition, the Caribou Ranch Recording Studio drew in famous recording artists to Nederland from 1971 to 1985, including Michael Jackson, Joe Walsh, Billy Joel, John Lennon, and Elton John until the ranch's recording capability was lost to a fire (McCall, 2015). From this era of Nederland's cultural growth came a cultural identifier of *Nedheads*. *The Nedhead* originated as a cartoon character created by Nederland cartoonist George Blevins from the Mountain-Ear (the local paper) in the 1990s. The term *Nedhead* was adopted within the community to describe locals for its "overlapping references like rhyming with Ned, and the Grateful Dead, head shops of the 1970's etc., it was a natural fit, but also metaphorically the character's head is also his home" (Gierlach, 2011, para. 3). The following image was found through community familiarization and fieldwork. The image shown in Figure 1 (below) is a

personal photograph of the researcher taken at a local shop during fieldwork depicting *The Nedhead*.

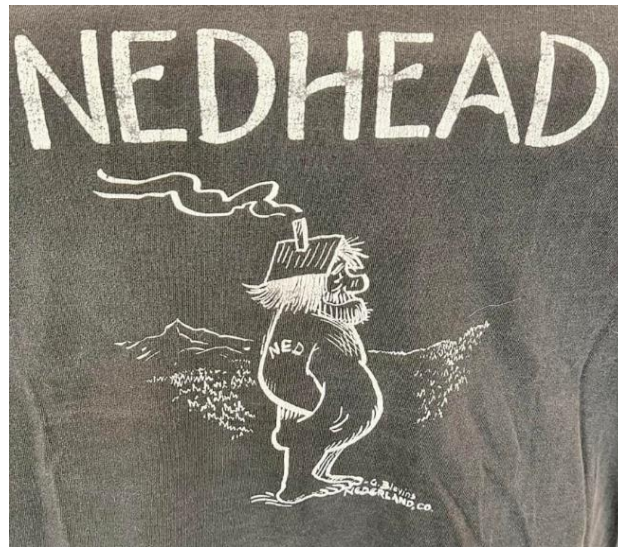


Figure 1. The Nedhead featured on merchandise in a local shop in Nederland (source: author)

Starting in the 1990s, Nederland community planning focused on turning the Barker Meadow area into a place of commerce and recreation for local and surrounding rural communities. This time also marked a greater focus on tourism planning to draw visitors and locals alike to enjoy the local area. This epoch has largely been marked by a year-round tourism economy, spurring from its location between Eldora Mountain Resort and Boulder, its identity as the gateway to the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area, and proximity to other popular PPAs such as Golden Gate Canyon State Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, and Estes. Nederland is now also known in the endurance sport world as a destination along famous cycling routes, becoming the home of Olympian cyclers (Trailforks, n.d.). Cultural transitions may be seen exploring the town as newer, luxury home construction contrasts with the town center sense of place.

Commercial real estate transitions include the purchase of Caribou Ranch by Caribou Ridge Land Holdings, LLC to form “an exclusive boutique community of homes” (Caribou Ridge, 2019). This rural gentrification through amenity migration attracts high income residents and

second homeowners exacerbating “big city problems” such as issues with transportation, affordable housing, staffing, and growing income inequality (Rumore & Stoker, 2023)

The trans-cultural history of Nederland from First Nation Ute and Arapaho land stewards through eras of mining, hippies, tourism, and further globalization is recognized as integral parts of Nederland’s identity. Nederland commemorates its shared history through museums, its town portal, and equipment/artifacts prominently featured in the town such as mining equipment or its iconic railcar housing local commerce. Cultural landmarks such as the Carousel of Happiness alongside art and music festivals such as Frozen Dead Guy Days and NedFest showcase the resident communities’ iconic love of hippie culture. Newer industries include breweries (e.g., Very Nice Brewing Company, Busey Brews, and Knotted Root), coffee roasters (e.g., The Train Car and Salto). The town center provides a palpable feeling of community interaction, livelihood, and recreation both to the resident population of about 1500 people, the surrounding communities of nearly 4000-8500 people (Town of Nederland, n.d.a), and transient visitors. Long since its original Ute and Arapaho caretakers, Nederland has steadily maintained an identity through its current residents, with the town adopting a motto of “Life’s Better Up Here” (Discover Nederland, n.d.). However, a new era can be seen in rising real estate prices, tourism expansion, and pressure on visitation of gateway communities and their respective PPAs. This intersection of historical identities embodied through people and place during COVID-19 has unknown impacts on Nederland’s senses of self, shaped by changes within residents and their relationships to tourism.

Nederland is a rare IWGC holding great potential as a case for study within critical and affective tourism studies. A deep relationship and cultural value of creativity through music and art is important to choosing this location. Additionally, their reflexivity in communication and

marketing of the town's history, present, and future identity is mirrored throughout town and tourism planning and verbiage. Clear ways of learning about the town's cultural values are found within the Town of Nederland's Envision 2030 series of master plans for the town. This series includes planning documents for vision, goals, and objectives maintained through the appropriate sub-committees. The 2013 update of Nederland's Envision 2020 plan stated the purpose of their comprehensive plan was "not meant to encourage growth, but to guide growth to be as sustainable as possible when it does occur" (Town of Nederland, 2013, p.10). Now updated and enacting their Envision 2030 plan, Nederland is balancing their ideals of "small-town feel and distinct identity with a 'small is beautiful, less is more' approach" (Town of Nederland, 2021, para. 2) with community-chosen development. The Envision 2030 planning document and public town portal information emphasizes a model of sustainability for both environment and society which is reflected throughout each subcommittee's vision, goals, and objectives. The Envision documents are enhanced by public documentation of Nederland's application and reception of funding from Great Outdoors Colorado's (GOCO) Resilient Communities Program (RCP).

Detailed, open, and transparent documentation (both video and written) through Nederland's many websites gave insight into the historical, current, and future identities valued by the communities. Past site visits for recreation informed the research planning and aided in referencing and recognizing change and town development. Crucial to this research is recognizing the Town of Nederland's awareness of change from different economic forces. The last paragraph of the town history shares that:

At the turn of the 21st century, the town's population growth had leveled out. New attractions brought increased tourism and increased revenue to local businesses. A new fire station and new library solidified Nederland's position as the hub of the Peak-to-Peak Community. Townsfolk now wonder what the future will bring... what will Nederland's next boom look like? Its next bust? How will we retain the town's unique character as the times around it change? One thing is certain: Nederland is a town like no other, and probably always will be. (Town of Nederland, n.d.b., para. 9).

It is this proximity to surrounding PPAS, history, relationship to tourism and tourism planning, philosophy of life represented through community governance, and geographic location to Colorado PPAs that make Nederland, Colorado the chosen site of study for embodied changes since the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3. Seminal Literature

As tourism networks adapt to the challenges of the pandemic, tourism planning and management must comprehend changes in the identities and mindsets of gateway community residents. Considering the trends of PPAs receiving historic levels of visitors, tourism research regarding ecological (Cole, 2017; Lenart-Boroń et al., 2022; Paudel, 2016), social (Everingham & Motta, 2020; Farkic, 2021; Milano et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2021), and technological/ICT relationships lack critical focus upon localized, gateway resident experiences (Pradhan et al., 2022). The following seminal literature guiding this research centers resident experiences within the theories guiding this research. This brief overview primes the reader to progress through the Methodology and resulting chapters presenting executive summaries of findings (Chapters 4-6).

2.3.1. Resiliency Within Crisis and Disaster Management

Crisis management and resilience theories underpin seminal research to understand how individual, community, and destination resilience occur simultaneously, interrelating across scales— particularly in places hosting tourism economies (Hall et al., 2018). Crisis and disaster

management has been described as “planning for, responding to, and recovering from crisis or disaster” (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p.312). Crises arise from action or inaction resulting in an event with detrimental impacts on an organization and/or the individuals within (Faulkner, 2001). A disaster may “refer to situations where an enterprise (or collection of enterprises in the case of a tourist destination) is confronted with sudden unpredictable catastrophic changes over which it has little control” (Faulkner, 2000, p.136).

Within communities seen as destinations and tourism-based economies (such as IWGCs), community responses to crises and disasters mirror crisis management (Cartier & Taylor, 2020). The distinctions between these concepts are related within the time of the COVID-19 pandemic as increased risk from climate change-induced disasters (e.g., wildfires, floods) was found to compound crises of housing, cost of living, staffing, political unrest, and access to services such as healthcare or food. These underlying issues preceding COVID-19 marked different eras of the pandemic.

2.3.2. The Seventh Moment, Embodiment, and the Affective Turn in Tourism Studies

Denzin (2002) describes seven moments, or “turns”, that have occurred in qualitative inquiry and social work in human disciplines. Our current moment has been marked as a critical turn, placing great importance on “interpretive, feminist and critical paradigms...in its post-structural and postmodern forms...defined by breaks from the past, a focus on previously silenced voices...conversations about democracy, politics, race, gender, class, nation, freedom and community” (Denzin, 2002, p.26; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This movement has readily been embraced by tourism studies (Boluk et al., 2019; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2019; Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021; Pernecky, 2020). Stemming from this moment, tourism authors are progressing affective knowledge in tourism inspired by the affective turn in other disciplines such as

geography (Buda & Tucker, 2015; Buda, 2015; Buda et al., 2014) and anthropology (Newell, 2018). Buda (2015) describes affective tourism as, “the ways in which affects, emotions, and feelings are accessed, felt, experienced, and performed in encounters between touring bodies and places” resounding the foundational work of seminal queer and affect theorists such as Sarah Ahmed and Eve Sedgwick in highlighting that “visceral intensities that circulate around and shape encounters between tourists, local tourism representatives and places” (p.3).

Qualitative, social scientists have reclaimed space within tourism research to situate affect, emotion, and embodiment as vital ways of generating critical knowledge within tourism (Buda, 2014/2015; d’Hautserre, 2015; Tucker & Shelton, 2018; Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). Affective scholarship has produced many descriptions and definitions for affect, generally agreeing on no universal description that encompasses its depth and complexity. Through an exploration of affect theory to explain the attraction of certain destinations, d’Hautserre (2015) describes affect as feelings diffusing “between individuals and within groups of people” (p.86). Affect centers upon embodied experiences of “other-than-conscious potentiality that can be brought on the surface...an intensity that when spiked, can become perceivable as emotion” (Martini & Buda, 2021, p.680; Massumi, 2002; Ngai, 2007). Emotions are differentiated as “social and cultural expressions of personal, subjective sociolinguistic descriptions of an experience” (Branstrator, 2023, para.6; Mazzarella, 2020). Coupled with embodiment theory (Swain, 2004; Ateljevic et al., 2005), affect theory enriches projects by relating all agents, including researcher, within complex systems to perceive change through thick and complex narratives reflective of their encompassing complex social-ecological systems.

Embodiment theory within tourism studies has many roots including Veijola and Jokinen (1994), challenging tourism’s disembodiment of tourists through the *tourist gaze* (Larsen &

Urry, 2011). Pritchard, Morgan, and Harris (2007) continued this momentum with their essay collection highlighting the importance of embodiment to understand how gender shapes discourse and power dynamics within tourism theory and practice. The critical and affective turns in tourism have grown in using embodied approaches tourism research designs and philosophies (Cavaliere, 2017b; Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). Since its inception and momentum within qualitative and critical studies, “self-reflexivity allowed researchers to acknowledge themselves as living, breathing, embodied human beings, who brought their previous experiences and worldviews to their project of inquiries” (Ateljevic et al., 2005, p.9).

Farkic (2021) shares trials in the use of embodied approaches in outdoor recreation tourism research to encourage greater attention to theoretical and methodological detail for embodied approaches to the production of knowledge. Embodiment and recentering the body as a gendered, cultural, political, and emotional intersection is seen within intersectional experiences of Black female bodies and the harms hidden within the performance of colonization within tourism (tebrakunna country & Lee, 2017). Lee (2017). honoring her home (tebrakunna country) listed as first author, shows embodiment as connections to self, others, land, country and kin as embodied beings within tourism dynamics. These highlighted examinations share insight into the progression and application of embodiment theory and embodied concepts within modern tourism studies and are influential to the development of this research.

Embodied approaches have been enriched by affect theory within tourism scholarship to explore and understand the affective dimensions of tourism (Buda et al., 2014; Buda, 2015; d’Hautserre, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2007). Everingham and Motta (2020) deconstruct the experience of volunteering tourism from a decolonial feminist perspective finding that affective spaces in tourism are paradoxically “bound up in, and shaped by, the larger processes of

neoliberalism and neo-colonial legacies, while at the same time, they contain borderland encounters of intersubjective relationalities and moments of vulnerability, care, critical intimacy and emergent decolonising connections” (p. 1). An important contribution of affect theory within tourism studies is the creation of affect through experiences and environments to instill physiological reactions or behaviors due to mood. Tucker and Shelton (2018) consider emotions, moods and affect produced within tourism experiences have “the propensity to make us *engage* (sic) with the world in this way or that” relating to the “‘worldmaking’ power of tourism” (Tucker & Shelton, 2018, p.66; Hollinshead, 2009).

The works of Eve Sedgwick and Brian Massumi have influenced tourism studies largely within affective, dark tourism such as post-disaster destinations or art installations including Banksy’s Dismaland (Pimentel Biscaia & Marques, 2020; Martini & Minca, 2021), and hopeful tourism (Pernecky, 2020). Brian Massumi describes emotions as “subjective content, the socio-linguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal” (1995, p.88). For this research, affect theory is used as conceptual and analytical guidance in understanding affective economies, further explained in Chapter 4 (Ahmed, 2004; Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2021), and emotion through an embodied approach to critically inquire about embodied changes relating to identities.

The role of the researcher within the research design and interpretation process is represented through an embodied qualitative research design in which where there is acknowledgement of “the corporeal selves of the researchers’ as well as the researched ‘subjects’ as primary factors in the research process” (Swain, 2004, p.103). An embodied approach brings light to the power dynamics within the relationships within a research design that intersect in multiple contexts (Swain, 2004). It’s important to note that the use of first and third person

fluctuates across certain chapters in the dissertation to present findings when appropriate to reflect an embodied approach to knowledge construction.

2.3.3. Biocultural Knowledge and Identities

Within tourism research, biological and cultural (i.e., biocultural) studies in tourism are needed to center place-based knowledge and experiences to combat the threat of biocultural homogenization through the pressures of globalization and biocultural diversity loss (Rozzi et al., 2018; Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023; Tauro et al., 2021). Biocultural knowledge includes terms including biocultural assets and heritage which “result from interactions between people and nature at a given time in a given place” (Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019, p.302). This relates to biocultural diversity as “a dynamic, place-based, aspect of nature arising from links and feedbacks between human cultural diversity and biological diversity” (Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019, p.302). Critical to the understanding of biocultural knowledge within tourism studies is Dr. Christina T. Cavaliere’s work demonstrating the importance of biocultural diversity within agritourism (Cavaliere, 2017a), affective dimensions related to climate change and growth paradigms (Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021), and recently with the development of the Critical Biocultural Identity Framework (CBIF) (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). The CBIF explores global tourism changes influencing biocultural identities of a gateway community directly relating to the intersecting power dynamics within a coastal gateway community with a mass cruise tourism-dependent economy (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). This work is foundational to this research as their work centers upon coastal gateway residents of Ketchikan, Alaska during the global lockdown period of COVID-19. The CBIF expands upon biocultural knowledge by finding identities as multi-scalar, complex constructions heavily shaped by bioregions. Biocultural identities are understood as, “the intertwining of social-ecological relationships and

diverse knowledges that situate characteristics within bioregional constructs” (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023, p.6).

Biocultural knowledge from different disciplines provides influential approaches to conservation (Gavin et al., 2015) and biocultural indicators for locally led environmental management (DeRoy et al., 2019). However, missing from tourism research is in-depth explorations of identities from IWGC resident perspectives as focus is generally placed upon tourist or visitor experiences and perspectives. Bond & Falk (2013) state that identities “can be reflected in the perspective of one’s mind or more indirectly in the perspective of ‘personality’...identity is something that attests to how others think about us, as well as how the ‘I’s’ think about themselves (Falk, 2009)” (p.431). Therefore, I pose that drawing from interdisciplinary biocultural studies may better guide qualitative inquiry within tourism for IWGC planning by connecting the affective components of place.

2.3.4. Technology Use and ICTs During Crises and Disasters

Research on the technological dimensions of community resilience (Hall et al., 2018) has expanded within tourism since COVID-19 featuring smart city and crisis management (Hassankhani et al., 2021) and extended reality (XR) for restorying human-wildlife relationships for biocultural conservation (Branstrator et al., 2023b). Within this budding area of research, caution has been expressed in approaching technology and ICTs in tourism without critical thought, identifying a dominant tone in academic assessments of ICTs within tourism and sustainability being “optimistic, simplistic and monocausal, with a focus on business and marketing opportunities” (Gössling, 2021, p.733). ICTs cover a broad range of technologies facilitating digital interactions such as smartphones, digital TVs and streaming platforms, social media, and networks facilitating online commerce (Pratt, 2019). This research addresses the need

for critical lenses within the framing of ICTs in tourism planning and management by contributing knowledge derived from the daily experiences of IWGC residents as agents within the tourism system to ground articulations of caution, understanding, or recommendations in ICT/technology use for individual and community resilience throughout crises and disasters as modeled during COVID-19.

Therefore, this research design is structured through principles of embodiment and critical qualitative inquiry to explore the effects and changes during crisis as embodied phenomena shaping identities through concepts of crisis and disaster management as it intersects with social-ecological systems (Cheer et al., 2017), biocultural knowledge (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023), and human-machine relationships through ICT and technology use (Haraway, 1991). This research brings feminist new materialist analysis (described in Methodology) to impacts of ICTs upon Nederland resident daily social dynamics as they are influenced by increased use of ICTs and time spent within virtual third spaces during crises. This approach fills gaps in tourism research of identity, CDM and resiliency through an in-depth, critical understanding of societal and environmental change mediated by technology and ICT use. The guiding philosophy of this research includes technology use in constructing resident and place identities of Nederland during COVID-19.

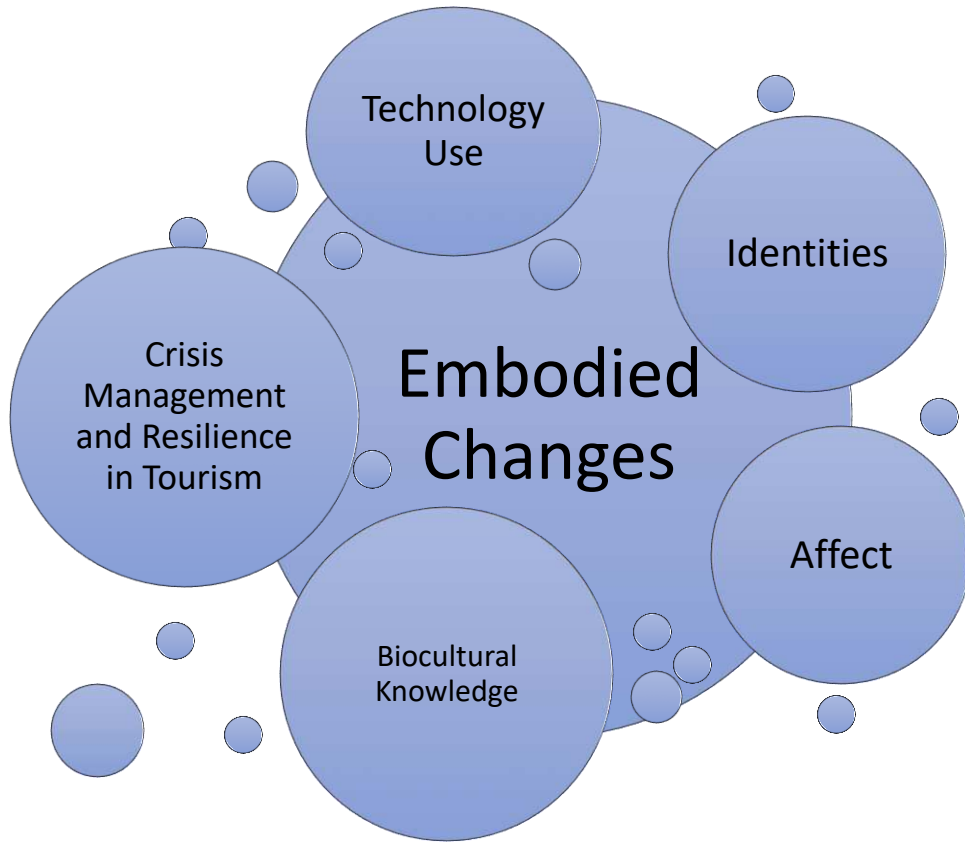


Figure 2. Conceptual compound of seminal literature

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The following chapter details matters of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology that ground the paradigmatic system of this research approach (Hollinshead, 2004; Matteucci et al., 2022) establishing embodied, reflexive records of my position within the research process, site, and topic of study. In fulfillment of the aim and objectives of this research, great care and critical thought was applied in the crystallization of a qualitative inquiry research design to bring forth knowledge from “differing views of the encountered reality/realities” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.154). Through the case study context of Nederland, Colorado, I engage “matters of art and social science as the phenomena in question are found and demonstrably interpreted via different but pertinent angles of vision” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.154).

This research explores change through a feminist new materialist lens to interpret concepts of community resilience and identities through intersections of embodied, biocultural, and affective knowledges. The following methodology utilizes qualitative methods of inquiry enacting the research design aim to explore changes perceived by Nederland residents during the COVID-19 pandemic related to technology use, affect, and identity. The literature guiding this research design contributes new knowledge to tourism academia as the methods employed elicit rich, complex knowledge from the perspective of residents guided by interdisciplinary literature of resilience, crisis management, biocultural knowledge, cyberfeminism, and identity theories.

This research address gaps in crisis management and resilience research in tourism by exploring identities and resiliency of an IWGC resident utilizing social, biocultural, and technoscientific theories to understand complexities of identity missing from tourism resilience

and crisis management literature. Within the Town of Nederland, an IWGC with a tourism-based economy, I analyze and interpret change in resident identities as related to community adaptation and resilience (i.e., cultural alignment [Cheer et al., 2017; Amoamo, 2017; MacLeod, 2013]) and resident relationships to information communication technologies (ICTs). I designed an integrated crystallization methodology comprised of qualitative methods of inquiry that were best suited to fulfill the aims and objectives outlined within this dissertation. By positioning my worldview in relation to this proposed case study, I present the following qualitative inquiry interpreting knowledge from an integrated crystallization of multiple sources of “realities that culminates into sense making through thick, rich, interesting and coherent representations” (Stewart et al., 2017, p.2).

To demonstrate how the chosen methodology assisted in fulfilling the aim and objectives, the following sections detail reflections of utilizing this methodology, introduces the reflexive thematic analysis process, and examples of the methods utilized. Additionally, a reflexive approach to the methodological process required me as researcher to reflect and grow through the progression of each method in fieldwork, leading to adjustments and lessons that may inform future crystallization methodologies in tourism. An overview of data collected during fieldwork is provided a preface to the findings, previewing the research findings and contributions.

3.2. Epistemological Lens

As I study changes in identity, community resilience, and the dynamics of an affective economy (Ahmed, 2004) during crisis, I reflect upon my own positionality, communities, and change in identity as an embodied research experience. I center the body (a more-than-human conceptualize of place, person, and biodiversity) within a new materialist onto-epistemology which supports embodiment paradigms crossing ecofeminist (Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021;

Camargo et al., 2016), cyberfeminist (Paasonen, 2011), and compostist (Haraway, 2016) bodies of work to explore identities in tourism contexts. Feminist new materialist perspectives include a diverse range of approaches sharing “a critique of and focus on interrogating the nature of the ‘human’ including acknowledgment of the actors (including those normally considered to be ‘nonhuman’) that come together to configure more-than-human worlds” (Lupton, 2019, p.1999; Braidotti, 2018).

Feminist new materialist perspectives in leisure and tourism embrace subjectivity and embodiment within the study of disruptive technological effects and affects during COVID-19 (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2021). Matteucci, Nawijn, and von Zumbusch (2022) provide a new materialist governance paradigm for tourism destinations of a “monist post-anthropocentric ontology, participatory epistemology, resilient forms of tourism and participation as methodologies, and social eudaimonia as societal value [axiology]” (p.169). They argue that “from a new materialist perspective, ontology and epistemology cannot be separated as reality is relational. In other words, all forms of life including humans are not parts of but constitute nature” (Matteucci et al., 2022, p.174). These examples of new materialist philosophy guide the construction of this research paradigm within a tourism context interpreting more-than-human relationships between social-ecological systems, crisis management, resilience, and identities.

Feminist new materialist paradigms open opportunities in research capable of eliciting and interpreting rich, complex data fitting the complexity of IWGC experiences. Specifically, this research was equipped with methods designed to fulfill the aim and objectives of this research following a crystallization methodology (Ellingson, 2009; Hollinshead et al., 2021). This design and employment of a crystallization methodology was founded in philosophy,

theories, and methods proficient in generating embodied, affective knowledge at individual and community-level experiences within IWGCs during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Given how tourism impacts compound and concentrate differently upon hosts of tourism economies (Mowfurth & Munt, 2009), my academic journey led me to follow epistemological paths regarding unique concerns and worldviews that intersect interpretive paradigms' theory, criteria, form of theory, and narration type (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Deep influence and reflection were provided through the advising of Dr. Christina T. Cavaliere within her Tourism and Conservation Lab at Colorado State University. Under her guidance, courses, regular discussions of philosophy and praxis, and lab work employing critical, ecofeminist methodologies within coastal gateway community research can be traced through my own epistemology, and methodologies. In the reflection of my own epistemology, Donna Haraway's works in new materialism directed my reading of seminal new materialism tourism scholarship with connections in "analyzing and conceptualizing human subjectivity and embodiment, agency and power relations, and the entanglements of human with nonhumans in more-than-human worlds" (Lupton, 2019, p.1998). Sprague (2016, 2018) deeply impacted my awareness of social science's influence on society, how our epistemologies frame our questions, and the ways in which these influences and our methods matter.

Core to building my epistemology are pluralistic dimensions acknowledging multiple ways of knowing that dissolve dualistic and essentialist boundaries through affective and embodied ways of knowing. Resonating with unsettling, disruptive, and decolonial tourism studies, I am influenced by the philosophies of posthumanistic and post-qualitative research as "forms of interpretive plural knowability, which demand the *fluid acumen* to map the less-fixed/fast-changeable populations of our time, and which are thereby decent yet rigorous in their

critical multilogicality” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.143). New materialism provides an umbrella under which my experiences and formations within critical ecofeminist research paradigms in sustainable tourism studies (Cavaliere, 2017a) embraces reflexivity through an embodied research approach and makes “ontological, epistemological, and methodological choices and statements to allow for Other voices to be explicitly heard in sustainable tourism discourse” (Camargo et al., 2016). Critical ecofeminist work challenges scholarly domination of women, nature, and culture.

This research demonstrates the potentials of critical ecofeminist research paradigms, known allies in reflexive, embodied, and affective ideologies within tourism studies (Ateljevic et al., 2005), to embrace Donna Haraway’s new materialist metaphor of the cyborg considering how our daily lives are increasingly “set by the extent and importance of rearrangements in world-wide social relations tied to science and technology...[as] we are living through a movement from an organic, industrial society to a polymorphous, information system” (1991, p.157). Haraway transcribes material and ideological concepts of White Capitalist Patriarchy into an Informatics of Domination to provide language reflective of the inadequacy of “advanced capitalism” to describe the oppressive and dominant forces acting through globalization of science and technology. By invoking a cyberfeminist approach within this critical inquiry, I investigate “the integration/exploitation into a world system of production/reproduction and communication called the informatics of domination” (Haraway, 1991, pp.158-159). Haraway’s growing epistemological stance within new materialism grows to refer to herself as a compostist (2016), using “the metaphor of compost to describe the rich variety of human and nonhuman actors that come together in assemblages and their potential to generate vitalities” (Lupton, 2019, p.1999; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

These philosophies acknowledge the social, ecological, and political realities of physical and virtual spaces through which we are affected across virtual and physical spaces. This realm of literature makes way for understanding third places as integral to our social-ecological systems. Within these places, we may interact with our immediate social networks or expand a sociopolitical scope to national and global networks which influence our perceptions of self and others. These multi-scale networks influence the way in which we conduct conservation research (Speaker et al., 2022) and build and maintain relationships with communities of research. Virtual worlds research within anthropology has revolutionized studies of online cultures including ways of teaching ethnographic field methods (Snodgrass, 2016). With my own lifelong presence within virtual worlds of gaming, communication, and social media, I have carried this experience within Dr. Jeffrey Snodgrass's Ethnographic Research and Teaching Laboratory at Colorado State University. Through exploration of players' experiences within nature-based games and relationships to online groups, I see the inclusion of technology use and online presence as a part of our embodied gendered, social, and political selves.

As a United States citizen raised in a post-9/11 world of crisis amongst technology, science, and entertainment expansion, I speak from concern for the role of social media, science and eco-literacy, and technology as they mediate our social relations "including crucially the systems of myth and meanings structuring our imaginations" (Haraway, 1991, p.159). This resurfaces the value of using the cyborg as metaphor as "the cyborg is a kind of disassembled and reassembled, postmodern collective and personal self. This is the self feminists must code" (Haraway, 1991, p.159). Therefore, the cyborg as metaphor relates humans' technological and scientific entanglements between nature and culture as "cyberfeminism points to critical analyses of cyberculture in relation to feminist thought – here, cyberfeminism becomes a critical feminist

position for interrogating and intervening in specific technological forms and practices” (Paasonen, 2011, p.335). It is through this complex philosophical lens that I see the world, its dynamic inhabitants, all that I do not know, all that I may know, and those who share the privilege belonging to one another through research.

These paths intersect and are embodied within a methodology in which myself as the researcher, contextualizing the historical, political, gendered, socioeconomic, and technoscientific experiences that frame how I see the world, influences the research design through the design and action of methods to reach the aims and objectives. Approaching this research through an embodied approach to explore crisis management and resilience in an IWGC was influenced by Dr. Stuart Cottrell while working as a graduate teaching assistant and an active student studying sustainability and resilience in international tourism contexts. This guidance provided by Dr. Cottrell complemented advisory under Dr. Cavaliere in discussing my epistemological lens and areas of my own identity and positionality that intersect with this research is important for methodological integrity. This research design was constructed in respect to my research paradigm including fidelity to the subject matter and utility in achieving research goals (Levitt et al., 2017).

This chosen methodology reflects how I give back to my communities of sharing with collaborations and change in the form of policy, practice, education, and healing through hospitality. The methodological aim of this research is to elicit complex expressions of resiliency and CDM from resident perspectives through qualitative methods to understand identities within Nederland. These areas that are sensitive to frequent changes, crises and disasters may be better understood in terms of resilience by expanding complex systems thinking to technoscience in daily lives. Feminist theory studying the relationships between technoscience, representation,

and gender opens the eyes of willing researchers to explore how “these possibilities increase the human capacities of seeing, hearing, *understanding and communicating* (sic): they are systems for representation. Technosciences represent and at the same time are themselves represented” (Kirkup et al., 2000, pp.xiii-xiv). Therefore, the metaphor of the cyborg, cyberfeminism, and feminist analysis of technosciences “is necessary to construct new conceptual tools to think differently with” (Kirkup et al., 2000, p.4).

A feminist new materials approach considers the act of research, the role of the researcher, and how these impact the community of research. I carefully constructed a reflexive research process to offer individual participants a safe, secure, inclusive, and welcoming environment to reflect and process their experiences during the pandemic understanding different ideologies may be present (Ermine, 2007). In-depth interview process can act as opportunities and resources for psychological and physiological well-being (Luu, 2022). This motivation is shaped from my experience in speaking with coastal gateway community members in previous research in Dr. Cavaliere’s Tourism and Conservation Lab related to perceived changes during COVID-19. I intentionally aimed to bring this cathartic experience to the research design as part of a reciprocal and respectful relationship between researcher and participants by providing an ethical space (Ermine, 2007) where complex emotions and experiences related to the pandemic may be shared through in-depth conversations and photo-elicitation (Cavaliere, 2017a). These accounts are expanded upon through secondary sources and field notes and diverse knowledge sources interpreted by a reflexive researcher generating themes “through data engagement mediated by all that they bring to this process” (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p.37).

3.2.1. Positionality

Related to this research, what parts of my own social, cyborg and biocultural identity overlap with this research? How does it position me to Nederland, the mountains, and its communities? How does it position me to the material and the outcomes of this research? In this declarative stage of my current worldview, I choose to reflect on my positionality as it both challenges and expands my perspectives in this research. Within research, there are power dynamics underlying who assumes power, from which positions, and upon who this power is enforced. This transparency allows visibility of my credibility within this area of research through multiple layers and overlaps of constraints and expertise in this project's paradigm. Additionally, within this research I choose to reflect upon the positionality of tourism (academic and industrial) to the Town of Nederland. This includes understanding previous relationships to my department of representation (CSU's Human Dimensions of Natural Resources Department), and the representation of researchers within the community's collective memory.

What knowledge and conversations preceded this research that may influence how residents perceive me as an intersection of institutional, aged, gendered, and cultured representation? Where in time, history, and space am I arriving within this conversation of tourism and identities? As I schedule interviews inviting critical, reflective dialogue (Boluk et al., 2019) through photo-elicitation (Cavaliere, 2017a) and affective methods of expression within interviews, who are we becoming (as researcher and researched) when we meet in such ethical spaces (Ermine, 2007)? How will I collect, analyze, and communicate the research data in a manner that resists and disrupts dominant approaches of "conventional 'helicopter research styles' where investigators merely drop briefly down into/into a given community" only to leave once the research (my) needs are met (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.146)?

Tourism researchers and studies may become carriers of critical multilogicality “where researchers have to learn how to be comfortable with their ‘plural knowabilities’ requiring comfort with ‘fluid acumen’ (thereby recognizing and responding to the mobile and mercurial character of identity and aspiration today” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.151). I approached this research design with the intention of making the interview process as an ethical meeting space in which a plurality of identities, ways of knowing (Cavaliere, 2017a), and situatedness are given space to become. Within this space, I am transparent in my own identity becoming and compounding as a visitor and researcher within Nederland, Colorado, living within virtual, scientific, and technological spaces, and the ways I affectively express these experiences. Residents take power within this space to reflect during the interview. Within this guided wandering (Cavaliere, 2017a; Hollinshead et al., 2021), critical tourism researchers internalize and embody the subtle obligations and demands to make space for counternarratives representative of multiple, emergent, and intersectional identities.

Acknowledging the influence of my identity as this study’s researcher, I am also transparent in my motivation to work with the Town of Nederland as I value the community and surrounding mountain region. Additionally, as a previous seasonal worker hosted by IWGCs in Alaska and Wyoming, these contributions to knowledge for Nederland and related IWGCs are made in reciprocity as these communities are meaningful to my own identity, emotions, and perspectives on technology use. This philosophical realm additionally speaks to the embodied positionality of the researcher overlapping with that of the researched as a means for understanding and constructing knowledge (Swain, 2004). Positioning myself and the field of tourism within this research assumes that the following findings are but one way of knowing the multiple realities of many people within one place. I acknowledge and seek to avoid the folly of

historical feminist paradigms that assumed power from Euro-American, Caucasian perspectives that excluded the needs, experiences, and relationship held by different people to the environment. Though this research does not bridge Indigenous-settler colonial narratives through methodology or research design, I do practice an ethical standard across research topics of becoming common plantain (Kimmerer, 2013; Stinson et al., 2021).

3.3. Crystallization as an Interpretive Bricoleur

Investigating and interpreting multiple knowledge sources to reach the study's aim and objectives differentiates from historical approaches to triangulation of knowledge sources. Hollinshead, Suleman, and Yu Lo (2021) contrast triangulation in discussing "crystallization", an independent research design approach, distant from triangulation, "that more intensively deconstructs the kinds of orthodox outlooks of validity and reliability that positivist and neopositivist efforts of triangulation routinely embrace" (p.154). Triangulation may be considered a form within the greater umbrella of mixed-methods research, which bridges methodological silos by incorporating different disciplinary traditions, knowledge, and ways of knowing (Snodgrass et al., 2023; Snodgrass, 2016). However, triangulation and mixed-methods methodologies do not assume tenets of researcher positionality, reflexivity, or use of creative genres of representation. Therefore, I decided to employ and design a crystallization methodology to action a more progressive approach to synthesizing multiple forms of representation. This progression of distinguishing between historical paradigms of research modeled guidance from my mentor and advisor, Dr. Cavaliere, to consider the history of triangulation and mixed methods within alternative methodological approaches to study and represent research participants holistically.

Crystallization within interpretative qualitative research is its own methodology, described as a purposeful “amalgam of differing views of the encountered reality/realities, and it engages both matters of art and social science as the phenomena in question are found and demonstrably interpreted via different but pertinent angles of vision” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.154; Ellingson, 2009). Though a more familiar term in qualitative inquiry literature, *crystallization* is a rare term within tourism scholarship (Hollinshead et al., 2021). Through a framework for qualitative research, Ellingson (2009, p.4) discusses the methodology stating:

Crystallization combines multiple forms of analysis and multiple genres of representation into a coherent text or series of related texts, building a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon that problematizes its own construction, highlights researchers’ vulnerabilities and positionality, makes claims about socially constructed meanings, and reveals the indeterminacy of knowledge claims even as it makes them.

This methodology resists dichotomizing research paradigms as tropes organized into hierarchies of historical recognition. Crystallization places particular emphasis upon utilizing multiple genres of writing or mediums of art as part of science; explicitly refuting assumptions of an art/science divide. This methodology was synonymous with my own feminist new materialist epistemology.

Upholding trustworthiness, credibility, and rigor within a crystallization methodology for qualitative inquiry speaks to how “the significance of the researcher as the alchemist and primary tool is highlighted through immersion and embodiment” (Stewart et al., 2017, p.6). Stewart et al. (2017) discuss integrated and dendritic approaches to crystallization. An integrated crystallization approach to qualitative inquiry and interpretation is akin to Denzin and Lincoln’s bricoleur analogy (2018) or that of a puzzle as it collects “interviews, observations, archival documents, images and text (the patches) to quilt together broad and varied sources” (p.6). My research design aligns with this methodology including semi-structured interviews, field notes, secondary sources, and artistic, affective expressions such as music and poetry as “appropriate

and ethically ratified pieces of the puzzle or quilt with the ultimate aim of answering the research” aims and objectives (Stewart et al., 2017, p.6).

The importance of a carefully constructed research design crystallizing understanding from multiple knowledge sources, including lived experiences as knowledge, cannot be understated as experiential accounts are “highly personal, subjective, intangible, multi-phased and multi-dimensional (presenting) a number of challenges to scholars, particularly in terms of what methodological approach is able to capture the richness of the experiences gained” (Wilson & McIntosh, 2010, p.141). Denzin and Lincoln (2018) predicted that the seventh and eight moments of qualitative research would be defined by interpretive scholars work implementing: i) including global economic influences to expand scope of inquiry, ii) embracing a postethnographic, postethnographer space, iii) the spatial, temporal, political, and gendered dynamics of identities of researched and researcher(s), iv) the moral and therapeutic nature of text, and v) a grand shared center of “avowed humanistic and social justice commitment to study the world from the perspective of the interacting individual” (2018, p. xvi).

Therefore, operating within qualitative research’s continued era of emergence, and to reach the methodological and research aims and objectives of this research, I implemented methods of qualitative inquiry that support both the research aims, objectives, and my positionality. These were carefully determined as effective for capturing thick, multi-dimensional knowledges sources to explore identities and community resilience of Nederland residents during COVID-19. The following literature outlines a feminist new materialist epistemology and formulative influences that lead to this research design’s integrated crystallization methodology, and the reflexive thematic analysis process.

The incorporation of embodiment within a feminist new materialist methodology is needed in tourism research to balance scholarship and media portrayals of destinations and IWGCs to move beyond polarized representations of devastation (Krugel, 2020) and recovery (Morales, 2022) focused through the perspectives of travelers and tour operators (Neuburger & Egger, 2021). The ontological, epistemological, and axiological connections of feminist new materialist guides critical, qualitative inquiry of resident and local experiences impacted tourism grounded within articulating connections between researcher responsibility and research content and design. Therefore, the methodological approach of this dissertation approaches resident lived experiences during the pandemic to deeply listen to experiences beyond externalized and dichotomized accounts.

3.4. Methods

The following section details the methods employed within this research to meet and address the research aim and objectives situated within a feminist new materialist epistemology. This section provides a review of the methods utilized to complete my data collection. I collected data through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, field notes, reflective journaling, secondary sources, and photo-elicitation. These methods facilitated meeting the research objective of assessing resident accounts and narratives related to changes during COVID-19. As supported by a crystallization methodology, these methods elicited rich, complex data to interpret new knowledge and ways of perceiving resident expressions of thoughts, emotions, and experiences during crises and disasters. Particular attention is given to the incorporation of photography, poems, and music as mediums of resident creative expression elicited through photo-elicitation and inviting different genres of resident creative expression through methods of qualitative inquiry. The role of creative expression in the analysis process is discussed in Section 3.5.

3.4.1. Semi-Structured Interviews, Field Notes, and Reflective Journaling

The initial phase of this research began after IRB approval in March of Spring of 2022. A safety protocol was developed in consultation with the advising committee to assure safety of researcher and residents throughout fieldwork. As this research occurred during COVID-19, all public health codes and recommendations for public interaction were followed during fieldwork. Additionally, the comfort and preferences of residents and researcher were respected in choosing locations and mediums (i.e., virtual or in-person) in the scheduling and conducting of interviews. This included making my advisor and emergency contacts aware of my interview schedule and location throughout field days. Preparation for a remote mountain environment required planning and adaptation for sudden changes in weather, loss of phone and internet reception, and preparing adequate supplies of water, food, and sunblock. As Nederland is a part of mountain ecosystems in forested areas, a safety protocol included times to conclude field work and locations to exercise extreme caution so as not to disturb wildlife.

Semi-structured interviews with Nederland residents began in March 2022 through purposeful snowball sampling to elicit the perceived changes in day-to-day environment and livelihood of the Nederland residents. Snowball sampling entailed asking residents to refer or suggest the contact of another resident in their social or professional network they thought may be interested in taking part in the study (Matiza & Slabbert, 2021). Snowball sampling is considered a purposeful method capable of reaching target participant samples with characteristics that may be difficult to access through conventional sampling (Naderifar, Goli, & Ghaljaie, 2017). The resulting resident participant sample developed through snowball and targeted sampling to collect data from the experiences of community members representing different livelihoods, values, and experiences.

Interviews were structured through the CBIF (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023), and social identity framework of Zhang et al. (2021), as well as feminist approaches to in-depth interviewing (Hesse-Biber, 2013; Vella, 2002). These integral resources guided the types of questions asked, cycles of practicing reflexivity, and representation of the residents within the study design (Cavaliere, 2017a; Hesse-Biber, 2013). I practiced deep listening during interviews, which may be understood as “a methodological tack and mindset” inviting intellectual humility, social, cultural, and political flexibility in being open-minded, and being willing “to question our complicity in reproducing those narratives through our choice of research topics and methods” (Koch, 2020, p.52). A pilot group of interviews was conducted prior to the dissertation proposal defense (after receiving IRB approval), to test the interview protocol and provide contextual readjustments to social, economic, cultural, gendered factors. Interviews followed an iterative reflex thematic analysis of “familiarization, coding, generating initial themes, reviewing and developing themes, refining, defining and naming themes, and writing up” (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p.39). This recursive flow gave space for reflective thoughts on the interview structure, improving questions and structure, and reflection upon early codes and themes.

Before, during and after interviews, field notes were taken to note details of the interview setting and the participant (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). These notes included details such as time, weather, the place of meeting (in-person or online), behaviors and reactions of the participant, as well as reflections of myself as interviewer before, after and during the interview. For example, one of my first field notes recorded the Wi-Fi and password of a coffee shop that became a popular meeting place for interviews, followed by:

It's a beautiful, sunny blue skies day...I'm settled in a table I hope will offer privacy for the interview. I'm very nervous with today having 2 interviews...The wifi isn't showing. Glad to have protocol pulled up ahead...I think I'm ready but fully aware I'm not sure what I'm ready for! (Saturday, April 2nd, 11:15 am)

This note demonstrating marking the environment of Nederland, my own feelings as the researcher, and notes to improve the impending field season. The nature and depth of field notes progressed through the season, with particular focus upon notes during interviews and post-interview reflection. On July 10th during an interview with Brienne (61), I noted the following observation using the first-person perspective of Brienne: “isolation has changed how we can welcome, perceive, or resent visitors. Having opportunities to see people again has brightened mood”. This note was part of building an understanding of the interactions of tourism, remote mountain geography, and emotional well-being during COVID-19. Field notes were also taken in the form of personal photographs of Nederland’s surrounding mountain environment, buildings, signage, landmarks, and iconic attractions often mentioned by residents during interviews. I captured the photograph below (see Figure 3) as a field note showing visitors wearing masks exiting a local shop as a local artist progressing a locally funded project to paint dinosaurs from geological periods of the Nederland area that shapes its home mountain range and valley today. Additionally, this photograph illustrates Nederland’s IWGC status by showing a central road sign placed at the entrance to town, guiding drivers through a roundabout leading into main streets of town or connecting to surrounding destinations.



Figure 3. A local artist painting a mural in downtown Nederland (source: author)

Field notes additionally provided reference points and markers for detailed reflective journaling throughout fieldwork, analysis, and the writing process. For example, unpacking my outsider status through journaling influenced conversations where residents felt I could not grasp concepts with appropriate depth. In some instances, the ways I spoke echoed outsiders preceding my own presence and fieldwork in town (e.g., reporters), warranting caution from residents to reflect upon the potential impacts of my words in the representation of Nederland. This is exemplified by the following excerpt from Don (47). Within our interview, Don advised me to consider how the questions I ask both represent and impact the town; advice challenging me to deeply reflected and adapt my interviewing and interpretation methods:

...be very careful where you're leading this next set of questions. Because once, if you open up this dialogue, about the national forests, you need to go back to decide what is the National Forest? And not just 'what is the national forest as it pertains to this town'. The National Forest isn't supposed to be specifically pertaining to the town, and that is for tourists... People are coming here for the national forests in the mountains. So if you're going to ask the question...you're opening up another fucking can of worms ... the only way you can regulate it is by saying who can and can't go there? How do you prove who's allowed to be in there and who's not? Or do you close it off? Then it's not a national forest anymore - It's a fucking preserve. So you have to look at what you're talking about.

Through deep listening, I was able to reflect and practice reflexivity before, during and after interviews containing critical moments requiring intellectual humility and embracing opportunities to learn with the shared knowledge from residents (Koch, 2020). Unpacking the interview experience with Dan through journaling, I wrote that “I felt insecure as the weight and reality of what this research could do could potentially conflict my own intentions”. I wrote that this shared moment with Dan demanded “critical reflection of the research design, the potential power and impact of this framing, and how I could challenge my own preconceptions of identity, Nederland, residents, and tourism” throughout the research process.

As I experienced my own life changes paralleling the dissertation experience, reflective journaling provided a space to consider my own experience, how it influenced points of interpretation, and spent extended time unpacking residents’ accounts. Journaling helped to process my own thoughts and emotions of personal experiences, building my capacity as a researcher to approach reflexive analysis of the vast collection of data sources and types. Reflections on theory, building themes, and connections to literature developed within journaling as an informal space to spend time with the content of this dissertation. This space aided in growing as an embodied researcher learning from residents with diverse backgrounds, motivations and knowledge. Throughout the coding process (described in greater detail in section 3.5), I referred to my journaling to remember rich details of important field days, events, and thought processes guiding the development of the final analysis.

3.4.2. Photo-Elicitation and Creative Expression

Without resident-centered paradigms, tourism scholarship and media portrayals of destinations and IWGCs risk representing complex experiences as click-bait frames of devastation (Krugel, 2020), or recovery (Morales, 2022) focused through the perspectives of

travelers and tour operators. Therefore, the methodological approach of my dissertation elicits different data types representing resident lived experiences during COVID-19 to deeply listen to experiences beyond externalized and dichotomized accounts. The interview protocol for this research includes a dedicated section for residents to share and express their experiences through the incorporation of photography supplied by both the participant and researcher. This methodology allows for affective indeterminacies and evolution of experiences becoming gateway resident life throughout crises and disaster (Massumi, 2002).

The aim and objectives of this research are proposed as best being met through the incorporation of creative expression and photography (McNiff, 2015; Cavaliere, 2017a). The elicitation of photography and creative expression within interviews gave residents an affective, expressive, and artistic outlet to represent their thoughts during the interviews of Nederland. Importantly, both residents and researcher provided photographs representing life in Nederland to co-construct cultural alignment concepts per the research objectives (MacLeod, 2013; Amoamo, 2017; Cheer et al., 2017). Resident participants were invited to bring photographs to the interview that they felt represented different aspects and perceptions of life in Nederland before and during COVID-19. Photographs taken by me or shared by residents were stored within the chosen qualitative data analysis software, MAXDA. Figure 4 (below) was a personal photograph taken as a field note early in the fieldwork as I became familiar with cultural landmarks, including Nederland's Mining Museum, featuring exhibits and artefacts on the late-1800s mining industry that led to the settler-colonial naming of Nederland, and shaping an era of its identity.



Figure 4. The Mining Museum of Nederland (source: author)

Additionally, I provided photographs found within the collection of online secondary sources representing Nederland from media perspectives (e.g., marketing, features in external news sources). Residents were invited to comment upon how presented compare to how their own photographs represent life in Nederland, or how their own photography of Nederland represented their experience and thoughts of changes in local life during COVID-19. The photo-elicitation segment of interviews additionally “set a visual stage for the topics presented” (Cavaliere, 2017a, p.113) supporting in-depth exploration of identities, affect, and technology use. The following photograph in the figure below (see Figure 5) is my recreation of a popular image I found as a top search result in the public domain of images when searching for “Nederland”. This is one photograph of several that I brought to interviews to elicit the thoughts of resident participants related to the representation of Nederland both internally to residents of the greater Nederland area, and externally to visitors and other communities. This photograph of an iconic shed in the heart of downtown Nederland is decorated to reflect the previously hosted

Frozen Dead Guy Days festival. This event is discussed further within Chapters 4-6 to relate the life cycle of this festival to changes in Nederland's identity during COVID-19.



Figure 5. Visitors posing in front of a decorated, iconic shed in Nederland in the spirit of Frozen Dead Guy Days (source: author)

Photography has been used across disciplines supporting spatial data for geographic information systems (GIS), social-ecological systems (Masterson et al., 2018), tourism (Cavaliere, 2017a; Willson & McIntosh, 2010), and in critical, feminist, and participatory action research (Liebenberg, 2018). However, the use of photography as a research method is categorized specifically to denote differences in the research design, the level of participation and decision-making by participants, how the photograph is taken, and fundamental assumptions of how the photographs and generated knowledge are used. Specifically, the use of photography within critical inquiry supported by in-depth interviews opens the possibility of crossing cultural and language barriers, provides space to express complex emotions and concepts, and shares power of knowledge production with participants (Cavaliere, 2017a). Additionally, photographs

allow for nonverbal expressions of phenomena driving research inquiry. The following section briefly overviews photographic methods in social research as related to the design of this research, with particular focus upon the methods of photo-based interviews (PEIs), photovoice, and forms of photo-elicitation. This discussion of related photographic methods reveals political, cultural, and historical influences in the consideration of choosing photo-elicitation interviews as a qualitative method of inquiry within a crystallization methodology (Liebenberg, 2018; Cavaliere, 2017a; Nykiforuk et al., 2016).

Within tourism literature, Willson and McIntosh (2010) critically discuss “the innovative qualitative research methods used...to examine tourists’ experiences” (p.142) through case study application. Photo-based interviews are described as photo albums constructed with photos taken by the principal researcher used to “prompt open conversational-style interviews with respondents” (Willson & McIntosh, p.143). Related methods such as co-constructed photo-elicitation have successfully been utilized within sustainability and tourism research such as Cavaliere (2017a) to further visual thinking through a co-constructed approach in “building relationships between the researcher, the participants and the landscape” (p.112). A distinct difference in the highlighted photo-based interviews and co-constructed photo elicitation methods is the researcher’s role in deciding which photos to include (Willson & McIntosh, 2010) and what to photograph during the interview process as part of the interpretation (Cavaliere, 2017a). Drawing from these examples within social research, photo elicitation within interviews may inspire dialogue under the “fundamental assumption that the meaning attributed to images, the emotions they arouse in an observer, and the subsequent information they elicit” complement information unable to be obtained through verbal inquiry methods alone (Langmann & Pick, 2018, p. 9).

Photovoice draws from foundations of “education for critical consciousness, feminist theory, and a community-based approach to documentary photography” (Wang, 2006, p.147). As defined by Wang and Burris (1997), “photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” (p. 369). Though photovoice has expanded through interdisciplinary application, three main goals must always underwrite the research goals: “they enable people to record and reflect their community’s strengths and concerns, to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and to reach policymakers” (Wang & Burris, 1997, p.369). The adoption of photovoice has spanned research topics such as understanding nuanced social-ecological system dynamics for human well-being, and community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) for social change and conservation (Beh et al., 2013). The following review of photovoice highlights critical social and political research progressing photovoice as a method inspiring the use of photography in my constructed research design. However, through this discussion a distinction is made in this research design categorizing the use of photographic methods through PEIs, a distinct method from the concept and methodology of photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Masterson et al. (2018) demonstrate how the complexity of social-ecological system dynamics requires methods like photovoice for “holistic ways of perceiving human-nature interactions from multiple worldviews that also acknowledge inequalities between scientific and other forms of knowledge” (p.1). Liebenberg (2018) frames a contemporary critique and implementation of photovoice within a participatory action research (PAR) framework for empowerment and social change using collective interpretation by groups to co-construct meaning. Throughout photovoice literature, “There is an inherent assumption...that its results

will ultimately stimulate change by influencing decisions and policies at the community level” (Nykiforuk et al., 2016, p.3). Though this research invited residents holding social and political positions of power, this research cannot claim a foundational assumption of facilitating social change by sharing the photographs with policy makers. However, considering the deep value of art and music to Nederland, photography provided by both residents within the interview process may reflect what Liebenberg notes as the power of photovoice for residents to “choose (what) to photograph, when and how, is shaped by what our community values as well as how we would like to reflect our lives” (Liebenberg, 2018, p.3). Therefore, this research acknowledges the historical, political, and cultural contexts of distinct photographic methods traced through critical and social research within the proposed method of PEIs (Liebenberg, 2018).

Photo-elicitation interviews (PEIs), “use photographs in interviews to either guide interviews, stimulate memories from participants or instigate dialogue about a particular subject of interest (Van House, 2006; Warren, 2005)” (Langmann & Pick, 2018, p. 9). PEIs guide both researcher and participant in reflection and discussion through in-depth interviews guided by photographs composed by participants to provide thick descriptions of tangible and intangible connections and values within the research area (e.g., nature, community), and allow participants to express complex concepts through affective, artistic, or direct visual representation.

The following photograph (see Figure 6) provided by Ellie (32), is an example of including photo-elicitation within interview to co-construct knowledge and understanding of resident perceptions and experiences during COVID-19 to the research aim and objectives. When invited to share photography relating to her thoughts and experiences of living in Nederland, Ellie shared the photograph below of a sunset of Nederland alighting clouds in pink and blue hues over pines trees.



Figure 6. A sunset in Nederland representing differing perspectives (source: Ellie, 32)

Ellie’s fellow resident and friend compared a photograph of this sunset taken at the same time, displaying a different array of pigments including yellow and orange. To Ellie, this photograph represented a metaphorical understanding of life in Nederland during COVID-19; though two people may simultaneously view the same phenomenon, what is seen and perceived can differ.

3.4.2. Secondary Sources

Secondary sources may be understood as data collected by other organizations or entities earlier or outside of the research (Ajayi, 2017). Secondary sources were aggregated as community familiarization, becoming a continuous process throughout fieldwork. Before and during the interview process, I collected secondary sources related to Nederland to become (and remain) familiar with cultural, political, environmental, and economical topics, trends, and

values (Cavaliere, 2017a). Sources included news, current events, cultural events (e.g., festivals, concerts), local commerce changes (e.g., businesses opening or closing), political updates (e.g., elections), documentaries featuring Nederland, marketing (both internally and externally generated), and social media (e.g., Facebook) to provide publicly available diverse perspectives creating a collage of Nederland experiences. Collection of sources complemented ongoing content and textual analysis throughout the research timeline both to maintain an understanding of Nederland's development in context of historical changes (Cavaliere, 2017a).

These sources were used as prompts during interviews as current events or emergent themes related to the secondary resources were related to interviews. Additionally, this collection and analysis of secondary sources established the start of interpreting social identities within virtual and technological realms as residents discussed in-person and online interactions, and how external representation of Nederland influenced visitation rates and behaviors within Nederland during before and during COVID-19. Examples of secondary source use included reading and hearing about popular stories overlapping between online forums and local newspapers. Popular examples included stories of human-wildlife interactions such as humans (residents and visitors) interacting with moose, bobcats, and mountain lions. On June 29th, 2023, The Mountain-Ear reported a long-term resident walking his dogs who startled a female moose with her calf, unintentionally provoking an attack (Marschke, 2023). By referencing this story during interviews, conversations were able to explore attitudes, values, behaviors, and emotions relating to the research aim and objectives stemming from local occurrences.

3.5. Reflexive Thematic Analysis and Thematic Saturation

The following reflexive thematic analysis outlines and details how the methodology designed and enacted within my dissertation addressed and met the research aim and objectives.

The foundational theory and philosophy of this research was embedded within the methods of this embodied approach to a crystallization methodology. I designed a modified reflexive thematic analysis process, displayed in the Appendix as Figure 7, utilizing anthropological techniques to identify themes as fundamental concepts arising during field methods (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). These were organized through overarching conceptual categories of codes by their relevance to the aim and objectives (Castellanos-Verdugo et al., 2010), and progressed through a cyclical thematic analysis from initial identification of themes to refined themes as major findings for chapter proposals (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The development of codes and themes grew steadily as I listened to interviews while commuting and working with Dr. Cavaliere on related research within the Tourism and Conservation Lab.

The coding process followed Braun & Clarke's (2021) reflexive approach to thematic analysis. This includes developing themes later in the research process from codes generated by the researcher through intensive analytical and interpretive engagement with the data "mediated by all that they bring to this process (e.g., their research values, skills, experience and training)" (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p.39). Inductive open coding will follow an organic process as my own understanding of the research grows. This reflexive approach of "familiarisation, coding, generating initial themes, reviewing and generating developing themes, refining, defining and naming themes, and writing up" (Braun and Clark, 2021, p.39). Interview transcripts, field notes, and secondary sources of textual, audio, and visual form were stored in password protected storage before being uploaded and organized in MAXQDA.

Using this qualitative data analysis software, I was able to move across sources to identify and build patterns from data through identification of emergent themes. Photographs taken by residents and myself underpinned this analysis process as the perspectives, values, and

experiences of residents represented in photography guided and shaped my interpretation of residential life in Nederland during COVID-19. Importantly, residents describing the meaning and associated emotions with their unique creative expression (e.g., photographs, music, poetry) during interviews allowed for me to question and its representation in relation to affect, identity, and technology use during COVID-19. Additionally, coding of my own photographs shaped understanding, analysis, and interpretation of emerging empirical themes.

With interviews recording on Otter AI, following influential methodological guidance (Cavaliere, 2017a) I listened to interviews daily during routines of transit, walking, or chores to continuously aggregate community familiarization and findings (Bernard et al., 2017) to interpret and identify salient themes and subthemes. While organizing notes and transcribing interviews, I created memos applying field observations and jottings to specific areas of transcriptions. Early in my initial coding process, I began utilizing emic phrasing and researcher interpretation to create inductive codes. This was complemented by a growing base of secondary sources from local newspapers, media channels and social media. Throughout coding and identification of early themes, I drew from the dissertation's basis of foundational literature to integrate deductive codes based on core themes.

3.5. Adjustments and Lessons

Throughout the dissertation process, I adjusted each method as testing and adaptation grew through the experiences of fieldwork. The following notes are summarized from field notes, transcription memos, and notes taken throughout the final analysis. These notes on adjustments and lessons may benefit future researchers embarking upon embodied approaches to research, those interested in crystallization methodologies, researcher experiences in IWGCs, or residents interested in the changes experienced by a researcher within their community.

Initially to guide the interview process, I wrote out all possible interview questions and prompts on index cards. However, I quickly moved away from index cards to maintain focus upon participant and follow organic construction of interview. The concepts of identity, emotion, and technology use readily and easily arose through conversations of life throughout the pandemic, but often required me as the researcher to adjust the order of questions and curate prompts to the organic flow of conversation. Additionally, with in-depth interviews and deep listening (particularly in-person), I gave precedence to note eye contact, facial cues, and body language, which were crucial to understand tone and depth of conversation topics. Interviews that occurred online or over phone required intent focus upon tone, pacing, and diction as organic cues characterizing in-person interactions were unavailable. The virtual mediums enabling remote interviews were necessary components of this research design during COVID-19, which enabled new ways of conceptualizing, approaching, and understanding the research aim and objectives. Though virtual mediums differed in the ability to deeply listen to residents, during times of crises such as COVID-19, deep connections were established to convey accounts, thoughts, and emotions in meaningful ways (’t Hart, 2021).

Throughout the field experience, I balanced conducting interviews with recruitment through resident references (i.e., snowball sampling) with recruitment through different channels of communication. As I reached out to residents who held positions in local government and town administration, I was offered multiple opportunities to briefly present and promote my research in public town meetings. An integral opportunity came through a conversation I initiated with a town planner operating a booth at the farmer’s market as they elicited resident feedback on popular Nederland’s trails surrounding town. With a brief introduction of my research, I was connected to Nederland’s Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Advisory Board

(PROSAB). In the planning of the next PROSAB meeting, I was connected to the town administrator who included a time slot for me to speak about my research in a public setting. This presentation allowed residents as attendees and board members to become aware of my presence in town, and familiar with the topic of my research. A summary of my presentation was noted in the local newspaper, the Mountain-Ear which supported the presence of this research and researcher in town. Additionally, the town posted a screen shot of my research on Nederland's primary public Instagram account outlining the title of my research, a summary of its purpose, and how to contact me.

Later in the summer, I presented at Nederland's Board of Trustees meeting, speaking to the town's leadership and answer questions of all residents attending in-person and remotely. The experience of being part of these meetings was humbling as I realized was integrating myself into community meetings and local channels of communication as a Colorado State University research representative, positioning the development of my dissertation as a living agenda item in community life. Between these public presentations, I was permitted by the administrators of Nederland's most popular private Facebook group using this social media platform to reach a much larger resident audience with to recruit across the greater Nederland area resident. Instead of using Facebook earlier in the summer to recruit, I waited until my presence in town had become more familiar, and I had built confidence and trust through a foundation of interviews. I interpreted this state through verbal approval of residents during interviews, thoughts of my research shared by residents in passing conversations, and willingness of residents to refer others in their network.

This time building a reputation before posting on the town's largest social media outlet (Facebook) was well-served as comments on my recruitment post were met with residents

endorsing me as a respectful researcher. This approval helped encourage residents to reach out via comments and private messages to learn about the study and consent to participate. Given the small-town context of Nederland, I reflected upon this unconscious decision I had made earlier in the summer to prioritize in-person networking before asking for permission to recruit through social media channels. In Nederland and prior experience researching a remote coastal gateway community, I found my background as a resident of a small town gave me an innate understanding of pacing the manner and mediums of my recruitment process that aligned with local values.

During the preliminary thematic analysis, I consulted my advising committee regarding the use of photography, poetry, and creative works shared by Nederland residents. After a detailed meeting to determine the ethical use of images and creative content shared by residents, I contacted the IRB to confirm and update the IRB protocol. Special care to this issue was given as the exempt status of this research does not threaten the safety of participants, nor the security of their personal details. All information is confidential, where the researcher is the only party made aware of the participants' personal information. Given the small-town context of this research, I was concerned that familiarity between residents may translate into recognizing phrasing of one another's writing, speaking, or potentially photography. In discussion with IRB, I shared the nature of my research, the field site, and how this related to my concern about the collection and featuring of different types of creative expression within academic writing or presentations. This conversation led to an updated IRB to reflect concerns of privacy and use of creative expression of residents.

3.6 Data Collection Summary

In total, I conducted 43 in-depth, semi-structured interviews (22 women/21 men) with residents of the greater Nederland area. These interviews were complemented by over 300 secondary sources such as newspaper articles, social media posts of resident forums, and publicly available artwork. I used the term “greater Nederland area” early within the recruitment and referential sampling (i.e., snowball) process, as I found that many people perceived by me to be locals or residents did not technically qualify as residents of Nederland due to their residential status despite working within Nederland or belonging to the community. This unintentional exclusion required clarification since of many locals who lived outside of Nederland in the Peak-to-Peak mountain region of nearly 8,000 residents who utilize and rely upon the health and human services of Nederland, but do not hold rights to vote on municipal matters. This distinction was emphasized to me in interviews explaining the importance of the Town of Nederland, part of Boulder County, to surrounding mountain gateway communities. Chelsea (60) emphasized that:

We have people in Rollinsville, which is Gilpin County [outside of Boulder County], they consider themselves Nederland. And Boulder County often has just programs just for Boulder County, and Rollinsville people would get very, very, very upset because they use [emph.] Nederland, they use [emph.] Boulder County.

Therefore, this research specified a scope of greater Nederland area residents as locals within Nederland and its surrounding mountain communities that worked, lived, or mediated daily life within Nederland. To draw from a diversity of local experiences, I sampled residents according to livelihoods, residency details, and community involvement to incorporate different backgrounds of residents. By monitoring this ratio, all interview participants balanced representation from 7 categories: local business, community organizers, education, local governance, creators, families, and elders/retired. Participating residents ranged in age from 23-

79 years old, spoke from positions across short to long-term residence, and were evenly split between represented genders. Interviews provided a total of 86 hours of in-depth interviews (~2 hours per interview), recorded across a variety of settings including in-person, virtually, within businesses, residences, or outside. Regular field site visits provided familiarity with Nederland's cultural landscape (Amoamo, 2017), and variations in parks, public works, businesses, visitors, and daily flows of life.

Consent to research participation and recording interviews was confirmed according to IRB approved methods of gathering signed consent forms, consent over email, and/or recorded verbal consent. Interviews were recorded using a USB recorder, and Otter AI when internet or data connection was available. Remote interviews were conducted via phone or hosted through Microsoft Teams. All recordings were transcribed automatically and edited manually through Otter AI. I used a student Microsoft account provided by Colorado State University to store all data within a password-protected CSU OneDrive folder.

I monitored the progression of thematic saturation throughout fieldwork to assure data collected qualified as reaching “the point during data analysis at which incoming data points (interviews) produce little or no new useful information relative to the study objectives” (Guest et al., 2020, p. 5). After the first five interviews, I thematically analyzed and coded interviews, field notes, and secondary sources to establish a baseline point of 87 codes representing the emergent themes. This baseline of 87 provided a denominator to compare the number of new codes found every two interviews, with the goal of reaching a level of 5% or lower in new codes (i.e., new information). While coding the 16th and 17th interviews, I found 4 new codes (4.6% of information being new) signaling thematic saturation. By the 43rd interview, hundreds of

secondary sources, 17 field visits, and reviewing months of reflective journaling, I had confirmed and maintained thematic saturation.

3.7. Preface to Findings

The findings of this research are presented in the following three executive summaries. Full chapters including detailed findings will become available upon request following finalized future publications. Each executive summary presents the findings organized by the outlined research objectives, and their connection to the research design. These pieces are intended to be read as self-contained chapters, where each executive summary chapter focuses upon a specific objective to collectively address the aim of this research. Each executive summary overviews the research contributions to knowledge for CDM in tourism, IWGC planning, critical feminist methods in tourism, and the value of affect and emotion in the co-construction of knowledge. A cumulative discussion and conclusion (Chapter 7) provides greater detail to each chapter summarized in its relevance to the dissertation research design.

4. AFFECTIVE TOURISM ECONOMIES: THE AFFECTIVE DIMENSIONS OF COMPOUND CRISES IN NEDERLAND, COLORADO

4.1. Chapter 4 Executive Summary

Affective and embodied paradigms in tourism studies are needed to resituate the body in tourism to make space for counter-narratives of *vivência* – “the lived and understood-in-everyday-fashion philosophical life of a home or host population” (Hollinshead et al., 2021, p.152). This preliminary chapter meets Objective 1 (affect) by contributing critical and affective knowledge within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of Nederland. By positioning affect theory within this research to explore the everyday life of residents during COVID-19, knowledge of resiliency and CDM is oriented from the perspectives and accounts of residents. The incorporation of residents’ creative expressions (McNiff, 2015) is emphasized within the use of a crystallization methodology to elicit affective, embodied knowledge of residents through artistic genres of data collection and analysis (Ellingson, 2009).

The executive summary of this chapter positions affective economies (Ahmed, 2004a) to conceptualize scaled connections between individuals and communities to explore emotions as part of IWGC resilience during crises and disasters. A feminist new materialist epistemology guides a critical lens analyzing dynamics of power held within different identities, how these identities relate to processes of change during COVID-19, and instances in which emotions are mediated by dependence upon Nederland’s tourism economy. Utilizing an embodied research approach, affect becomes an integral part of furthering knowledge production to explore how emotions both express and affect individual and community resilience as part of crisis and disaster management through the case study of a tourism-based economy.

During crises and disasters, particularly as they compound through climate change, what do emotions *do* when conceptualizing affective tourism economies? The lived residential experiences of an intermountain western gateway community (IWGC) of Nederland, Colorado is presented as a microcosm of change within IWGCs of the United States focused upon community experiences. Within a crystallization methodology featuring in-depth, semi-structured interviews with residents and secondary sources, I incorporate residents' creative expressions to understand how affective dynamics navigate life throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Discursive and affective methods are featured within this crystallization methodology complementing a feminist new materialist epistemology to discover and contribute new knowledge within CDM and resiliency knowledge in tourism. This methodological approach to Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19 contributes new knowledge from research designs needed to expand "how tourist scholars might make sense of the affective contours of the 'post-viral' tourism world" (Molz & Buda, 2022, p.190).

This philosophical grounding gives particular attention to the study of being and becoming – a strong realm of interpretation in the study of change influenced across multi-level systemic change experienced locally by residents (Hollinshead et al., 2021; Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). Utilizing this methodology created the capacity to explore affective dimensions of residents' individual and collective experiences within Nederland during crises through multiple methods. Through this approach, my research posits that by conceptualizing IWGC economies as both affective and touristic constructs, the ways in which emotions "do things" within tourism dynamics may inform IWGC planning for crisis and disaster management. In turn, the tourism academy and industry may learn from the lived residential

experiences of IWGCs such as Nederland as IWGCs with shared experiences adapt and evolve to the unfolding issues of compounding crises and disasters.

This research contributes knowledge to tourism scholarship as most sites and scales of research analyze destinations, tourists, and the tourism industry as opposed to focusing critical lenses upon residents', particularly the inclusion of conflicting emotions from economic dependency and risk from tourism during crises and disasters (Erickson, 2021; Sandlin & Mauldin, 2017; Brown, 2016; Picard & Robinson, 2012; Tucker, Shelton & Bae, 2017). By centering residents and communities whose experiences were shaped by entanglements with tourism economies during COVID-19, research informed with resident-centric knowledge may more effectively and holistically inform future research for tourism planning in IWGCs adapting to ongoing and impending crises and disasters.

This research stems from an overarching aim to explore the relationships between changes experienced by Nederland residents hosting a tourism economy during crisis through concepts of identity, affect, and technology use. The objective fulfilled within this manuscript is to further the critical and affective turns within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of IWGC residents. The literature within this research bridges queer philosophy of affect and emotion (Ahmed, 2010; Snediker, 2009; Sedgwick, 2003), cultural theory (Beauchamps, 2017), resiliency (Pugh, 2017; Naylor et al., 2021; Hall et al., 2022) and community responses during crises and disasters (Cartier & Taylor, 2020) finding significant limitations upon the suite of affect and emotions discussed within affective and tourism literature - primarily focused upon hope, optimism, shame, empathy, and quantification for management of emotions for tourism operations (Volo, 2021).

Commonly, affective dimensions are seen as related to destination image, branding, and travel intention such as cognitive and emotional dimensions of destination image held by tourists (Najar & Rather, 2022; Lehto et al., 2008; Alvarez & Campo, 2014). However, research is growing in centering embodied and affective ways of knowing to highlight gateway resident experiences during crises (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). Therefore, affect theory is positioned within an embodied approach to co-creating narratives between researcher and residents (Cavaliere, 2017a) to further knowledge of multi-scalar experiences of individual and community resilience during COVID-19. This research draws from the works of iconic authors within qualitative, social, and feminist research that have discussed descriptions and characterizations of affect, which has influenced transdisciplinary adoptions and application of emotion and affect (Ahmed, 2004a/2004b; Sedgwick, 2003; Massumi, 1995). This approach informs the following application of affective and creative methods of inquiry within a new mountainscape context of Nederland, Colorado during COVID-19. Inviting residents to interpret and incorporate their own creative expression during interviews brought greater depth to the thematic analysis process heightening researcher capacity to perceive and identify major themes expressed within the human dimensions of crisis and disaster management.

Grounded in the methodology, I made the community aware of the topic, purpose, and content of my research through hanging posters on community billboards, visiting local businesses to speak with patrons and owners, attended live music and farmers markets, and posted an invitation to participate in the research in the most popular Nederland-based Facebook pages. As I embraced, practiced, and was humbled by an embodied research process, I grew connections with members of the community including local government, town administration, and members of non-profits and non-governmental organizations supporting health and human

services of Nederland and the surrounding intermountain mountain network. As residents became more familiar with me, I earned trust, support, and validation in the research process. This warranted two invitations to join public proceedings in town meetings where I learned of current issues, projects, and became more familiar with local values related to a greater scope inclusive of life during crises and disasters such as wildfires, housing and workforce crises, and COVID-19.

The findings of this research present *affective dimensions of resilience* as local values relate to places and behaviors mediating the emotional well-being of Nederland residents during COVID-19. Findings expanding upon *identity, belonging and responsibility* demonstrate how a socialized *economy of care* mediates individual and community resilience during COVID-19 where the gendered identities of residents matter in who leads adaptations in care during crises and disasters. *Affective tourism economies* of communal loss (anger, fear and anxiety) and queer optimism (gratitude, luck and appreciation) demonstrate how emotions affect social and emotional capital according to resident identities during crises and disasters. Complex expressions of *empathy and sympathy* and *sense of humor* are found within individual emotional regulation, drawing simultaneously from sense of self and the biocultural identity of Nederland.

5. REMOTE CONTROL: THE CYBERNETIC FOLD OF TECHNOCULTURE AND IDENTITY IN NEDERLAND, COLORADO

5.1. Chapter 5 Executive Summary

Intermountain western gateway communities (IWGCs) of the United States, such as the Town of Nederland in Colorado, are frontiers of technocultural change catalyzed by rapid advancements of information communication technologies (ICTs). As IWGCs witness the rise of ‘Zoom Towns’ (Potter & University of Utah, 2020), the role of ICTs within individual and community resilience within crises and disasters is imperative to understand as related to tourism dynamics. However, tourism research would benefit from deeper consideration of ICTs as technocultural change to social and political realities, which are critical to understanding the experience of COVID-19 and our globalized societies. Therefore, the following paper explores philosophical engagements through feminist new materialist paradigms synthesizing cyberfeminist, cybernetic, and technocultural theory (Haraway, 1991; Shaw, 2008; Paasonen, 2011). This is understood in an applied context by positioning Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19 to expand resiliency knowledge of technology use and ICT systems as reflections and catalysts of change.

The executive summary of this chapter presents fieldwork from Nederland, Colorado featuring qualitative data sources within a crystallization methodology (Ellingson, 2009), enriched by creative expressions of residents (McNiff, 2015), to explore the roles and meanings of technology use during COVID-19. In-depth interviews, secondary sources, field notes, deep listening, and reflective journaling from fieldwork conducted in Nederland during COVID-19 are organized through a rigorous, reflexive, and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Affective and feminist theories of technology use embedded into the research design address gaps in knowledge by eliciting resident accounts to understand how human systems and relationships of Nederland have permanently changed with the advancement and adoption of ICTs. Studying the role of technology use during heights of the COVID-19 crisis through this approach allows critical perception of social and spatial (physical and virtual) elements of crises and disaster management currently lacking within tourism (Gretzel et al., 2020). Modernity has witnessed and embodied “social change drive by technological innovation...[which] have to be understood as organized according to the development of new technologies that changed patterns of work and social life and influenced cultural institutions” (Shaw, 2008, p.8). Therefore, Nederland resident perspectives are represented within a larger body of knowledge featuring international urban and metropolitan perspectives (Moreno et al., 2021).

Rural and remote resident relationships to, and mediated by, ICTs during COVID-19 are budding in resiliency knowledge in tourism (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023). This area of knowledge is currently limited in relating to the technological dimensions of individual and community resilience (Young, 2019; Firdhous & Karuratane, 2018; Branstrator et al., 2023a). Therefore, to articulate a more critical lens echoing political ecology and critical geographies of resilience, research is needed centering IWGCs to support their own development plans and needs incorporating crisis and disaster management within tourism planning (Cretney, 2014).

Individual and collective use of ICTs enable remote livelihoods and lifestyles, including new online social spaces as third places. Perceiving and analyzing technocultural changes to social and political institutions (Shaw, 2008) requires diverse approaches and multi-scalar perspectives to understand the many systems and actors within remote and rural places embodying and affecting change related to ICT development – particularly to understand the role

of ICTs during crises and disasters. Critical qualitative analysis through a crystallization methodology uncovers intersections between ICTs and multi-scalar representations and embodiments of identities, influencing individual and community resiliency. This approach merits incorporating literature of space and place (Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Lalicic & Garaus, 2022) to structure social science research of CDM within IWGCs during COVID-19. The findings include emic use of irony, metaphor, and creative expression (Haraway, 1991; McNiff, 2015).

Themes of *remote control, involvement and participation*, and *cybernetic identities* are presented with empirical demonstrations in the forms of interview excerpts and resident creative expressions such as photography and poetry. Sub-themes are identified to provide deeper meaning to each theme which are listed here in order of their respective themes. These sub-themes include *change, vision, and control; ICTs and technology use for individual and community resilience; and the resident gaze*. The findings relate technocultural change in residents' daily use of ICTs to shifting social and political dynamics within cybernetic systems where individual and collective identities influence individual and community resilience of Nederland.

6. REFLEXIVITY AND REFLECTIONS OF CHANGE ACROSS SCALES OF IDENTITIES: A CASE STUDY OF NEDERLAND, COLORADO

6.1. Chapter 6 Executive Summary

This article summary is the third and final highlight of findings conceptualizing identities as aspects of individual and community resilience during crises and disasters. To contribute knowledge encapsulating complex aspects of resident lives during COVID-19, this summary chapter addresses the aim of this dissertation by addresses gaps in CDM research in tourism by exploring resident identities through creative and affective expressions (Ahmed, 2004a/2004b), technology use (Hassankhani et al., 2021; Branstrator et al., 2023b), and cultural realignment (Amoamo, 2017; Cheer et al., 2017; MacLeod, 2013) to expand upon individual and community resilience throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

This chapter of findings addresses reflections of physical and virtual spaces in which we live social, affective, and biocultural realities. The findings of this exploration are part of an iterative process of analysis, contributing towards a final step of using cultural realignment as a tool for analyzing change within an intermountain western gateway community (IWGC) at the scale of a mountainscape destination identity. The individual level scale of investigation is expanded upon through secondary source analysis (Ajayi, 2017) and field notes (Emerson et al., 2011) to compare resident representation and interpretation of Nederland, Colorado with external representation, branding, and stereotyping (MacLeod, 2013). This analysis builds a scale of knowledge to assess processes and agents of change in the representation of Nederland. An important point of this analysis is exploring the agency of Nederland residents to control such changes, and how this relates to community resilience to social-ecological changes (Amoamo, 2017; Cheer et al., 2017).

This summary chapter contributes towards tourism scholarship regarding processes and agents of change through embodied, affective accounts during crisis within western gateway communities, how they are related, and what this knowledge reveals regarding “community resilience, the restoration and re-imaging of [mountain] space/place, and the changing significances of...sociopolitical and cultural landscape” (Amoamo, 2017, p.80). Through collective analysis of resident identities as biocultural (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023), affective, and technocultural constructs, a larger scale of understanding is presented relating Nederland residents’ sense of self to sense of place, and what processes and agents of change impact cultural alignment through time. I argue that cultural realignment as a tool for analysis within an embodied, feminist new materialist research design has potential to explore changes during the COVID-19 pandemic through a multi-scale representation of identities. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is met by using cultural realignment as a tool of analysis to explore the processes and agents of change impacting representation, resident agency to influence changes related to tourism, and community resilience in Nederland during the COVID-19 crises (Cheer et al., 2017; Amoamo, 2017; MacLeod, 2013).

These methods are designed to construct thick descriptions and narratives from the standpoint of gateway residents including nonverbal expressions related to experiences (photography, poems, or songs), in-depth, semi-structured interviews within an ethical space (Hesse-Biber, 2014; Ermine, 2007) allowing for co-construction of knowledge between researcher and resident (Cavaliere, 2017a). Finally, the accounts of residents are expanded upon through secondary sources and field notes from community familiarization to piece together a community-level collage demonstrating the cultural alignment processes of Nederland, Colorado.

The tourism academy has witnessed the need for new paradigms in research amidst change and adaptation mediated by tourism economies since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (Sigala, 2020). Within this expanse of scholarship, crisis and disaster management research within tourism has revitalized interest in conceptualizing the multi-scalar complexities and connections of the tourism system through social-ecological resilience theory (Butler, 2022). Affective, embodied approaches centering questions of mobility, identity, resilience, and the power of tourism's presence (and absence) are well-situated to critically inquire into meanings of individual and community resilience within crisis and disaster management. I expand upon the affective dimensions of individual and community resilience during COVID-19 through a feminist new materialist epistemology. This philosophical engagement interlaces crisis and disaster management, cultural realignment, resiliency, and a critical biocultural identity framework (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023) within a tourism context. Reflecting upon my own identity and presence as researcher, this summary highlights findings from doctoral fieldwork based in the IWGC of Nederland, Colorado during the summer of 2022 through a crystallization methodology in which reflexivity and reflection guide a reflexive thematic analysis of in-depth interviews, secondary sources, and creative expressions of resident experiences during COVID-19. Empirical excerpts demonstrate how scales of identities relate to IWGC residents creating and keeping community through creative expression as individual and community resilience during crisis.

Three major themes with associated sub-themes were crystallized including *scales of identities, creating, and keeping community*, and *creative expressions of resilience*. These themes further critical and affective scholarship within tourism using cultural realignment as a tool of analysis to explore processes and agents of change as reflections of power and resiliency within Nederland during COVID-19. Each theme extends critical, affective tourism scholarship within

crisis and disaster management to support systemic relationships encompassing multi-scalar identities as the alignment of individual, community, and destination identities affects gateway community resilience through crisis and disasters.

7. CUMULATIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction to Dissertation Summary

Overwhelming visitation patterns since COVID-19 have taxed the social-ecological and economic infrastructure of communities bordering western United States PPAs (Stoker et al., 2021). This research addresses the need for knowledge centered on the experience of residents by questioning tourism's multi-level structures of sociocultural and economic power within IWGCs. Specifically, this research explores how a tourism-based economy within Nederland mediated resident experiences of change during the COVID-19 crisis. This dissertation design builds a comprehensive argument epistemologically guided by a crystallization methodology featuring methods that met and addressed the aim and objectives. By reflexively collecting and thematically analyzing multiple sources of knowledge within the case study of Nederland, Colorado, changes during crises were conceptualized as embodied phenomena to understand identities and representation as related to adaptation for individual and community resilience during compound crises and disasters.

Chapter 1 provided an overarching introduction including the need for this research and its unique location within crisis and disaster management, social-ecological and psychological resilience, and critical qualitative inquiry in tourism studies. Theories of affect, embodiment, resiliency, and technology are detailed as they related to this study. Chapter 2 provides a detailed background for the site of study in Nederland, Colorado. Chapter 3 details the philosophical and epistemological guidance of the research design, and chosen methods designed to meet the aim and objectives. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are presented as executive summaries of chapters, each

addressing a major objective. This culminating Chapter 7 summarizes the structure of this dissertation, how the findings met and addressed the research aim and objectives, and suggestions for future research.

7.2. Meeting the Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research was to explore the relationships between changes experienced by IWGC residents hosting a tourism economy during crisis through concepts of affect (Chapter 4), technology use (Chapter 5), and identity (Chapter 6). A crystallization methodology positioned within a feminist new materialist paradigm guided the selection of methods for qualitative inquiry including semi-structured, in-depth, and photo-elicitation interviews (Cavaliere, 2017a; Hesse-Biber, 2014), deep listening (Koch, 2020), secondary sources (Ajayi, 2017), field notes (Emerson et al., 2011), and reflective journaling (Cavaliere, 2017a). Interviews and collection of secondary sources expanded using affective methods in critical tourism research (Hollinshead et al., 2021; Cavaliere, 2017a) to elicit data forms capable of encompassing complex meaning of phenomena.

This aim was demonstrated by the progression of chapters 4-6, with each chapter introducing and summarizing a designated objective. Chapter 4 addresses Objective 1 (affect) by furthering the critical and affective turns within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of Nederland residents. This chapter presents major findings from the experiences and perspectives of Nederland positing that *by conceptualizing IWGC economies as both affective and touristic constructs, the ways in which emotions “do things” within tourism dynamics may inform IWGC planning for crisis and disaster management*. This chapter demonstrates the validity and value of embodied, affective approaches to studying the complex, systemic relationships held within IWGCs encompassing multi-scalar identities and

representation as *the alignment of individual, community, and destination identities affects gateway community resilience through crisis and disasters*. Chapter 5 addresses Objective 2 (technology) by critically assessing the role of technology in navigating spatial and social realities of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting identities. This chapter expands understandings of identity through *philosophical engagements with feminist new materialist paradigms synthesizing cyberfeminist, cybernetic, and technocultural theory*. These findings *position Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19 to expand resiliency knowledge of technology use and ICT systems as reflections and catalysts of change*. Chapter 6 addresses Objective 3 (identity) by using cultural realignment as a tool of analysis to explore processes and agents of change revealing change agents in power and control within Nederland during COVID-19. Section 7.3 summarizes the dissertation findings preceding Section 7.3.1 which unpacks the research contributions and findings.

7.2.1. Revisiting Methods

The following section revisits how the methods chosen within a crystallization methodology, and how each method structurally and systematically facilitated an analysis resulting in the research contributions and findings. This summation revising the methods of this crystallization methodology provides additional reflection upon my role as researcher, and the position of this research to Nederland and academia. Finally, this reflection may provide deep insight for research inspired by the affordances, challenges, and possibilities of critical, qualitative methods in tourism.

Grounded in a feminist new materialist epistemology provided a foundational approach to the choice of each method employed. Each piece of seminal literature coincided to guide the choice of methods to design an embodied approach to a crystallization methodology capable of

eliciting and analyzing complex from resident perspectives. First, the work of Cavaliere (2017) and Hesse-Biber (2014) guided the construction of semi-structured, in-depth interviews in which photo-elicitation and creative expression guided the co-construction of knowledge relating Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19. The inclusion of photography and creative mediums within interviews inspired sincere and complex accounts from resident participants to express the meaning related to identity, affect and technology use during overlapping crises and disasters during COVID-19. Additionally, the elicitation and inclusion of resident photography, poetry, and song lyrics provides a depth within the presentation of findings to convey complex concepts within empirical themes. This approach shifted the gaze of readers and researchers to resident perceptions of resiliency and CDM within an IWGC case study to inform the present and future of impactful tourism scholarship.

Reflexive thematic analysis of these in-depth, semi-structured photo-elicitation interviews in conjunction with secondary source analysis provided dynamic context of data collection throughout fieldwork. For example, the inclusion of current events and stories featuring Nederland in external news sources (e.g., CBS Denver) imbued resident accounts with details and emotions relating research concepts to local context. Deep listening (Koch, 2020) was necessary within this process to bring intellectual and emotional humility to deconstruct my own knowledge and biases throughout interviews, resident interactions, and approaching secondary source analysis with an open-minded approach. Field notes taken during interviews and site visits were crucial ways of marking the progression towards the research aim and objectives with critical consideration of resident representation and the potential impact of this research. Additionally, field notes were paramount in the development of empirical themes. By noting

environmental details or pinnacle words statements and topics during interviews, I was able to recall important details to guide reflective writing and analysis after leaving the field.

Finally, the incorporation of technocultural, cybernetic, and cyberfeminist theories in the construction of a cyborg epistemology guided the employment of each method and resulting analysis process. This critical, qualitative inquiry from resident perspectives situated within CDM found new ways of analyzing concepts of resiliency and identity within tourism geographies. Specifically, the synthesis of cyberfeminist theories within a feminist new materialist paradigm through in-depth interviews helped to reveal digital toxicity within ICT use and its gendered impacts. The discovery of digital toxicity as a gendered experience of increased ICT use warranted cyberfeminist investigation into technocultural changes experienced by women in remote mountain communities.

The revisitation of these methods as part of the study's crystallization methodology demonstrates the efficacy of each method as part of a critical, qualitative inquiry in meeting and achieving the overarching aim and each objective. The next section will detail the overview of the dissertation findings.

7.3. Dissertation Overview

Geopolitical and bioregional narratives of diverse effects and changes from the standpoint of PPA gateway residents hold knowledge of anxieties and biopolitical responses in touristic encounters (Mostafanezhad et al., 2020) and how these “alter how we experience ‘home’ through material and discursive forces, condensing memories, sensory moments, and future desires” (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2020, p.153). Therefore, this doctoral research was designed and employed utilizing a crystallization methodology to elicit and interpret creative, affective expressions. This research positions affective, embodied theories within a feminist new

materialist paradigm to explore Nederland resident identities as integral to individual and community resilience of IWGCs during compound crises and disasters such as life during COVID-19. Knowledge situated from the perspectives of the residents of Nederland, Colorado both challenges and builds knowledge situating affect, identities, and the role of technology in the future of crisis management in tourism.

Chapter 4 analyzes resident-focused knowledge to inform proactive IWGC planning throughout future uncertainty, crises, and disasters by bridging gaps in affective scholarship with CDM in tourism. A broadened suite of emotions and affect is found conceptualizing social, systemic, and economic dependency shaping the relationships between tourism and residents during COVID-19. Drawing from Sara Ahmed's work on affective economies (2004a), this chapter expands upon how emotions do things within Nederland during COVID-19 as changing community dynamics are mediated by the power and presence of a tourism economy. This chapter presents *affective dimensions of individual and community resilience*, found to be affective and emotional mediation of residents collectively building community resilience to processing internal and external changes. This is exemplified through accounts of *residents mediating emotional well-being during COVID-19* as residents were drawn to certain activities, places or people to process or experience certain emotional states.

Intertwined aspects of *identity, belonging, and responsibility* related to resident agency within adaptations during COVID-19 affecting how individuals and the community adapted during compounding crises and disasters. Residents relayed the importance of local identity in caring for one another during COVID-19, as individual actions reflected the greater identity of Nederland. This created senses of belonging and conflict as caretaking generated unequal expectations and work by certain residents. This is further detailed within the recognition of

Nederland's economy of care; the localization and socialization of caring for one another as intermountain residents creating an *economy of care* where roles of care, caretaking, and nurture during COVID-19 draw from individual and collective identities (e.g., mountain folk, small town).

The final theme from Chapter 4 takes great care to detail complex suites of emotions emerging at contact zones (Ahmed, 2004a) between residents, visitors, and tourism economies. *Affective tourism economies* are critical conceptualizations of the circulation and exchange of emotion mediated by tourism economies aligning people and places according to identities and emotional capital (see Table 2). The first affective economy discussed was an *economy of anger, fear and anxiety as building communal loss*. Communal loss described the experiences and results of individual reactions to unwanted or unexpected change, fear of changes to come, and trauma that grew and circulated within the Nederland community. Feelings of agency (or lack thereof) related to resident attitudes towards visitor and tourism management, which were heightened through influxes of new residents as these changes threatened the attrition of Nederland's identity. Residents' critical reflections on life during COVID-19 revealed an *affective tourism economy of queer optimism* (Snediker, 2009), adapted in this research as ways residents critically thought about instances of feeling good as interesting and cognizant aspects of individual and community resilience. Residents shared deep moments of reflection, seeking "to take positive affects as serious and interesting sites of critical investigation" (Snediker, 2009, p.3). Residents discussed feelings of gratitude, luck, and appreciation often by drawing from the biocultural identity of Nederland as part of their own sense of self. Resident connections to the surrounding mountainscape of Nederland was integral to residents critically reflecting upon positive affect in the face of community-wide loss during COVID-19.

Empathy and sympathy were found as powerful forces influencing residents to see and treat other residents and visitors by imagining the lives, thoughts and emotions of others as intertwined with their own through imagined or shared lived experiences. This analysis found some residents lost empathy and sympathy towards visitors and residents holding certain social/political identities. Other residents were encouraged to see more people getting outdoors during the COVID-19 crisis, drawing from their own experiences living in Nederland to welcome visitors safely. By recognizing vastly different types of empathy within tourism and affective literature (Tucker ,2016), these findings bring a nuanced approach to empathy and sympathy within affective tourism economies and their influences upon individual and community resilience during crises. Finally, *sense of humor* was found as a form of communication conveying personal adaptations during crises synthesizing sense of self with place through joking or comedic expressions. Humor as a psychological, cultural, and social factor of individual or community resilience is largely unexplored in CDM. However, this final theme of Chapter 4 shows resident use of humor as adaptation during crises and disasters, and how humor reinforces place-based local values.

These compounds of emotions moved between residents, places, and influenced residents' perception of Nederland's identity to residents as chaotic visitation patterns during COVID-19 directed emotional and social capital towards certain people, places, and identities. Affective tourism economies guide academics and practitioners to consider how complex emotions are constantly present and moving at borders between people and places (Cavaliere & Ingram, 2021), and to question how these effects identities and alignments of people with and against one another (Ahmed, 2004b; Shiva, 2004). Emotions and moods moved through and between residents in physical and virtual settings influencing social dynamics of the

community's collective body; affective tourism economies support and expand upon tourism research bringing attention to relationships of power mediated by the presence and varying levels of dependence upon tourism economies within IWGCs.

Chapter 5 critically assesses the role of technology in navigating spatial and social realities of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting identities of Nederland and residents. Transdisciplinary literature crossing cybernetics, technoculture, and cyberfeminism form a cyborg epistemology to position final article to explore the impact of ICTs and technology use as influencing changes during COVID-19 (see Table 2). Donna Haraway's cyborg metaphor guides this critical, qualitative analysis of data, interpreting meaning from the use of irony, analogy, and metaphor to critically analyze changes in Nederland since the onset of COVID-19. The role of technology enabling regional and international communication and remote ways of living has not been critically analyzed in tourism scholarship – particularly as related to IWGCs. In addressing this gap, this chapter finds the theme of *remote control* which references changes in power dynamics relating residents, communication, and control through diverse data types including metaphors, similes, analogies, and irony shared by Nederland residents. Remote control is expanded through the sub-theme of *change, vision and control* analyzing resident accounts of fearing, embracing, or being affected by changes in power dynamics shifting who or what controls change within Nederland, and the visions held by different people as agents of change. The cyborg epistemology allows for the researcher to perceive technocultural changes influencing individual and collective identities as people, ICTs, and remote communities such as Nederland experience drastic political, social, and environmental change during COVID-19.

Resident *involvement and participation* as forms and meaning of resident implication in local programs, organizations and governance operations during COVID-19 were found to be

intertwined with expanded ICT use. *Involvement and participation* demonstrate positive impacts of accessibility for remote residents to join in town management, while also questioning who is represented in local governance and by what means. *ICTs and technology use for individual and community resilience* were found as a sub-theme of *involvement and participation* relating ways ICTs and technology use during COVID-19 shaped threats and adaptations for individuals and the community to maintain societal organization and functions. With contentious topics of tourism and visitor management, who is represented and how is imperative to IWGC planning. As seen during COVID-19, Nederland's role as a central hub for smaller and neighboring IWGCs calls into question who is impacted by tourism, who has the power to shape tourism policy, and how the economic incentives are reinvested into the communities involved and participating in Nederland's long-term vision.

This chapter utilizes an embodied approach to understanding the technocultural impacts of ICTs upon cybernetic systems of communication and within Nederland during COVID-19. As opposed to providing disembodied accounts, separating cognition and emotion within a mind-body divide, this chapter centers embodiment with resident accounts and research design to recognize how multiple scales of identities in Nederland during COVID-19 were shaped through human-machine interactions resulting in the theme of *cybernetic identities*; understood as partial and fluid identities formed at the contact zones (Ahmed, 2004a) between humans, information systems, and machines. *Cybernetic identities* are embodied understandings of self, place, and others shaped by technocultural, biocultural and political changes (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023; Shaw, 2008).

Finally, this theme is expanded through the sub-theme of the *resident gaze*, described as resident representations of power and control across virtual and physical spaces organizing

systems for community expectations and reinforcing performative social dynamics. This final sub-theme contributes new knowledge from the case study of Nederland where cybernetic systems are expanded through ICTs, reinforcing and recreating representations of power. These systems host resident sentiments towards tourism, identities aligned with or against tourism development, and provide background systems of communication related to tourism impacts and management. As IWGC residents living within a tourism-based economy, the case study of Nederland demonstrates how critical approaches to understanding human relationships to technology during crises and disasters is needed to holistically understand the dynamics of IWGCs as ICTs exacerbate change within remote communities bordering PPAs. Specifically, this research explores how these changes are related to greater information systems, and how this knowledge relates to individual and community resilience of residents. This theme brings philosophical engagement with gazing into CDM context through modern application in an IWGC case study during global mobility changes of COVID-19. Tourism research must further resiliency research to support residents in challenging inequities and status quos harbored within tourism economies. In this progression, CDM in tourism may better be able to support IWGCs in realizing their visions of the future.

Chapter 6 contributes new knowledge for tourism by applying cultural realignment as tool within the reflexive thematic analysis process of the case study of Nederland. This approach expanded the context of cultural realignment beyond islandscapes to analyze changes in mountainscapes, expanding “the links between cultural alignment and socio-ecological resilience” (Cheer et al., 2017, p.40) by investigating emergent themes and relationships of power necessary to support IWGC resilience. Cultural realignment within this research is used to identify and analyze agents and processes of change during COVID-19 as embodied processes

across individual to community-scale perceptions of mountainscape identities. The study design conceptualizes mountainscapes, homes to interconnected IWGCs, as building blocks of western bioregions. Resident-centered knowledge of life within Nederland during COVID-19 explores identity as cyborg, social, and biocultural constructs. The synthesis of these theories builds the capacity of this research to investigate the complexity of identity, its fluidity, and dependence upon social, ecological, historical, political, and technological systems. This approach uncovers global, national, and local changes during COVID-19 challenging resident perceptions of self and place identities. These interconnected, multi-scalar perceptions of identity are found to influence individual and community resilience during COVID-19 as actions, emotions and attitudes stemmed from individual and shared identities. This scaled understanding of identities during crisis contributes new knowledge of biocultural identities within an IWGC case study further positing identities as part of biocultural diversity, and their necessity in resisting biocultural homogenization (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023).

Chapter 6 finds major themes including *scales of identity*, understood as the interrelationships and influence of individual, community, and biocultural identities related to life within a tourism economy. This theme recognizes the complex and synchronous effects of global, national, and local-scale influences shaping individuals and places as actors within an IWGC hosting a tourism-based economy. This theme is expanded through coding *reflexivity, reflection, and change*; resident experiences during COVID-19 elicited through critical inquiry bringing critical awareness to resident relationships to town, change, history, and the future. By utilizing cultural realignment as a tool within thematic analysis, *scales of identity* additionally relate to *cultural alignment of self within community*, a sub-theme categorizing the interrelationships of resident identities from individual scales to collective identities of

Nederland, linking the cultural alignment of community identity with external marketing of place identity towards visitors (Amaomo, 2017; Cheer et al., 2017; MacLeod, 2013). This theme found the importance of internal representation of Nederland held by residents corresponding with external representation of Nederland through marketing or online features. During COVID-19, these multi-scalar identities help to identify resiliency factors as resident values relate to motivations, actions and behaviors during crises and disasters.

Creating and keeping community was found as singular or repeated actions by residents that created and/or reinforced community and place through culturally salient means. This theme was exemplified through the emic term of *showing up*, or meaningful actions of residents caring for one another. How residents showed up outlined *community pillars*, described as places, people and organizations supporting resident health, well-being, and quality of life. This deeper analysis of identity during COVID-19 revealed connections between *gender and leadership* as women were identified as maintaining or stepping into leadership roles. The incorporation and analysis of residents' affective and creative expressions during COVID-19 enabled finding *creative expressions of resilience*; creative mediums used to process emotions related to change during COVID-19, manifesting through multi-scalar connections between individuals and community. Individual mediums for creative expression related to psychological resilience of residents, building towards collective, community resilience through publicized performance and expression of identities and values.

Conceptualizing identities as social, biocultural, and cyborg constructs resulted in finding the importance of *third places and spaces* to host resident creativity and the evolution of place identity during COVID-19. During quarantine and lockdown, the use of virtual spaces to host creative expression brings attention ICTs in creating places and spaces as part of IWGC life and

identity. These findings position third spaces and places as places reflecting multiple scales of identities while reciprocally being made by residents and visitors. This contributes biocultural knowledge from the case study of Nederland by exploring self-determination and representation to protect “the qualities that make them such special places to live and visit amid the planning and development pressures and challenges they face” (Stoker et al., 2021, p.21).

7.3.1. Research Contributions and Findings

This research centers Nederland resident perspectives of affect, technology use, and identity during COVID-19 to address gaps in CDM for IWGCs with tourism-based economies. This new contextual application of this literature in Nederland as an IWGC case study provides new contributions of knowledge through the presented case study. A feminist new materialist epistemology guides the design of a crystallization methodology to position affective and qualitative methods to support, extend, challenge, and contribute knowledge to guide future research and practices for resiliency and CDM in tourism. The methodological approach of this research supported and extended the work of Hollinshead, Suleman, and Yu Lo (2021) in unsettling tourism knowledge production by utilizing a disruptive methodology to provide “counternarratives and counterpractices speaking back against dominant approaches to knowing” (p.144). This research demonstrates how a feminist new materialist paradigm is reinforced by affect, resiliency, and biocultural theories to perceive the effects of power within complex systems across material, virtual, social, and emotional dimensions shaping Nederland resident life during COVID-19. The case of Nederland demonstrated that incorporating creative, affective methods of inquiry within tourism research bridges critical, affective literature and CDM through rich and complex conceptualizations of individual and community resilience.

This research contributes knowledge of applied and philosophical engagements with Nederland resident narratives through the outlined methods to critically examine how tourism economies mediate change during COVID-19 within an IWGC case study. Where Section 7.3 provides a summary of each empirical theme, this section specifically expands upon the themes of *affective tourism economies* and *cybernetic identities* as contributions filling the identified gaps within this research.

First, this research identifies and addresses gaps of affective scholarship within CDM for tourism derived from the lived experiences of Nederland residents to conceptualize and understand social, systemic, and economic dependency shaping the relationships between tourism and residents during crises and disasters. The theme of *affective tourism economies* revealed situated knowledge from Nederland resident perspectives, which explores resident perspectives as subjectivities formed through economic dependency upon tourism during crises and disasters. This theme contributes a new concept within CDM and resiliency research in tourism through affect. *Affective tourism economies* additionally offer affective suites to expand upon the limited types of emotions and affect discussed in tourism research. Therefore, *affective tourism economies* are positioned within this research to resist limited mainstream emotional research to explore the complexities and nuances of emotions for individual and community resilience within CDM.

This research offers a new approach to resiliency and CDM by integrating concepts of identity and technology use from biocultural, cybernetic, and social frameworks in seminal literature to approach the case study of Nederland. Through philosophical engagements with feminist new materialist paradigms synthesizing cyberfeminist, cybernetic, and technocultural theories, the empirical theme of *cybernetic identities* is found to expand resiliency knowledge of

technology use and ICT systems as reflections and catalysts of change. This approach fills gaps in tourism scholarship through Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19 as IWGCs change with trends in mobility, remote working, and housing contributing resident perceptions of self, community, and place as entanglements with tourism. This theme offers new ways of utilizing social-ecological and cybernetic systems to examine “planning and development challenges in gateway communities across the West” (Stoker et al., 2021, p.23). Additionally, this theme contributes knowledge of cybernetic systems connecting Nederland through a tourism-based economy to global trends in mobility.

Cybernetic identities were found relating to ICTs and technology use to be influential in individual and community resiliency during COVID-19. This theme demonstrates the need for CDM in tourism and IWGC planning to be critically cognizant of information as matter, where the quality of information becomes a force of change during crises and disasters. Specifically, the accuracy, validity, and reliability of information used by Nederland residents during crises and disasters influences resident adaptation in maintaining societal organization and functions in relation to understandings of self, places, and others.

7.4. Limitations and Future Research

This research was conducted in partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Philosophy at Colorado State University within the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources. Many limitations were due to the nature of this doctoral process, the time this research occurred, and the resulting research design. Starting my doctoral journey Fall of 2020 created many limitations and considerations in the ability to conduct in-person site visits while monitoring COVID-19 transmission levels, and the comfort of Nederland residents through Spring and Summer months of fieldwork. However, this limitation became inspiration for the topic of my research, drawing from experiencing the

importance of technology's influence upon learning, knowledge production, and the research process. It is suggested for future research to resist forgetting the discomforts, pain, and societal impacts of COVID-19. Though global quarantines, travel measures and health mandates have been lifted related to COVID-19, embodiments of change have permanently shifted global systems – particularly related to tourism dynamics. Within CDM and resiliency research in tourism, how can future research connect to the feelings, adaptations and changes experienced by residents of tourism economies to improve resident engagement with tourism planning?

This research was designed following a feminist new materialist epistemology, a crystallization methodology, and qualitative methods to investigate complex and multifaceted concepts of emotion, technology use and identity. The findings and contributions presented within this dissertation utilize methods appropriate to meet and address the research aim and objectives and are presented by a single researcher in close consultation with an advisor and doctoral committee to design this approach the IWGC case study of Nederland, Colorado. An important planning application of this research may be to Nederland and other IWGCs without a comprehensive master tourism plan incorporating tourism crisis and disaster management.

At the time of this research, Nederland had recently acquired funding and was in the process of conducting community surveys and town halls to incorporate residents in a first official tourism planning document. The concept of “identity” has become an important concept in recognizing and representing residents as a community within Nederland's initial document announcements (Colorado Tourism Office, 2023). Crisis and disaster management specific to IWGCs and gateway communities with tourism-based economies should be included informed by resident experiences during compound crises and disaster such as (but not limited to) life during COVID-19. It is the hope of this research that these findings may encourage including

affective components of resilience and considering technocultural impacts of change within future stages of tourism planning in Nederland. Future research may cross-apply these considerations in other IWGCs. It is my intention to present these findings following IRB protocol and protecting the confidentiality of Nederland participants through a public town hall meeting. Strict considerations of the small-town nature of this research will be considered in the presentation of findings to respectfully bridge this research with public engagement in Nederland.

Research designs with resources to structure community-based and collaboration approach with representative residents and local organizations are still needed to further IWGC residents' perspectives in CDM. Additionally, future research progressing knowledge from paradigms incorporating affective, embodied, and feminist new materialist theories are still needed to address the ambivalence in human understanding of selves and others in relation to technocultural changes with a curated focus upon IWGCs and gateway communities of differing geographic status. However, new epistemologies, methodologies and methods are needed to elicit resident-centered knowledge to shape the future of IWGC and tourism planning.

Specifically, the findings of this research encourage future research seeking to utilize feminist methodologies and paradigms for intersectional approaches with dedication to gendered, racial, economic, and historicized issues relating tourism impacts in IWGCs and CDM. Future research designs inspired by this research may improve upon intersectional understandings of economies as affective, touristic, and power-laden constructs through application of these findings in new case study applications. By drawing from queer, affective, and feminist new materialist scholarship, these findings may encourage further tourism research supporting IWGC

planning critically considering and conceptualizing what, and who, is valued within affective tourism economies, and how these considerations impact affective dimensions of resilience.

This matters for the future of critical research in tourism as knowledge of the depth, complexity, and manifestations of emotion and affect is needed to explore the dynamics intertwining residents, researchers, and tourists within the geographies, economies, and impacts of tourism. It is my hope that this research inspires resident engagement with public meetings and processes to guide proactive IWGC planning such as emancipatory zoning (Cavaliere et al., 2023) to identify and protect third spaces for individual and community resilience of residents. Importantly, insecurities (shaped through dependence upon tourism economies in increasingly risky tourism geographies such as mountainscapes), grow from colonial neoliberal power feeding negative economies – the antithesis of emancipatory, neolocal, degrowth, and diverse/alternative economies. These affective suites mediating Nederland resident experiences during COVID-19 may be better addressed in proactive IWGC planning to inform CDM for psychological well-being of residents during overlapping crises and disasters.

Importantly, it is the hope of this research to support further inclusion of residents in tourism research and bridge tourism academia with interagency alliances and governmental bodies to support the funding and research needs of IWGCs. Creative expression in future research may support grant writing processes and the acquisition of funding by garnering and presenting data for residents to represent their own stories as being impacted by tourism. These accounts represent deep, lived knowledge of power inequities often present within tourism-based economies, and situated knowledge of solutions best suited for unique places and people.

Table 2. Table of Contributions and Findings

Research Aim: To explore the relationships between changes experienced by Nederland residents hosting a tourism economy during crisis through concepts of identity, affect, and technology use.		
Seminal Literature	Empirical Themes and Subthemes	Meaning
Objective 1 (Affect): To further the critical and affective turns within tourism scholarship through an embodied research design exploring identities of intermountain western gateway residents		
Stoker et al. (2021)	Affective dimensions resilience	The affective and emotional mediation of residents collectively building community resilience to processing internal and external changes
Volo (2021)	Mediating emotional well-being	Residents being drawn to certain activities, places or people to process or experience certain emotional states
Tucker (2016)	Identity, belonging, and responsibility	Expressions of resident agency within adaptations to change where actions and emotions draw from identity, belonging, and responsibility, affecting individual and community resilience throughout compound crises and disasters
Cartier & Taylor (2020)	Economy of care	Localized caring for one another as intermountain residents creating a socialized <i>economy of care</i> where the role of care, caretaking, and nurture COVID-19 relates to individual and collective identities (e.g., mountain folk, small town)
Frohlick & Zamora (2020)	Affective tourism economies*	Critical conceptualizations of the circulation and exchange of emotion mediated by tourism-based economies aligning people and places according to identities and emotional capital
Ahmed (2004a, 2004b)	Communal loss	Individual reactions to unwanted or unexpected change, fear of changes to come, and trauma had grown and circulated within the community
Cavaliere & Ingram (2021)	Queer optimism	Ways residents critically think about instances of feeling good as interesting and cognizant aspects of individual and community resilience
Everingham & Motta (2020)	Empathy and sympathy	Complex ways residents imagined the lives, thoughts and emotions of others as intertwined with their own through imagined or shared lived experiences
Naylor et al. (2021)	Divarication	Relationships shaped by the experience, or lack, of empathy or sympathy, relating to polarities strengthening or distancing relationships, or divarication
Cann & Collette (2014)	Sense of humor	Nuances conveying personal adaptation during crises synthesizing sense of self with place through joking or comedic expressions

Note. *Indicates an empirical theme that extends and contributes to filling existing gaps in the seminal literature

Objective 2 (Technology): to assess the role of technology in navigating spatial and social realities of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on identities		
Seminal Literature	Empirical Theme	Meaning
Powell et al. (2021)	Remote control	Changes in power dynamics relating residents, communication, and control through diverse data types including metaphors, similes, analogies, and irony shared by Nederland residents
Kirkup (2000)	Change, vision, and control	Resident accounts of fearing, embracing, or being affected by changes in power dynamics shifting who or what controls change within Nederland, and the visions held by different people as agents of change
Sodja (2023)	Involvement and participation	Forms and meaning of resident implication in local programs, organizations and governance operations during COVID-19
Branstrator et al. (2023b)	ICTs/technology use and resiliency during COVID-19	Ways ICTs and technology use during COVID-19 shaped threats and adaptations for individuals and the community to maintain societal organization and functions
Shaw (2008)	Cybernetic Identities*	Partial and fluid identities formed at the contact zones (Ahmed, 2004) between humans, information systems, and machines. These are embodied understandings of self, place, and others shaped by technocultural, biocultural and political changes (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2023; Shaw, 2008)
Haraway (1991)	The resident gaze	Resident representations of power and control across virtual and physical spaces organizing systems for community expectations and reinforcing performative social dynamics...and daily discourse relating tourism to residential life

Note. *Indicates an empirical theme that extends and contributes to filling existing gaps in the seminal literature

Objective 3 (Identity): Using cultural realignment to explore processes and agents of change in Nederland during COVID-19		
Seminal Literature	Empirical Theme	Meaning
Cavaliere & Branstrator (2023)	Scales of identities	The interrelationships and influence of individual, community, and biocultural identities related to life within a tourism economy
Cavaliere (2017)	Reflexivity, reflection and change	Critical awareness of residents considering their own relationship to town, change, history, and the future
Cheer (2017); Amoamo (2017); MacLeod (2013)	Cultural alignment of self within community	Relates resident identities from individual scales to collective identities of Nederland, linking the cultural alignment of community identity with external marketing of place identity towards visitors
Naylor et al., (2021)	Creating and keeping community	Singular or repeated actions by residents that create and/or reinforce community and place through culturally salient means
Cartier & Taylor (2020)	Showing up	An emic term indicating residents who meaningfully acted on behalf of the community and others, caring for one another during in need
Stoker et al. (2021)	Community pillars	Places, people and organizations supporting resident health, well-being, and quality of life
Dengler & Strunk (2018)	Gender and leadership	Residents rising to lead town operations during crisis followed gendered patterns
McNiff (2015)	Creative expressions of resilience	Creative expressions of resilience manifesting through multi-scalar connections between individual and community
Hanks et al. (2020)	Third spaces/places during crises and disasters	Places available to residents during crises hosting diverse expressions of creativity, building from singular to collective engagements, playing critical roles in individual and community resilience

Note. *Indicates an empirical theme that extends and contributes to filling existing gaps in the seminal literature

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APPENDIX

Table 3. Table of Terms

Term	Definition
Affect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A relational “line of force, [or] a capacity to act” connecting individuals to social bodies as collectives with feelings in common; feelings diffusing “between individuals and within groups of people” (p.86). (D’Hautesserre (2015, pp.79-86) 2. Suites of moods often associated with physiological arousal (Tucker & Shelton, 2018)
Affective Economy	<p>A prevalent concept expanding within materialistic, affective, and critical tourism research is Ahmed’s concept of affective economies (Ahmed, 2004a). Ahmed’s analysis of affective economies has been used to analyze how “emotions work to secure collectives” and how emotions “work to align some subjects with some others and against other others” (2004b, p.25).</p> <p>“In such affective economies, emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities—or bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments” (Ahmed, 2004, p. 119)</p>
Agency	<p>“In an individualist stance, agency is opposed to structure, with the individual being the only driver of decision-making and action. In an holistic stance, emphasis is given to the prevalence of routinised action as following from the already established order” (see Damşa et al., 2021)</p>
Biocultural Knowledge	<p>Place-based knowledge of biological and cultural intersections. Biocultural knowledge includes terms including biocultural assets and heritage which “result from interactions between people and nature at a given time in a given place” (Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019, p.302). This relates to biocultural diversity as “a dynamic, place-based, aspect of nature arising from links and feedbacks between human cultural diversity and biological diversity” (Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019, p.302).</p>
Bioregion	<p>A “land and water territory whose limits are defined by the geographical limits of human communities and ecological systems rather than by political boundaries” (Department of Bioregion, n.d., para 7).</p>
Community Resilience	<p>“Existence, development, and engagement of community resources by community member to thrive in an environmental characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise” (Magis, 2010, p. 402)</p>

Crisis Management	“Crisis management has been described as “planning for, responding to, and recovering from crisis or disaster” (Pennington-Gray et al., 2011, p.312)
Cultural Realignment	“...the intentional depiction or interpretation of a culture (or part of one) for a specific preconceived purpose” (MacLeod, 2013, p.74).
Embodiment	“A focus on embodiment in qualitative research acknowledges the corporeal selves of the researchers’ as well as the researched ‘subjects’ as primary factors in the research process” (Swain, 2004, p.103)
Emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “...emotion refers to cultural and social expression, whereas affects are of a biological and physiological nature” (Probyn, 2005, p. 11).” 2. cultural and social expression of feelings “more easily put into words”, bridging relational meanings of affect as non-representational aspects of biological, physiological, and manifestations of action-potential (Tucker & Shelton, 2018, p.67; d’Hauteserre, 2015).
Ethical Space	“the idea of the ethical space, produced by contrasting perspectives of the world, entertains the notion of a meeting place, or initial thinking about a neutral zone between entities or cultures. The space offers a venue to step out of our allegiances, to detach from the cages of our mental worlds and assume a position where human-to-human dialogue can occur.” (Ermine, 2007, p.202).
Identity	Bond & Falk (2013) stated that identities “can be reflected in the perspective of one’s mind or more indirectly in the perspective of ‘personality’ ...identity is something that attests to how others think about us, as well as how the ‘I’s’ think about themselves (Falk, 2009)” (p.431).
Information communication technologies (ICTs)	“Devices, networking components, applications and systems” facilitating digital interactions (Pratt, 2019)
Intermountain western gateway community (IWGC)	Stoker et al. (2021) identify a "gateway community", specifically a western gateway community, as "communities of 150 to 25,000 people that are: 1) within 10 linear miles from the boundary of a national park, national monument, national forest, state park, wild and scenic river or other major river, or lake and 2) further than 15 miles from a census-designated urbanized area by road" (2021, p.23).
Reflexivity	“Essentially, reflexivity is an acknowledgement of the agency of the researchers, the researched, academic audiences, students and others...Being reflexive means looking and reflecting inwards upon ourselves as researchers, and outwards upon those that we ‘research’ .” (Ateljevic et al., 2005., p.9)
Resilience types (social-ecological, psychological, individual, and community)	“Social-ecological resilience is the capacity to adapt or transform in the face of change in social-ecological systems, particularly unexpected change, in ways that continue to support human wellbeing (Chapin et al. 2010, Biggs et al. 2015).” (Folke et al., 2016, p.2)

Psychological resilience refers to personal qualities or traits supporting personal well-being in the face of adversity (Cann & Collette, 2014, p.466)

Individual and community resilience in this research is described as a dynamic outcome of well-being “even when that entails significant modifications to behaviour or to the social frameworks that structure and give meaning to behaviour” (Hall et al., 2018, p.63).

Community resilience may be described as the “existence, development, and engagement of community resources by community member(s) to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise)” (Magis, K., 2010, p.402).

Third Space

“Third place refers to the location that is distinct from home or work/university, where people spend their time having fun, socializing and connecting with others (Hanks et al., 2020).” (Handarkho et al., 2020)

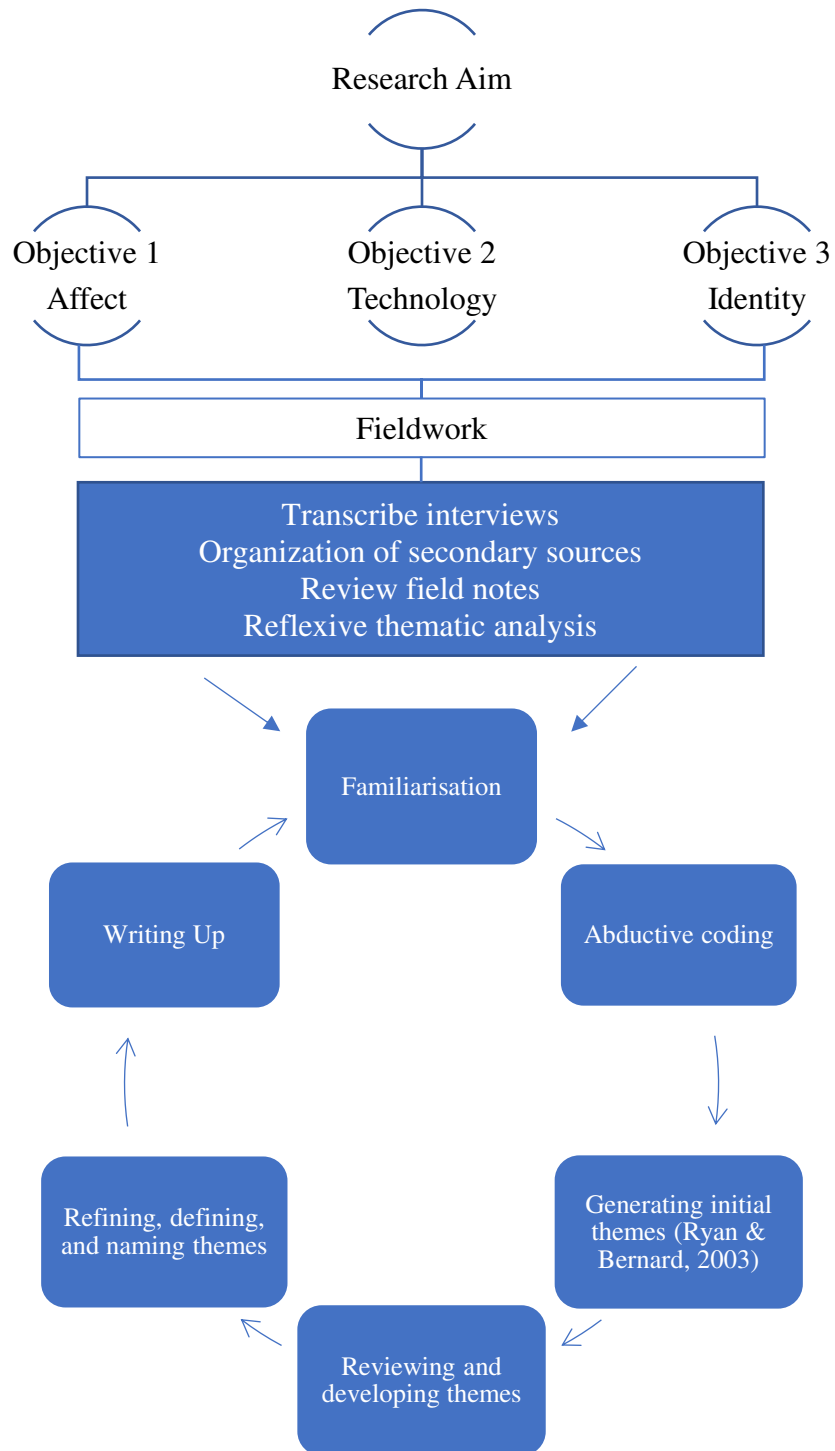


Figure 7. Modified Reflexive Thematic Analysis Process adapted from Castellanos-Verdugo et al. (2010), Braun and Clarke (2019), and Ryan and Bernard (2003)

Table 4. Participant Demographics

Name	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	Residence	Seed(s)
Jerry	M	67	Tradesman	Writer, carpenter, electrician, builder	45+ years	Creator; Community organizer; Elder; Local business; Family
Apollo	M	31	GD; some college	Writer, poet, musician,	4+ years	Creator
Don	M	47	BS	Handiwork Food Events	27 years	Community organizer; Local business
Elpis	F	38	MS	Health services	6 years	Community organizer; Local business
Ralph	M	66	Some college	Retired; musician	47 years	Community organizer; Retiree; Family
Bill	M	57	MS	Community service	30+ years	Community organizer
Meryl	F	67	MS	Tourism agent; Remote work	40 years	Local business; Local governance
Iris	F	60s	BS	Small business owner; local media	36+ years	Community organizer; Local business
Patrick	M	73	MS	Retired	12 years	Retiree; Community organizer
Darcy	F	68	BS	Retired	12 years	Retiree
Jacob	M	75	MS	Health and human services	22+ years	Community organizer; Family
Lucy	F	50	BS	Youth services	27 years	Community organizer; Retiree; Family
Chelsea	F	60	BS	Health and human services	21 years	Community organizer; Family
Alexa	F	40	BS	Small business owner	16+ years	Local business; Family
Louis	M	23	BS	Public service	23 years	Creator; Family
Allen	M	74	BS	Local organization operator	39 years	Creator; Community organizer; Retired; Family

Anna	F	28	MS, some PhD	Small business owner	1 year	Local business
George	M	74	BS	Small business owner; NGO	43 years	Local business; Elder; Family
Michelle	F	47	BS; Trade knowledge	Public works	33 years	Community organizer; Local governance
Florence	F	35	MS	Service industry	2 years	Local business
Diana	F	54	MSc	Board director	1 year	Community organizer; Family; Educator
Lorie	F	79	BS	NGO	39 years	Family
Loretta	F	58	BS	Small business owner	30+ years	Community organizer; Local business
Felisha	F	34	PhD	Town administration	34 years	Community organizer; Family; Local government
Laurel	F	51	Certifications	Small business owner	2 years	Community organizer; Local business; Family
Jack	M	25	Some college; Trade knowledge	Public works	2 years	Community organizer; Local business
Elton	M	47	PhD	Scientist	15 years	Local governance; Community organizer
Phil	M	40	Some college	Artist; Entrepreneur	6 months	Creator
Elija	M	36	Some college	Artist	1 week	Creator
Jessica	F	50	BS	Small business; Marketing	16 years	Community organizer; Local business
Brianne	F	61	BS	Health and human services	26 years	Local governance; Education
Ted	M	31	BS; Trade	Entrepreneur; Remote work	2+ years	Local governance; Family
Ellie	F	32	MBA	Student	4 years	Family; Education
Brigid	M	36	MBA	Small business owner	7 years	Community organizer; Local business

Kim	F	62	BFA	Artist and designer	24 years	Artist; Family; Educator
Hermes	M	37	Some college; Trade knowledge	Town administration	2 years	Creator; Community organizer; Local governance
David	M	64	PhD	Musician	15+ years	Creator
Sandra	F	69	BS	Artist	10+ years	Creator; Local business
Ben	M	60s	BS	Small business owner	40 years	Community organizer; Creator; Family; Local business
Vincent	M	60s	Trade knowledge	Entrepreneur	40+ years	Community organizer; Family; Local business; Local governance
Frida	F	44	BS	Entrepreneur; Artist	15+ years	Creator Local business
Werner	M	34	PhD	University educator	8 years	Creator Town administration Education
Jehane	F	61	BS	Health and human services	34 years	Local business Family