

THE '91 ROOs

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The '91 Roos is a sports documentary focused in Killeen, Texas. exploring the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos high school football team and their journey to their city's one and only state championship in football. Killeen is a small central Texas town that is directly adjacent and provides support to Ft Hood, one of the world's largest military bases. With the Persian Gulf War raging in 1991, soldiers that lived in Killeen were being sent off to fight, leaving the city almost like a ghost town. In October 1991, the Luby's Massacre occurred in Killeen, bringing the already depleted city further down by tragedy. At the time, this was the worst mass shooting in US history. This high school football team went on a fairy tale type of run during their 1991 season, resulting in winning a state title and bringing big hope back to a small town in need. Using direct interviews, narration and archival footage, this film provides an emotional yet inspirational look at a small town football team and their improbable season.

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by

Derwin Graham

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is dedicated to my family for all their continued support throughout my academic pursuits. Not only family, but the many friends and colleagues that helped along the way. I also dedicate the efforts behind this project to the entire community of Killeen and Ft. Hood, Texas for all the support they poured into me throughout this journey. I pray that I can continue to shed positive light on our community and give voices to the many untold stories like this one for the years to come.

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PROSPECTUS

This section was written during the course of a year, from January 2021 until December 2021. This is the original proposal that was submitted and approved by the thesis committee.

Title: *The '91 Roos*
Length: 50 minutes
Format: HD Video, Blu-Ray and DCP
Director: Derwin Graham

Short Description

The '91 Roos is a documentary film that explores the triumph and tragedy of the 1991 Killeen High School 5A Football State Championship team. Killeen, Texas is a town nestled at the hip of Fort Hood, one of the largest military bases in the world. In the fall of 1990 thousands of soldiers were deployed to fight in the Gulf War, leaving the city of Killeen a ghost town. Families and businesses struggled, unemployment was on the rise and the Killeen High School football team finished 5-5 to miss the playoffs. Going into the 1991 season, there were high hopes around the city on and off the field. On October 16, 1991 George Hennard drove his pickup truck through the local Luby's and opened fire in the restaurant killing 23 people and wounding at least 20 more. It was the worst mass murder in U.S. history at the time.

The Killeen High Kangaroos football team seemingly rallied around the tragedy and helped refocus the town's attention onto something positive. They turned into a team of destiny and honored the victims of the shooting by making a run to the city's first and only Class 5A State football championship. Through interviews, cinéma vérité and archival footage the film will look to explore the story of the 1991 Killeen High School football team, the city itself and the immortalizing impact that was left in the waking years since then.

Purpose

The '91 Roos will serve as an uplifting and inspirational story both locally in Killeen, Texas and around the nation. It's a powerful and compelling story of triumph in the midst of tragedy. It will show viewers that when tragedy strikes, we lean on one another to help see through it. The film will highlight a sports team that is deserving of having its story told. In doing so it will also serve as a piece of documentation that can be preserved in the history of Killeen, Texas sports for future generations to watch and learn a piece of local history.

Intended Audience

The intended audience for "*The '91 Roos*" are young men, ages 13-25. Other smaller audiences include parents and residents of Texas, more specifically in the Killeen and central Texas area, and people that have a general interest in sports and U.S. history. This is a story that is both local and national due to the nature of the content. It involved a local high school football team and small town, but with the Gulf War and the Luby's Massacre, it sparks a wider and more sensitive audience.

Influences

During my pre production phase, I researched and encountered several films that helped me explore narrative techniques and ways to go about filming my own project. It also helped that I already work professionally in the documentary film industry, so I leaned on support and knowledge from personal colleagues of mine for the project's success. From the below influences, I was able to formulate the style and approach that I would take and film my own project with. I focused on interesting direct interviews and heavy archival to help tell the story I wanted to tell.

Documentary Films

Undefeated (2011), Director: Daniel Lindsay and T. J. Martin.
<https://www.netflix.com/title/70177633>

The film documents the struggles of a high school football team, the Manassas Tigers of Memphis, as they attempt a winning season after years of losses. The team is turned around by coach Bill Courtney, who helps form a group of young men into an academic and athletic team.

The U (2009), Director: Billy Corben
<https://watchdocumentaries.com/the-u/>

Throughout the 1980s, Miami, Fla., was at the center of a racial and cultural shift taking place throughout the country. Overwhelmed by riots and tensions, Miami was a city influx, and the University of Miami football team served as a microcosm for this evolution. The image of the predominantly white university was forever changed when coach Howard Schnellenberger scoured some of the toughest ghettos in Florida to recruit mostly black players for his team. With a newly branded swagger, inspired and fueled by the quickly growing local Miami hip-hop culture, these Hurricanes took on larger-than-life personalities and won four national titles between 1983 and 1991. Filmmaker Billy Corben, a Miami native and University of Miami alum, will tell the story of how these "Bad Boys" of football changed the attitude of the game they played, and how this serene campus was transformed into "The U."

The U: Part 2 (2014), Director: Billy Corben

The U Part 2 picks up where the original film left off, with the program trying to recover from the devastation left by NCAA sanctions and scandals that had some

calling for the school to drop football.

Limited Series

Last Chance U, (2016-)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-YCKtBb0L4>

Elite athletes with difficult pasts turn to junior college football for a last shot at turning their lives around and achieving their dreams. Stories about players that received national attention at some point and the journey they are going through after all the questions of “what happened to this guy?” have been asked.

Source Materials

Articles

Houston Chronicle. (2011, August 16). *Shooting rampage at Killeen Luby's left 24 dead*. Chron. Retrieved November 4, 2021, from

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<https://www.kwtx.com/2021/10/16/30-years-ago-today-massacre-lubys-cafeteria-killeen/>.

Tepper, G. (2020, April 27). *#Txhsfb pandemic theater: Killeen vs. Sugar Land Dulles, 1991 5A state championship*. Dave Campbell's Texas Football. Retrieved November 4, 2021, from

<https://www.texasfootball.com/article/2020/04/20/-txhsfb-pandemic-theater-killeen-vs-sugar-land-dulles-1991-5a-state-championship>.

Verdejo, A. (2015, December 8). *1991: The year Killeen needed football*. Houston Chronicle. Retrieved November 4, 2021, from

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/1991-The-year-Killeen-needed-football-6673468.php>.

Books

Karpf, J., & Karpf, E. (1994). *Anatomy of a Massacre*. WRS Pub.
<https://www.amazon.com/Anatomy-Massacre-Elinor-Karpf/dp/1567960405>

Style and Approach

The '91 Roos will use an approach similar to other 30 for 30 documentaries like *The U* and Netflix's *Undefeated*. The film will look to submerge the audience in what it is like to be in Killeen, Texas. Killeen is in itself a character on its own. To understand the strong tie that this team has to its city, first I have to make the audience that does not know about Killeen, care about Killeen. From a brief history of its relation and proximity to Ft. Hood (the largest military base in the world), to visual evidence of what makes Killeen just that, Killeen. I will take the audience on a walk through 1991, including the Luby's Massacre that devastated the country. From there I will take a look at the 3 key players from that Killeen High School football team that led the way for the state championship as well as the team overall. I will account what it was like prior to that season as well as what went into that season and the adversity that shook them in the midst of it all. Captivating archival footage will be heavily utilized from home videos of family and friends to news and broadcast footage. A few visual inspirations for this film are Billy Corben's *The U* Part 1 (2009) and Part 2 (2014) and Daniel Lindsay and T.J. Martin's *Undefeated* (2011).

Feasibility

The project is very feasible, especially since I have already talked and met with a majority of the 1991 team from the key players, to the head coach and other people that had a role in that season. This has become a personal/passion project being that I have

close ties to the city. The subjects have all agreed to be a part of the film and are ready whenever I get the green light. The challenges I see are trying to keep things as condensed as possible and keeping the story grounded to where I see fit.

It's a big story for the city, so there is a lot to tell. Keeping things on track will be the biggest challenge, which is a good challenge to have. Another challenge may be securing archival material outside of home videos. If I have to go through new stations or other outside parties for material, then funding would have to kick in heavy. That said, Kickstarter, GoFundMe and out of pocket means may have to be the resort to secure appropriate rights and clearances. Overall, this project is very doable and an important piece to the Killeen culture that hasn't been told visually. Articles have been written, but now is the time to add a documentary piece to the vault.

Pre-Production Research

Treatment

Shots of Leo Buckley Stadium in Killeen, Texas set the tone for where our story takes place. An anonymous voice talks about what it meant to be a part of the 1991 football team and the inspiration behind it all. The banner of the lone state championship hangs near the field. Members of the Killeen High School marching band walk into the center of the frame and get into their ready position. The anonymous voice comes back again, talking about how the lone title may not look like much to the average eye, but to the city of Killeen, it meant much more than 20 state championship titles. A whistle blows and the marching band begins to play the school's fight song. Various highlights from the Killeen Kangaroos 1991 season intercut, showing how good they were mixed in with quick news flashes of the Gulf War still going on as well as the

mass shooting at the local Luby's. Shots of the star players Dion Marion, Billy Spiller and Charles West, or "the 3 Amigos as they were referred to, play. The anonymous voice caps off the introduction by saying something along the lines of "when the K (Killeen, Texas nickname) needed something to get behind, these high school kids led the way. They were the "91 Roos". The title sequence shows and fades to black.

Fade in to Bobby Etheredge, head coach of the 1991 Killeen High football team, holding a team photo of the 1991 State championship team. He talks about the memories just from holding the photo in his hand and recounts the players he still remembers to this day. He points out 3 specific players, Dion Marion, Charles West and Billy Spiller. We see a close up shot of Charles West from 1991.

From there comes a seamless transition from 1991 Charles West, into Charles West today. He mentions his name and position. The same will be done with Billy Spiller and Dion Marion, shifting from present day versions of them to 1991. The three of them meet together for the first time in years and talk amongst each other. Reminiscing about the past, the good times in Killeen as well as the bad. After introducing the 3 Amigos from the Killeen High School team, we see the visuals of them still talking amongst each other as a voiceover of a knowledgeable Killeen resident/figurehead gives us the short history of Killeen, Texas for outside perspective on things.

You briefly see the resident/figure head and ID him as the speaker for visual purposes. A visualization is shown of 1991 Killeen through archival footage and really tries to set the tone of what it was like to be a resident of Killeen. I will talk about how Killeen, Texas is nestled right in between Austin and Dallas and is directly adjacent with Ft. Hood. The significance of this is that Ft. Hood is one of the largest military bases in

the world, so Killeen's economy is directly impacted by Ft. Hood. It depends on the activity from the military post, the soldiers and their families that are stationed there.

A lot of the kids that attend Killeen High School are military kids. Thus, the reason for Killeen being known and referred to as the military "Boom Town " is because of its rapid growth in high influx of soldiers. You will hear about 1990 specifically to begin tying it into the story of the Killeen football team. The population of Killeen at this point was about 63,936 people. After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the late summer of 1990, the city prepared for war and sent thousands of troops from the 2nd Armored Division and the 1st Cavalry to the middle east.

Archival visuals of troops leaving and deploying for war, women and children crying, the city dry and almost ghost town-esque will be shown. Which is essentially what the city felt like as they were dealing with the effects from the Gulf War. By the fall of 1990, businesses suffered, restaurants and establishments were closing and unemployment was on the rise, more than 13% in November 1990. A lot of houses were left vacant and there were only around 5,000 troops left on the entire military post. We see all of this through archival material. Enrollment numbers from military connected students in 1991 showed a decrease of almost 400 students (355).

So across the board, the Gulf War was taking a toll on not only the city of Killeen, but the high school as well. The 3 Amigos talk about that 1990 season and how shorthanded it was on the field due to lack of students, finishing 5-5 and not making the playoffs. You'll hear from the players and coaches and see archival material from that 5-5 season and how that ultimately hurt and humbled them going into the 1991 season.

I will then get into the preparation of the 1991 season and hear what the

mentality was going into that season. I'll immediately dive into the first couple of games of the season and how they were looking good and getting wins. I will build all the way to October 1991. Specifically, October 16, 1991. From there, I'll cut to news footage/coverage of the Luby's shooting that took place in Killeen, Texas at the local Luby's restaurant. You see reaction from the players as they describe what it was like upon learning of the shooting that took place up the road from them. I give a short overview of the shooting and how George Henner murdered 23 people before committing suicide at the Luby's cafe. At the time it was the deadliest mass shooting by a lone gunman in U.S. history.

This was a tragic blow to the city of Killeen that was already dealing with the effects from the Gulf War. The coach talks about what it was like having to rally the team after the tragedy and how they responded. Accounts from players about their feelings after the massacre help set the tone for how they proceeded afterward. I'll fast forward to October 18th, 2 days after the shooting. Killeen is set to play their homecoming game Pflugerville. The players recount the game and the atmosphere at the stadium before the start. A city official talks about how the city was in the days immediately following the shooting. A reporter mentions how the press wasn't allowed to speak to the players pre game.

The players talk about the pregame and how both teams kneeled and prayed together and how powerful it was for everyone. They end up winning the game, 21-14. From there, I'll jump into the streak of wins and how the city of Killeen was falling in love with this team of destiny. Despite the tragedy around, everyone seems to be putting their hope on this little high school football team. They talk about their win against

Copperas Cove to earn a spot in the playoffs after missing it last year. A year after missing the playoffs and a month after a mass shooting, they are in the playoffs.

I'll get into their playoff run showing highlights from various games. I'll even use a visual of a playoff bracket to show their path to the title game. They have a couple of close games, and make it to the state title game. Their opponent, the undefeated Dulles Vikings. I will provide a background of this team to get a sense of the David versus Goliath matchup of this state title game. The viewers will hear and see news reports previewing the matchup between the two teams. They'll hear from the 3 amigos and others close to the team talk about what it was like having to match up with them. The night before the game is symbolic, the Killeen football team ended up going to Luby's to eat dinner together, we will hear from the players about that experience.

How it happened by chance, it was the only thing open and near them at the time. A full circle moment for this team of destiny. From there, it will jump into game day of the state title game. Viewers will hear from players, fans, coaches, etc. Footage from the game will be shown, key plays and moments while the players seemingly talk us through it all. Fast paced and exciting all the way down to the wire. The final buzzer sounds and the team is a state champion team. Emotions fill everyone even until this day. Viewers will see them celebrating in archival footage as they talk in present day about what winning that title meant for not only them, but for the city of Killeen as well. Destiny fulfilled. They continue on talking about what it means to them 30 years later.

We hear one key thing from each interviewee about what that title means today for them, the city, etc. We fade to black and see a lot of the members from that team reminiscing and talking amongst each other during a ceremony honoring them for

winning that state title during a game of the school's 2021 season. I will provide updates about what each of the key figures from the story are currently up to. I will finish things off with giving an update about where Killeen High School's football team currently stands and how to this day, that 1991 Football State title is still the only championship in school history. Fade to black and end the film.

Characters

- *Billy Spiller* - One-third of the key contributors of the 1991 Killeen football team that news reporters dubbed "The Three Amigos". Billy was the quarterback and heart and soul of the 1991 Killeen Kangaroo football team. One of the main reasons that the Killeen football team made its incredible run through the playoffs. #2 on the football field, but #1 in the hearts of many Killeen residents to this day.

- *Dion Marion* - Another key contributor of the 1991 Killeen football team that news reporters dubbed "The Three Amigos". Dion was the starting running back for the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos team and the MVP of the state championship game. He and Billy also helped lead the Killeen Kangaroos track team to a state championship earlier that 1991 season, which served as somewhat of a booster going into that fall 1991 football season.

- *Charles West* - The final key contributor of the Killeen trio known as "The Three Amigos". Charles was the starting wide receiver for the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos football team. He currently coaches in the Houston area, where he helped his team win a state championship. Join a rare group of people that have won both a championship as a player and a coach.

- *Bobby Etheredge* - Coach Bobby Etheredge was the head coach for the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos football team. He came in in 1989 and took over as the coach and in his 2nd (and final) season with the team, led them to Killeen's first, and only, state championship. He is used through archival interviews since he has senile dementia, also known as Alzheimer's Disease. I spoke with him over the phone with his wife and daughter to see if he could recall anything from that season. The most he could tell me was that he remembers the team being really good that year and being grateful to coach that 1991 team. His wife and daughter both declined to be on camera for the documentary, but gave me their blessings to do what needed to be done for the film.

- *Ed Blomquist* - One of the assistant coaches on defense for the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos football team. He offers insight from a coach's viewpoint on everything from what it was like prior to the 1991 season, how the Luby's massacre affected them and their state championship game run. He is a solid character because he sounds like how you would envision a Texas high school football coach would sound like. Also speaks on "The Three Amigos".

- *Corbett Lawler* - Corbett Lawler is a long time Killeen resident and the former principal during the 1991 season the Killeen Kangaroos won the state championship. He offers good insight on what it was like back then dealing with tragedy, the team going on their improbable run and how it felt to watch them do it. His daughter was also one of the head cheerleaders of the team.

- *Erin Dumler* - Erin Dumler is the daughter of Corbett Lawler and was a former cheerleader, known as the Kangarettes. She offers a perspective from not only the daughter of the high school principal, but also that of a cheerleader who saw all of the

actions up close and behind the scenes. She's also the only woman voice we hear throughout the film. Something that is much needed to help level out the male characters.

- *Al "Doc" Wilson* - Doc was one of the longest serving members of the Killeen Independent School District, working for Killeen for 57 years. He is a catalyst of the 1991 Killeen football team and more like a father figure to a lot of young men from that team. He offers sage-like wisdom and insight about everything from head coach Bobby Etheredge, the team itself, the season and playoff run as well as the journey home after winning the state championship.

- *Mike Young* - Mike was the play by play announcer for the 1991 football season. He has a really strong announcer voice and adds that sporty field to the film's discussion. He gives the perspective from someone who literally has to be the voice of the team for all the fans watching and listening from home. He is one of the stronger voices and characters of the film.

Ethics

When creating a documentary that includes highly sensitive topics within it such as the Luby's Massacre and Gulf War, you have to be very delicate about what to include and exclude from the film. You want to be able to tell an effective story without compromising the mental health of viewers or triggering someone directly affected by the two events. Essentially, I intend to give concise yet strong summaries of both events to where viewers, both aware and unaware of the details of each event, will be able to walk away satisfied with what they viewed.

Financial Aspects

Majority of the funding of “*The ‘91 Roos*” will come from personal finances, close friends and family members. My team and I have also already taken it upon ourselves to create a domain website www.91roos.com where I will sell ‘91 Roos merchandise to raise money for the film. The merchandise will have a retro feel to it that mimics the shirts that were sold during the 1991 Killeen football team’s season run.

Venturing out into other methods of fundraising such as crowd-sourcing through Kickstarter or Indiegogo websites could also be options that I am currently weighing out still.

<https://www.kickstarter.com/>

<https://www.indiegogo.com/>

Taking the crowd-sourcing route for fundraising money can be a hit or miss. This is why incentives for investors can always get more people interested in giving to the cause. A possible incentive set up is provided:

DONATION	PERKS
\$5	A video saying thank you.
\$15	A film poster, plus: ALL THE ABOVE
\$25	A “‘91 Roos” T-shirt, plus: ALL THE ABOVE
\$50	Name in the film credits, plus: ALL THE ABOVE
\$100	A DVD copy, privilege of seeing the first 10 minutes of the film, plus: ALL THE ABOVE
\$200	An Associate Producer credit in the film credits, privilege of seeing the first 20 minutes of the film, plus: ALL THE ABOVE
\$300+	An Executive Producer credit in the film credits, privilege of seeing the full film, plus: ALL THE ABOVE

Distribution Possibilities

The ‘91 Roos will enter the film festival circuit and target the following festivals:

- American Black Film Festival
- Houston Black Film Festival
- National Black Film Festival
- Charlotte Black Film Festival
- San Francisco Black Film Festival
- DOC NYC
- Oakcliff Film Festival
- Deep in the Heart Film Festival
- Black Cinematheque
- Austin Film Festival
- Atlanta Docufest
- Hayti Heritage Film Festival
- Denton Black Film Festival
- Lonestar Film Festival

After a film festival run (2 years), the film will also be proposed and shown in high schools (and eventually middle schools) across the greater central Texas area including:

- Killeen Independent School District
 - Killeen High School
 - Schoemaker High School
 - Ellison High School
 - Harker Heights High School
- Copperas Cove Independent School District
 - Copperas Cove High School

- Temple Independent School District
 - Temple High School
- Belton Independent School District
 - Belton High School
 - Belton New Tech

I feel that it is important to showcase this film directly where it affects the community the most. Not only is it a good sports story, it's essentially a historical story that can be preserved in Killeen's archives as a historical piece.

Social Media Timeline

Site	Rationale	Availability
Facebook	Communicate with fans/supporters	12/16/2021
Twitter	Communicate with fans/supporters	12/16/2021
Instagram	Trailers/teasers for fans/supporters	12/16/2021
YouTube	Trailers/teasers for fans/supporters	12/16/2021
Vimeo	Trailers/teasers for fans/supporters	12/16/2021

Schedule for Pre-Production, Production, Post-Production

Date	Event	Location
Pre-Production		
August-October	Research, contacts, proposal	Houston, TX
Production		
November 19	1991 Team Reunion	Killeen, TX
November 20	Principle Lawler and Amy Dumler interview	Killeen, TX
January 9	Killeen scenics/broll	Killeen, TX
January 15	Doc Wilson	Killeen, TX
February 4-5	Billy Spiller and Dion Marion interview	Killeen, TX
February 6-7	B-roll footage day	Killeen, TX
February 12	Doc Wilson interview	Killeen, TX
February 12	Ft. Hood military base to film/scenics	Ft. Hood, TX

Date	Event	Location
February 19	Coach Ed Blomquist interview	Killeen, TX
February 20	Killeen scenics	Killeen, TX
February 26	Charles West interview	Houston, TX
March 5	Billy Spiller interview #2	Killeen, TX
March 13	Drone filming of Killeen	Killeen, TX
April 2	Pick up shooting for specifics	Killeen, TX
Post-Production		
March-May	Editing, sound mixing, finalizing	Killeen, TX

RECONCEPTUALIZATION BEFORE PRODUCTION

In the preproduction phase of my project, I initially planned on doing a reunion scene for the film's opener and having the entire 1991 Killeen football team there at the Killeen High School gymnasium. At the time, I felt like seeing the players in the present would be a nice way to establish the characters of the film before I got heavy into the actual story that takes place in the past. I believed that being a "fly on the wall" and letting things unfold as they may would make for a much more raw and intimate moment that viewers could see and even relate to. The more I humanized my film subjects, the more that audience connection would grow.

I would capture the members of that 1991 Killeen football team chatting amongst each other, reminiscing about their triumph, trials and tribulations throughout that year. Afterward, I was going to surprise the players and bring out the former head coach, Coach Bobby Etheredge, to surprise the players and see how that authentic scene would play out. Coach Etheredge would then deliver a speech to the players about what 1991 meant to him as a coach and how that team helped him as a man or something along that line.

Something to get them fired up one more time like he had done a countless number of times back in their former playing days. I had to completely shift this plan during the production phase. I was in heavy communication with representatives from Killeen High School about this documentary project. They fully supported my project and ended up letting me know that they were planning on having a "reunion" for the 1991 championship team during one of the current football team's games at halftime.

This was exciting because this would essentially alleviate some of the planning and logistics that I would have had to do myself to get that '91 team together.

As the days went on, I was not kept as up to date with details regarding the reunion as I would have hoped to be. I was able to get the full details at the last second and had to scramble to be able to capture a portion of the team reunion. As the filmmaker, it was my responsibility as well to maintain the communication so that I had everything I needed to execute my gameplan.

I could have pushed more, whether that had been more calls, emails, finding another contact, etc. It can get tough when people aren't being responsive, but that's when I should have taken more of the reins, as the director, to make it happen despite the fact. There was no deep rundown or pre planning for shots at this reunion at halftime since it was so last second. Therefore, I had to do what some documentarians would call "running on the fly", and go out there and did what I could with what I had. It ended up going good for the most part. One of the most memorable moments of the film ended up coming from this film day.

Majority of the players on the team didn't get to show up to the "reunion", even the head coach Bobby Etheredge didn't attend. I got some good shots of the former players holding the state championship trophy, their rings, Doc and Billy in attendance and a group shot. With this, I came up with the idea of moving the reunion from the beginning to the end.

The new idea I had for the beginning was to now use archival and music to set the tone for the film. The archival would simply be an overall synopsis of what the film was going to be talking about. It's essentially a cold open/teaser for the introduction

sequence instead of a reunion. I think that gets the audience's attention and makes them want to invest their time into watching the rest of the film. Not only that, but it can also make for a good trailer for the film.

Another idea I ended up having to reconceptualize was the idea of head coach Bobby Etheredge being one of the interviewees for the film. I had done a lot of research with my team and reached out to people that may potentially have an idea on where Bobby was these days. Finally, I caught word that he was in the greater Houston, Texas. In my mind, this worked out perfectly because that was where I lived. I was able to get in contact with his wife through one of my other interview subjects, Charles West, and she let me know that he was more than likely not in the best shape to participate in the project.

Bobby Etheredge suffers from senile dementia, also known as Alzheimer's Disease. His wife was very sweet and helpful, and even recounted that 1991 season herself. I asked if she would be willing to be on camera herself, but she declined because she said she doesn't like the way she looks on camera. She even let me speak to Bobby for a couple of minutes just to test and see if he'd be able to even recount anything from that 1991 State Championship run. All he could provide me were simple answers like, "we were a really good team", "I remember those guys" and "we won the state championship". I ended up making the decision to not include him as an interview in the project, and instead relying on archival footage and photos for him to suffice.

I also spoke with his daughter, Kimberly, who was a cheerleader for the Killeen Kangaroos football team during that 1991 state title run. She was also a good person to talk to and provided really good context. Sadly, she also declined to be on camera for

the same reason. Camera shyness was something I was unable to reassure them about, but they gave me their blessing and wished me luck. Despite the slight challenges, the project continued on and I believe the final product is one to be proud of.

INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Documentary Ethics and the Filmmaker

Documentary filmmakers are creatives that give voices and a visual to stories that oftentimes need a voice and never had the exposure to do so. Reina Marie Loader talks about ethics and the documentary filmmaker, speaking how “documentary filmmakers (as opposed to journalists) see themselves as creative storytellers ‘who tell important truths in a world where the truths they want to tell are often ignored or hidden’” (3). Anytime you are dealing with documentary film, filmmakers have to take into consideration the plethora of ethical dilemmas that you can (and majority of the time, you will) encounter during production.

The question becomes do the means justify the ends? As Timothy Asch notes, “ethical truths are relative to a particular culture and a particular moment in history. As filmmakers we should be aware of and take seriously the ethical concerns of the time in which we live” (Asch, 204). I want to create the best project possible, ethics can add or dilute that final product. Ethical concerns and consideration first arise during the pre-production phase and carry on throughout both the production and post production phases. Ethical challenges are always a concern all the way up to the documentary’s screening. As a filmmaker you want to make the conscious effort to always do right by the subjects and people that are letting you film them.

They are letting you into their personal space and lives, so it is our duty as documentarians and filmmakers to do justice by them. Allison Milewski touches on this in an article with information from the Center for Media and Social Impact saying, “honor your (vulnerable) subjects. Protect them from attack and don’t leave them worse off

than when you met them” (Milewski, 7). As a filmmaker taking on a project, I am not looking to exploit, disrespect or misrepresent any group of people or individuals that make up the film. “Focusing on the viewer, the link between ethics and representation takes on comparable importance. To what extent are we responsible for the truthfulness of what we say?” (Nichols, 1). Nichols also goes on to mention how many documentary filmmakers have gone on to have successful careers because of the misfortune of their subjects/others.

This is very interesting when you think further and put it into perspective. Others’ misfortune and vulnerability to open up to complete strangers (in documentary filmmakers) can lead to a certain story that the filmmakers want to carve out from it in production and post production. Filmmakers hold a great deal of power with a camera in their hand and it’s up to us to maintain a code of ethics in order to not only get the best film possible, but also make sure we’re walking that fine line with the subject matters we’re portraying in the documentary film.

It’s important to note that although *The ‘91 Roos* is a sports documentary film, the film also touches on much more than that. The topics aside from the sports that it covers, happen to be subject matters that challenge documentary film ethics. *The ‘91 Roos* documentary film also happens to talk about the Luby’s Massacre that occurred in Killeen, Texas as well as the Persian Gulf War that left a city in a ghost town type of state. Mass shootings are a very sensitive subject matter. An article talks about ethics when covering mass shootings, saying that “many outlets have chosen to devote less coverage to perpetrators and more to victims and to the laws and policies that have not prevented these tragedies” (Yahr, 2019). In other words, you want to cover the shooting

and the victims itself, not those that perpetuate them.

These two specific topics that are talked about in *The '91 Roos* are very triggering subject matters to the city of Killeen and Ft. Hood, Texas. People have lost a lot because of both events and when talking to people for the film even to this day, you can hear the pain and scarring that they still have because of it all. At the time, the Luby's Massacre was the worst mass shooting in the United States. Approaching how to go about telling this large event in U.S. history in a small duration of time effectively had to be thought out fully for production.

As the director/filmmaker, and my strong connection to the community, it really helped me lean into the ethical side of storytelling with sensitive topics. It takes a lot of courage for a person traumatized through tragedy to come out of their comfort zone and speak on it for a documentary film. As a filmmaker, I have to continuously make the conscious effort to make sure I do everything in my power, as the one controlling the narrative, to go about it in a way that can get the story across the way I see fit but also do right by the characters themselves.

With this, I made sure that during interviews, I didn't pry too hard at subjects to get specific answers. I tried to make sure that each question asked was calculated and safe enough for the interviewee to feel comfortable and vulnerable enough to give us their perspective of everything. I also accepted the fact that not all the subject matters may want to talk about the tragedies of those two events. Who am I to be upset if someone doesn't want to relive any potential trauma? That's where the ethical decision to maintain respect comes into play.

People will talk about what they want to talk about, and that's where the line is

drawn in the sand of documentary ethics. There came a point in one of the interviews where one of the subject matters was recounting what life was like after the Luby's shooting. As he got going into his answer, you could see the gloss glaze over his eye as he began to truly remember this seemingly new, unlocked memory from the tragedy and starting choking up a bit. Per his request, I cut the cameras for him to get himself back together. Now as documentarians, we're taught that those types of moments and shots are gold for documentary film.

Me knowing this as it's happening, I am excited because this is the stuff you hope to capture in its raw and untouched form. This is also where the line in the sand is drawn too, and as the filmmaker you have to make the decision if you want to be the documentary filmmaker or the empathizing human being. It was an easy choice for me (being a resident of the area that was also affected by the tragedy the subject matter was tearing up about) to stop recording and let things calm back down. That's why I think I was the perfect person for this specific story.

Being someone who truly relates and knows the story, can find a way to still effectively tell the story without compromising characters and their mental health. This is why I made the decision to not pry hard for answers about the Gulf War or Luby's Massacre, and decided to let archival footage carry and tell the story. I think it helped the film in the long run as far as tapping into old footage to show the summary of the tragedy and give people an interesting perspective to see that we aren't all that far from 1991 in 2022 as we think when it comes to mass shootings.

During post production, it's easy to throw all of your ethical concerns out of the window for the sake of the edit and a "better" film. As the editor of the film, you still have

to maintain ethics for the film. You have to consider everyone still from the characters in the film to the wider, general audience that will be consuming your media. This means considering what constitutes something to be interesting and worth showing to the viewers but also is fine ethically for the person in the film that was interviewed.

Balance is key to making everyone happy. Nichols talks about this in an article on documentary ethics, saying “A code of documentary ethics must focus on protecting the well-being of both film subjects and actual viewers. In each case an ethical code needs to give primacy to respecting subjects and viewers as autonomous human beings whose relationship to the filmmaker is not limited to or solely governed by a formal contractual relationship” (2). I worked diligently and with true purpose to ensure that the subjects of the film felt comfortable and open, and did them justice in the end with the final product of the film.

I didn't want to misuse moments that may make them feel slighted or misrepresented in any way. A New York Film Academy article makes an excellent point, saying, “Ethics are certainly the baseline of most documentary films given the content and the realism of these projects. Filmmakers are documenting real people, with real issues that generally come from dark places to shed light on the focus and bring it to the world's attention. If these matters were light, there may not be such a need for an ethical code of conduct but when dealing with people who have been brutally beat and are retelling their story for the public to hear first hand, these subjects certainly need to be protected” (Kantilaftis, 2014). Anything can be quickly taken out of context, but with proper planning, execution and empathy, the ultimate goal of having an amazing documentary film can still be achieved. I hope that the subjects of my film as well as the

audiences that will watch it feel that I have achieved that goal and will embrace the project with open arms and positivity.

Subject-Filmmaker Relationship

The subject and filmmaker relationship is one that can raise a lot of ethical questions and concerns. Can a filmmaker be too close to the subject matter? Lines begin to blur when there is an overly invested filmmaker attached to it. Yes, it's great that they have such a strong bond with the subject, but it can be compromising in the long run if they begin to try to intervene because of their tie to the subject at hand. They may even go as far as to limit what someone may be trying to express because they don't want that viewpoint being tied to the film they are trying to make.

I wanted to make sure that my approach, both ethically and visually as a filmmaker, could exist hand in hand. My characters and subjects in the film trusted me with their name, likeness and words so I wanted to show them that I would do right by them. I think me being close to the story (but not in an overbearing manner) worked out nicely in the grand scheme of things for the story's overall execution. I knew what and who to look for when it came down to production and knew what would make or break the film. Being a member of the greater Killeen community, I could relate to the tragedies that were talked about in the film. I was able to use that relatability factor to my advantage and present things in a way that was digestible for the characters I was talking to throughout. As a filmmaker, you're already an outsider with a camera to potential characters. As a local filmmaker with ties, that already puts me in the door of familiarity with the subjects because of that "small town effect" of we're all family.

And at the same time get the material I needed to tell the story that I needed to

tell. The fact that I was someone from the area left a great impression on the interview subjects. They felt like they had one of their own talking to them and telling their story. People can appreciate it all that much more when it's someone who comes from where they are from. They can use and say certain things that only someone from that area may say or understand, and that leaves for a much more authentic and real feeling documentary film. As a filmmaker, I have to be able to teeter that middle ground and do what I can to not only tell the story that I'm hoping to tell, but also maintain that subject-filmmaker relationship to the best of our abilities.

PRE-PRODUCTION

The preproduction phase of *"The '91 Roos"* took place between Houston, Texas and Killeen, Texas over a period of two months from August to October 2021. During this time, I conducted my own research on the subject matter to fully familiarize myself with the details of the story. This time was also used to lock in my crew that would help execute everything. Everyone in my crew also happened to be creatives from the Killeen, Texas area, which was very cool because that made everyone that much more attached to this project. This time was also used to get in contact with the subjects of the film and get their approval to be filmed for it.

PRODUCTION

Overview

The production of *The '91 Roos* consists of interview and observational footage acquired in and around the Central Texas area. More specifically, in both the cities of Killeen, Texas and Ft. Hood, Texas. The bulk of production occurred in January and February of 2022. Additional shooting days and pick up shoots were added in March and April 2022.

Crew

Director/Producer/Editor: Derwin Graham

Derwin was born in Ft. Hood, Texas and raised in nearby Copperas Cove, Texas. During his early years he spent a lot of his time in Killeen, Texas He graduated from Baylor University with a degree in journalism and a minor in film & digital media. He is in his final year of the University of North Texas' Documentary Production & Studies MFA program.

He is entering his 4th year of working in the sports media industry. He most notably worked as the lead archival producer for ESPN on the Emmy award winning docu-series, *The Last Dance*. He has worked as a producer for documentaries for other major companies including: HBO, 40 Acres & A Mule, National Geographic, Religion of Sports and TIME. When he's not working professionally, he is working on his own personal projects.

1st AD/Producer: Ashleigh Rudser

Ashleigh is a Killeen based filmmaker who is also a graduate from the University of North Texas' media arts program. She has traveled to Los Angeles to pursue her

filmmaking ambitions. While there, Ashleigh attended New York Film Academy where she wrote, directed, and produced her first short films. She currently works for the city of Killeen where she handles all of their media presence.

When she's not working for the city, she is running her business, Rud+Camera. Ashleigh was the yang to my ying of the project. She comes from the UNT media arts family, so she knew what to expect with a project of this magnitude. She was the glue that held things together and provided much support as the 1st AD and one of the main Producers of the project.

Additional Crew: Kreshawn Fleming

Kreshawn was born and raised in Killeen, Texas and is a local photographer and videographer. He graduated from Killeen High School in 2006, and graduated from Sam Houston State University with a degree in film. He provided behind the scenes support such as: slating interviews, securing locations for filming, taking behind the scenes photos of us working on set and even helping camera operations at times.

He also got involved during the post production phase and helped when it was time to transcribe and read through our key interviews. He also handled a lot of the social media posting alongside myself and Ashleigh. He even got one of the local Killeen bar and grill restaurants to donate proceeds of their drink sales to the project.

Audio Engineer/Producer: Deonte Epps

Deonte was born and raised in Killeen, Texas and a proud graduate of Baylor University with a major in film & digital media. He is the creator, producer, and cohost of "The Duo: Sports and Stuff Podcast" that has had featured guests from ESPN, Bleacher Report, and more from the world of sports. Previously, Deonte has spent time as a

sports reporter, teacher, and coach. Deonte did a ton of heavy lifting alongside myself as far as research and development for the project.

He initially inspired me to pursue this specific project topic. He originally had an idea about doing a podcast about the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos football team and reached out to me about how to go about doing that. Around the same time, I had just begun piecing together the initial treatment doc for the 1991 Killeen Kangaroos football team. I got him on board with me and the film idea I had and we were able to have a jump start on both of our ends as a result. He also is the narrator of the film as well.

Camera Operator/Post Production Producer: Dentrell Hill

Dentrell was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and raised in the Killeen area. He graduated from the University of North Texas and is currently studying for his real estate license. When he isn't studying, he is doing photography and blogging about music. Dentrell was one of the least experienced when it came to the documentary world of production, but he offered so much support and ideas.

He had a huge helping hand on the post production side of things where he assisted me on the archival side. He helped me as we searched for specific archival footage, helped me do QCing of different versions of the film to see what flowed best and even helped with condensing down the script with me. He also was a camera operator on a few of our key interviews.

Equipment

The equipment used for the production of *The '91 Roos* was a combination of many things that helped bring this project to fruition. Camera wise, the equipment used was the Blackmagic Ursa Mini provided by the University of North Texas' media arts

department, my personal Blackmagic Pocket Cinema 4K camera and a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV. Location sound was obtained through the use of the Zoom H6 Audio Recorder as well as a boom microphone. This double-system sound method allowed us to capture audio directly as well as audio through the cameras themselves and get the best sounding audio possible. I varied between a few lenses ranging from 50mm and 85mm Rokinon prime lenses to Canon and Sigma zoom lenses.

Experience

Majority of the shoots consisted of myself, my DP and a couple crew members. I often was the camera A operator while also managing the other cameras, making sure the shots lined up the way I wanted them to. There was one shoot with an interview subject where no one was available to assist me in the field that particular time frame when the subject was free.

So I had to assume all the roles of production to make sure I got the interview knocked out. This was also my first time recording interview subjects in front of a green screen. A lot of the areas in Killeen where I had space to film just weren't aesthetically pleasing. So I went ahead and decided to use a green screen to add in something more fitting for each of the characters I interviewed with the green screen.

There was one hiccup during production that caused some slight headaches. There was one particular interview where I had finally secured the interviewee after losing contact with him for months. He finally agreed to an interview and we went to meet up with him. I showed up to film him only to realize that we did not have the correct lens or additional tripod in any of our vehicles we traveled in to meet him. Somehow, one of the crew members had forgotten to pack it in the vehicle before we

left (silly mistake on us not triple checking).

I had to cancel on the spot and reschedule something with the interviewee. It was slightly embarrassing, especially for me being a professional in the field of work. I ended up pushing his interview back, and got it a couple of weeks after that. During principal photography, I mainly had to travel locally within the central Texas area (Ft. Hood, Texas and Killeen, Texas) and to the Houston, Texas area for one interview.

Things worked out in our favor that the majority of the subject matters stayed relatively close in the Killeen area and were able to meet us to interview there. I was even able to capture some on the run footage when there was a mini reunion of the 1991 Killeen football team during one of the high school football games. One of the final shots of the film comes from that interaction between members of that 1991 team. I knew that I didn't need a large amount of observational footage for this particular project because it's more so a project of reflection and not a fly on the wall, "let's see what happens" type of documentary film.

Having such a small crew allowed our subjects to feel comfortable and vulnerable enough to show themselves on camera without feeling uncomfortable. There was one moment where one of the players from that 1991 team was recalling what it was like after the Luby's shooting, and he began to tear up and choke a little bit. I let the camera roll a little bit to capture this. During the first cut, something felt like it was missing throughout the film. It felt like I needed something stronger to help transition to the different parts of the film.

That's when I came up with the idea of potentially introducing a narrator for the film that could serve as "a voice of God" and break the film up so that it could flow a little

smoother. Since one of the producers, Deonte Epps, was a podcaster and had all the necessary microphones and audio gear to work with, I leaned on him to serve as that voice. He was a former news broadcaster for KWTX in Waco, Texas so it only made sense to let him assume this role.

I wrote a few mini scripts for his narration tracks and laid those down for the film and got them into the project sequence. In the end, I think it really added to the flow of the overall film. As far as the musical side of the project, I ended up going with music from APM Music versus going with an original score. I had myself as well as one of the additional crew members scour through the many pages of APM Music to see which songs would fit for which sequence in the film. In the end, I think the song choices really helped the film just as much as an original score would have helped it.

During one of the early sequences of the film, I really wanted to capture that 90's essence of the film through the music for the film. A song that kept coming to mind was "Slam" by Onyx. It's an energetic song that pulls you in, makes you want to bob your head and holds your attention for the duration of the song. With this being such a popular song, it makes the process of getting fully licensed and cleared to use a challenge. To potentially work around this, I ended up finding someone who remade the beat and used their version of the track for the film.

In my experience dealing with music remakes and rights and clearances in documentary film, this has typically worked out. I'm currently awaiting response from the producer of the remake as well as some colleagues that deal with musical rights and clearances to help me get this track cleared for worldwide usage. I feel like this track is great for helping to tie into the time period, especially with the archival that it is

partnered with in the film. Worst case scenario if this particular version of the song isn't clearable, there are alternative sites that have tracks that may feel similar to this particular song.

Production Schedule

- January 9, 2022 - Filming around Killeen, Texas
- February 4-5, 2022 - Interview Billy Spiller and Dion Marion
- February 6, 2022 - Killeen, Texas visual evidence/scenics filming
- February 12, 2022 - Doc Wilson Interview + get on Ft. Hood military base to film/scenics
- February 19, 2022 - Coach Ed Blomquist + Killeen scenics
- February 26, 2022 - Charles West
- February 27, 2022 - Billy Interview #2
- March 13, 2022 - Shooting drone footage of Killeen
- April 2, 2022 - Pickup shoot to get more specific broll

Shooting Locations

The three shooting locations used during principle photography for *The '91 Roos* were: Killeen, Texas, Ft. Hood, Texas and Houston, Texas. Some of the subjects of the film did not live in Texas at the time of filming, but this worked out nicely when there was a local event in Killeen when they would just so happen to be in town for a few days. From there I capitalized and filmed during that small window of availability. Killeen, Texas is a central Texas town that is directly located next and coexists with Ft. Hood, Texas. Ft. Hood, Texas is one of the largest military posts in the world. Majority of the soldiers that work on Ft. Hood lives and has families that stay in the Killeen community.

Without Ft. Hood, Killeen would not thrive the way that it does. Houston, Texas is where one of the subjects of the film stays. It is also where the 1991 Killeen Kangaroo football team played the state championship game against Sugarland Dulles at the Astrodome.

Budget

A full budget is included in the appendix.

POST-PRODUCTION

Equipment

The double system picture and audio captured in production were synced using PluralEyes software. Picture and sound editing were done on Adobe Premiere Pro in the home of one of the producers of the film. Color grading was applied using a mix of Premiere Pro and DaVinci Resolve to fully maximize the DH color footage captured on the Blackmagic Ursa Mini and Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K. Some characters of the film were filmed in front of a green screen and I added in backgrounds that were relevant to Killeen, Texas to their interviews so it had something more appealing instead of having blank backgrounds. All audio mixing will be complete via Adobe Audition and Pro Tools. All footage will be exported to 422 Apple ProRes for optimum picture quality during screening.

Schedule

- March 12-13, 2022 - Viewing, Transcribing and Logging the footage
- March 19-20, 2022 - Organization and First Assembly Cut arranged
- March 26-April 2, 2022- Editing
- April 2, 2022 - 1st Rough Cut
- April 3-5, 2022 - QC and get notes
- April 8-10, 2022 - Editing
- April 11, 2022 - 2nd Rough Cut
- April 11-14, 2022 - QC and get notes
- April 15-23, 2022 - Editing
- April 24, 2022 - Fine Cut 1

- June-July 2022 - Final Cut Ready for film festival run

RECONCEPTUALIZATION DURING POST-PRODUCTION

Upon completing production and having a rough assembly of *The '91 Roos*, I was initially satisfied with things for the most part. I was sad that I couldn't get any of the Etheredges involved directly in the film (the head Coach Bobby Etheredge has Alzheimer's disease and both his wife and daughter didn't want to be on camera due to shyness). But I figured that I could maybe find some archival to take the place of that lack of interview from them.

This would turn out to be true and I ended up getting archival material from the wife and daughter. I even found two interviews from Bobby Etheredge to make up for his lack of talking in the film. I also realized that the majority of the interview subjects didn't talk in crazy depth about the Gulf War (at the time of their 1991 state championship run, the Gulf War was raging in the Middle East) which was a key component to the city being like a ghost town.

I had to make a decision and figure out a way to incorporate the Gulf War more in the story so that it wasn't missing completely. I settled on providing narration to fill the gaps and also swerve as the transitions into the next sequence of the story. It provided a break from interviews and provided further context to the story to further get the viewer invested and informed on the story. I tried to make sure that Killeen itself felt like a character in the story and had a voice. This was done during the first sequence of the story after the cold open.

I got visuals of where we are in Killeen and a sense for the present day Killeen before we fade into the background and history of Killeen and Ft. Hood. I think that combined with the stories and archival scattered throughout the film make for a strong

ode to Killeen and Ft. Hood. That goes for anyone familiar with the town and complete strangers interested in the story. Another thing I noticed while working on several of the rough cuts was that there was a lot of exposition and long winded answers from different subjects.

A couple of the older characters got a little lost in their own stories and provided a little too much information at times. It came down to having to cut it down for the sake of run time and not being long winded. Although what they were saying was good, it wasn't necessarily good for the final cut and wouldn't be completely missed. It got tough at points because like any other film maker looking at footage, you think everything is gold. It ended up coming down to losing the gold for the diamonds and I'm satisfied with what I came out with. Originally during talks in pre-production with Tania and my committee, the consensus was to maybe find survivors from the Luby's shooting and interview them as well as my current list of characters.

I too thought this would be good for the story, but when it came down to production, it was just hard to find the survivors willing to be on camera. Instead I turned to my go to when it comes to documentary film, archival footage. I ended up finding strong archival material of survivors recounting the tragedy on camera and used that during the Luby's Massacre sequence of the film, and I think that worked well in place of the "missing" characters. Being the director and editor of a documentary that just so happens to also be a "passion" project can be rough. I had to constantly step back and make sure I provided enough detail across the board so that anyone interested in the film would be able to sit, watch and comprehend what's being talked about for 50 minutes. Approaching this film with the understanding that the potential audience may

not know the underlying details of Killeen and this story was key in providing the appropriate amount of backstory within the film. This thought process helped out a ton at the end of the day and helped make a better story. I knew going into the documentary film that it would more than likely be archival heavy since it's a story from the past.

I really leaned in on that aspect of the project and let the archival carry portions of the story. I think that works well, because it makes the story feel that much more real when they see older archival footage and not just people reminiscing and talking about the past. It makes things that much more captivating and authentic all at the same time. I'm thankful for my committee members because they really helped out in that pre production phase and made sure I was iron tight there so that I could go into production and post production with minimal hiccups and come out with a strong thesis film.

EVALUATION OF COMPLETED WORK

Pre-Production

Going back and looking at the initial development of *The '91 Roos*, I see a dream realized fully and flushed out as clean as it could have been. Just about everything I had hoped to accomplish and get from the project, aside from not getting Head Coach Bobby Etheredge on camera, I was able to accomplish. For that, I have to thank my committee and the crew I had around me. They all really got behind the project and it shows with the final product.

This idea has been floating in my head since my first year project. I just sat on it as a potential thesis idea, but I had always thought that maybe it was something that was too big for me to bite and chew. I thought the idea was too big for me and that maybe I could do it one day. I'm glad I finally took that leap of faith and realized that I had a big enough bite to handle this subject matter.

Production

Like many productions are, the production of *The '91 Roos* was challenging to say the least. One can go into a production with a specific game plan and the production Gods say otherwise. If I could've done something different, I would not have let others in my production crew talk me into using a green screen background for our interview subjects. Despite not having the most aesthetically pleasing backgrounds to work with on sets, I don't think that was the best decision. I feel bad about it because I already knew from my prior experience with documentary film.

I've never seen a green screen used for a background on professional documentaries, I hate that I let that slide because I was trying to be a "team player" and

not overpower the production. That's exactly what I should have done was step up and use my voice as the director to say "no, this is a bad idea" and figure out the best solution to the background problem. It ended up not looking terrible in post production, but it doesn't look like that documentary you would see on television in my opinion because of the green screen effect. This may be something worth revisiting later down the road as a reshoot if the stars align for it to happen.

I also wish I would have found an actual production crew member that specialized in audio. I leaned on someone with a film production background from college to handle the audio because they talked a good game about it (they also graduated from UNT, so I figured they knew the equipment well). They ended up not getting the best quality audio, which is a huge deal breaker when it comes to any film. You can get away with bad footage sometimes, you can never get away with bad audio. It completely takes the viewer out of the experience. It was usable and fixed up some in post, but it will need a lot of TLC to get it to where I feel is "professional".

I was able to achieve the style and approach that I had originally hoped to achieve from the pre-production phase. In pre-production, I was hoping to focus the film around direct interviews and heavy archival material. I executed this by making sure I got as many detailed answers from subjects in their interviews. I was also able to find a plethora of archival material through subjects, internet searching and archival resources that would help push the story along when interviews wouldn't. I was hoping this film would feel like an ESPN 30 for 30 with the style and approach. I was able to achieve this, for the most part. However, I do wish I could have gotten some more observational footage of different subjects outside of their initial interviews. This way I could have

potentially used their observational footage at certain points of the film to break up the use of archival and/or interview footage. This approach works well in their documentaries, and may have worked well on my own. Overall, I had a vision as far as the style and approach and saw it through to the best of what was available to me, and it made for a quality film.

Some good spots were that I didn't have to travel to too many different locations to film since it was a pretty local story. I only had to travel out of town once, that was to Houston for one of the interviews. This is the same interview that I initially had to cancel on set and reschedule due to missing equipment.

This was challenging because I had already spent a great deal of time trying to track this particular person down (no one had heard from him in years), and when I finally got a response, I folded by having to cancel. Luckily he was able to get back to us again and was able to give us an interview. Getting archival footage was very easy during production. So many people had a bunch to share, even the championship game they played in as well as their playoff run to the state championship.

I ended up getting the full backing of the city and even made it to the news for our efforts. Once that happened, the flood doors opened and everyone I talked to was more than willing to help by any means. This story is not just a documentary about a football team, it also incorporates the Gulf War and the Luby's Massacre, so it was important to teeter the line nicely so that everything had its moment in the film.

With either the Gulf War or the Luby's Massacre, one can easily spend an entire documentary talking about either or by itself. With this project, it was important to not belittle either of these events, but also not pour too much into them to take focus away

from the main story arc of the film, and that was the 1991 football team's response to both events. I believe I hit this nail on the head and I got a great amount of all the above without taking away from the story.

My previous MFA films also focus on a sports related story, but this particular film allowed for much more than just a sports film. With a sports film, the thing is you can't make it about the sport. With this Killeen High School football team, it's not about how good they were or weren't when they played. It's about the forces that took them and their small town and ultimately crushed their hopes and dreams and then how they responded to that.

I really lean more into their response, and it doesn't feel like just another sports film. There isn't much football until midway into the film. Something that was done on purpose to show this is more than just sports. I think my prior two films that I completed during my MFA tenure allowed me to fully evolve and really flush this thesis film into something bigger than itself.

This project ended up becoming a big piece of Killeen history the more I got into the interviews and carving out the story. The characters and story that I am telling with this project can be passed down for generations to come in Killeen, Texas and even Texas history. It's a story of triumph over tragedy through sports, literally something you would see in a movie.

Post- Production

Post production for *The '91 Roos* was very overwhelming a lot of the time. At one point, I ran out of space on the initial drive I used to hold all of the footage I shot on the Blackmagic Ursa Mini and the Blackmagic Pocket Cinema 4K camera. So I ended up

having 3 drives total with footage spread out.

That resulted in footage and things getting lost or mixed up. And at one point I lost all of the b-roll footage that I had shot, and I didn't realize until we were sitting in Premiere trying to import everything. I ended up having to scratch editing for a bit so I could go back and see what all b-roll footage I needed to get all over again. It was a huge inconvenience, and a damper because I lost some pretty amazing shots that couldn't be recreated.

Starting the editing process is always a pain just because you have to get things set up and organized in the edit before you can get to laying things within the edit. With this comes organizing footage, finding our characters, synching their audio using PluralEyes software, going through each and every interview and cutting down each one based on what they are talking about and organizing all of the transcripts accordingly into one solid script.

It's a process within the process, a tedious one at that. Like Premiere Pro is known for, there came random points where the application would just freeze up and stop responding. This became frustrating toward the back end of the edit when I was trying to export a cut out. It would freeze at 71% and just stop responding. I finally figured out the issue. There was one file (a B-Cam of one of the interviews) that was corrupt somehow. Once I went in and removed that, the export finally started acting right and let me get a new version of the film out.

Sometimes footage decides to do wonky things that are out of our control, and you end up having to call an audible and adjust accordingly. Another challenge was that I wasn't even going to be the main editor sitting in front of the screen. I was going to be

assisting the editor and helping build the structure and story arc on the side and letting them be the actual editors.

The person I originally planned to handle the majority of the edit did not do so, and left it all in my hands. When I first brought them on board, they were aware that they would be the one controlling the editing software and making the cuts, placements, etc. They told me their schedule would be fine to do so, and I went with their word because they previously had a good track record, from my understanding. When it came time to get into post production, they received all the drives and information that they needed to begin the editing process.

A couple of days went by and I checked in to see how things were going (since I was remote in a different city, I was not able to be in the same edit room as them at the time). They told me things were going good and that they were laying things on the timeline, so I'm naturally thinking that we should be fine. I had a concrete script for them to follow and had allowed room for me to be open if they needed to hop on a call to discuss things.

I decided to pop up in town a couple of days later to allow myself to sit in on the edit and help keep track of things. When I get to the edit with the editor, they let me open up the timeline to see how things are going before they have to step out and go to another gig they have to film. As I'm going through the timeline, I see that they are going completely off script and not arranging much of anything. It looked as if they were rushing things and just throwing footage anywhere to have a timeline built. I had to start from scratch and began crafting a new project sequence myself on their edit.

When they got back, I let them know that this was unsatisfactory and that things

needed to change. The editor gave me a bunch of excuses about their schedule not working for this and that they could still work on it, but it was going to have to wait. At this point, I'm frustrated because they had already committed a long time ago and had been promising me my project was going fine in the edit. I suppose the person oversold themselves to me and their time. They let me know life stuff got in the way and how they were burnt out as far as film and production was concerned, and they started to check out mentally by this point.

I told them I would take over because I was in a time crunch and couldn't afford to sit back and wait for anyone else to handle things. They let me use their editing software as much as I wanted to while I was in town to edit the film, and seemingly vanished from anything editing related. Their set up was in their home and despite me staying up late hours editing, they never popped their head in to try and take over or offer any input or help. I've never seen an editor check out and be right under the same roof.

At the end of the day, I had to do what I had to do and crank it out myself with the help of one other person from the crew, who served as my Associate Archival Producer. As the filmmaker, it's all about calling audibles and taking the reins before things can hit the fan. Being in the professional industry for a few years now has helped mold me to be ready for the unexpected. In the end, I think that it helped out in the long run for the story because I was able to recall interviews and footage that I shot, since I was the one who shot them, and it made the edit somewhat easier. There were a lot of late nights in the edit, but the final product is rewarding enough for the hours put in on Premiere Pro.

APPENDIX
SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Sample Release Form

LICENSE, ASSIGNMENT AND RELEASE

1. For good and valuable consideration, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I hereby irrevocably grant Derwin Graham together with employees, agents, licensees, successors, assigns, and those acting with their permission or upon its authority (all of whom are referred to below as the "licensed parties") the absolute and unrestricted right and permission to record, copy, reproduce, adapt, edit, summarize, copyright, publish, photograph, film, televise, exhibit, distribute, license, vend, rent, disseminate, display, perform, and otherwise exploit in any and all markets and media now known or hereafter devised (collectively "use") my appearance, name, likeness, voice, documents, other property, views, performance, efforts, trademark or trade name, biography, artistry, recorded image and voice, and all other documents and artifacts provided to Derwin Graham by me (collectively the "materials") in or related to any and all versions and/or episodes of the untitled documentary film/program tentatively entitled "THE '91 ROOS". This includes, in perpetuity, by any means, uses or media, now known or hereafter devised, without limitation, all means of television, theatrical or non-theatrical distribution, consumer video devices, sound recordings, or print, electronic and/or photo essay materials or publications, and in all types of advertising and promotion of the foregoing and of the services of the licensed parties or any of them.
2. I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the materials or the uses to which any of those materials may be put, including without limitation the completed television program or other film or program, and the related advertising and promotion of any such film or program.
3. I represent and warrant that I have the right to enter into this agreement and to grant the rights herein granted. Recognizing the licensed parties' reliance upon this agreement, I hereby irrevocably release, discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the licensed parties and each of them from and against all actions, damages, costs, liabilities, claims, losses and expenses of every type and description (including attorneys' fees and expenses) to which the licensed parties or any of them may be subject as a result of or in any way related to any use of the materials by any of the licensed parties, including without limitation any claim for violation, infringement or invasion of any copyright, patent, trademark right, privacy or publicity right, defamation or any other right whatsoever that I now have or may ever have resulting from or relating to any such use of the materials.
4. I agree that all audio and/or video recordings of the materials or any of them as well as all descriptions or summaries of my personal history and/or views that are made and used by any licensed party will be solely owned by Derwin Graham and that they may copyright in its name and for its sole benefit any such audio or video recording containing the materials or any of them.
5. Nothing herein will constitute any obligation on any licensed party to make any use of the rights or the materials set forth above.

6. This License, Assignment and Release sets forth the entire agreement between me and the licensed parties, and I am not relying on any promises or statements, nor have I been promised any money or other compensation, in connection with my signing this document or any use of the materials, other than expressly set forth herein.
7. This License, Assignment and Release shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of Texas, applicable to contracts entered into and to be fully performed therein.

I have read this License, Assignment and Release prior to signing it, and I understand its contents.

DATE: _____ NAME: (please print) _____

SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

If signatory is not yet 21 years old, complete the following form:

I, the undersigned, hereby warrant that I am the _____ * of _____, a minor, and have full authority to authorize and execute the above License, Assignment and Release which I have read and approved. I hereby irrevocably release, discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless each licensed party as provided above in paragraph 4.

DATE: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian:

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

*insert the word "parent" or "guardian," as appropriate

Interview Questions

Dion Marion, Billy Spiller and Charles West

1. Describe the atmosphere in Killeen going into the Fall of 1991.
2. What brought you (or your family) to Killeen?
3. What was a normal week like in Fall of 1991?
4. Where were you when you first heard about Luby's shooting?
 - a. Describe Killeen in those weeks following.
5. What are your favorite memories, coach, story, etc from that season?
6. What was the atmosphere like in the Astrodome?
 - a. What were the emotions on the bus, locker room?
 - b. Were there many fans that traveled to the game?
 - c. Describe the escort home?
7. 30 years later, what is one thing you would want people to remember about this championship team?
8. Did the team take on the role of "putting the city on its back" as a form of inspiration during a rough and tragic time?
9. Was there any point in the sense where doubt crept into the minds of players in the locker room? What did it take to overcome that?
10. The talent in 2021 in the Greater-Killeen area is obviously spread out throughout the 4 KISD high schools, as well as Copperas Cove, Belton, Temple. What do you think it will take for Killeen High (or any area district) to go on their own magical run to the state title game?
11. Everyone knows "Doc". Describe what made him so important to the team that season, and why he will always be considered one of the best.
12. Who was Coach Bobby Etheredge? What made the coaching staff so special to lead the team during that season?
13. Anything you would change or do differently if you got the chance to go back and relive it?

Mike Young

1. Describe the culture of the city of Killeen in 1991.
2. In your mind, with the Luby's tragedy still in the forefront, how important was this team to the city of Killeen?
3. Can you remember where you were on that day? How did you feel?
4. What do you remember about the atmosphere around town?
5. How did you become play by play announcer for the team?
6. Who was Coach Bobby Etheredge? What made him different from other coaches?
7. Was there a game or a moment in the season where you knew this team had what it took to win a state title?
8. Describe the atmosphere of the Astrodome for that state title game?
9. Any other significant moments or memories from that season?

What is your favorite memory from 1991?

What coach was the most liked/disliked? Why?

How did Luby's shooting affect Killeen?

Did you feel like this was the year yall would be "good" or have a chance at state?

What was Killeen like (what did you did for fun, fav restaurants, activities)

Rivalry games? (Ellison?)

Any photos, videos, contacts, lettermans, yearbooks, what killeen city looks like now

Did anybody go pro? Since Killeen is a character should we highlight some of the successes from Killeen? Wic, Tommy Harris (maybe shoot in Tommy Harris center) Roy Miller III

Erin Dumler and Corbett Lawler

1. What is your name, where are you from, and what is your affiliation with the 91 Roo team?
2. What is the first thing you think of or remember when someone brings up that 91 State Championship?
 - a. Explore further based on answer.
3. What do you remember going into the fall of 91?
 - a. What was the atmosphere like around town?

- b. Ghost town?
 - c. For the coaches?
 - d. For the school?
4. Describe your experience as a coach's wife. **
 5. Describe those first few weeks of the season.
 - a. Preseason and Odessa and S Oak Cliff wins
 - b. Loss to Temple than Waco
 - i. What changed after that loss?
 - ii. Why?
 6. Describe the day of the Luby's shooting on October 16th
 - a. Explore further based on answer.
 - b. As a principal, how do you tackle that subject and that experience with staff and students?
 - i. What was the schools/districts response?
 7. What was the atmosphere like at the game that Friday?
 - a. As a coach's wife, what was your experience?
 - b. Would you say that is the moment the season began to turn around?
 8. Describe the weeks following? Cove, Ellison, Austin.
 - a. As a person living in Killeen?
 - b. As a principal?
 - c. As a coach's wife?
 9. What game or moment, in particular, stands out for you in those games?
 10. What do you remember about the Jersey Village Game?
 11. Were you there for the team send off? Describe.
 12. Tell me about the Astrodome and what that was like?
 13. What memories stick out for you most about that game?

14. Were there a lot of fans in the stands?
15. What was the homecoming like when the team returned home?
16. How do you feel Killeen High or even Killeen, itself was changed that year?
 - a. By the war
 - b. By the shooting
 - c. By the championship
17. What was Killeen High like in the year(s) immediately following?
18. How would you describe Killeen to someone who has never been here before?
19. Have you seen any of the coaches or players from that year, is there anyone you stay in touch with?
20. Anything you would like to add about your experience or what you remember from that whole season/fall.

Budget

Shooting Format: Digital Video				Total Budget:	\$73,392.64	
Running Time:	60 minutes			Pre-Production	\$1,329.91	
Shooting Days:	21			Above the Line		
Locations:	6			Production	\$51,710.86	
Studio:				Post-Production	\$18,156.87	
Start Date:	TBD			Distribution	\$2,195.00	
End Date:	TBD					
				<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Cash Needed</i>
Total Budget Estimate:				\$73,392.64	\$70,112.68	\$3,279.96
<i>Note: No Tax on Filmmaking Expenditures in Texas</i>						
https://kpmfilm.com/film-tax-credits-by-state-map/texas/						
				Contingency:	10%	

<i>Description:</i>	<i>Rate in \$US</i>	<i>Per</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Cash Needed</i>
Pre-Production						
Research Materials	\$0.00	Allow	1	\$0.00		\$0.00
Fundraising Materials	\$250.00	Allow	1	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
Proposal Development				\$0.00		\$0.00
Title/Concept Copyright	\$55.00	Registration	1	\$55.00	\$0.00	\$55.00
Location Scouting	\$200.00	Allow	1	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Travel Expenses	\$40.00	Gas tank	4	\$160.00	\$0.00	\$160.00
Gas, Parking, Tolls	\$250.00	Allow	1	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
Group Apps	\$0.00	Flat Fee		\$0.00		\$0.00
Cloud Storage	\$9.99	Month	9	\$89.91	\$89.91	\$0.00
Graphic Design	\$65.00	Hour		\$325.00	\$325.00	\$0.00
Licensing of Intellectual Property				\$0.00		\$0.00

<i>Description:</i>	<i>Rate in \$US</i>	<i>Per</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Cash Needed</i>
Retaining Legal Counsel				\$0.00		\$0.00
Pre-Production Sub Total:				\$1,329.91	\$441.91	\$915.00
Production						
Talent/Performer	\$980.00	Day		\$0.00		\$0.00
Director/Producer	\$3,418.00	Day	9	\$30,762.00	\$30,762.00	\$0.00
Camera Operator	\$500.00	Day	9	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Sound Recordist	\$500.00	Day	9	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Camera Equipment						
Blackmagic Design URSA Mini 4K Digital Cinema Camera	\$2,484.95			\$2,484.95	\$2,484.95	\$0.00
Canon Prime Lens Set (24, 35, 50, 85 mm)	\$127.00	Day	9	\$1,143.00	\$1,143.00	\$0.00
Sachtler FSB8 Tripod (75 mm)	\$60.00	Day	9	\$540.00	\$540.00	\$0.00
Losmandy Porta-Jib Standard w/ K-Pod	\$180.00	Day	9	\$1,620.00	\$1,620.00	\$0.00
Sound Equipment						
702T High-Resolution CompactFlash Field Recorder	\$1,499.95			\$1,499.95	\$1,499.95	\$0.00
Sony EMC-77 Lavalier Mic	\$56.00	Week	3	\$168.00	\$168.00	\$0.00
Sennheiser 416 Shotgun Mic Kit (w Boom Pole)	\$110.00	Week	3	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$0.00
Sennheiser G3 Wireless Lavalier Mic	\$110.00	Week	3	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$0.00
XLR Cables (25 ft.)	\$6.00	Week	3	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$0.00
XLR Cables (5 ft.)	\$4.00	Week	3	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$0.00
Lights Grip Electric						
Arri HMI 3 Light Package (525, 525, and 1200 Par)	\$850.00	Week	3	\$2,550.00	\$2,550.00	\$0.00
Flag Kit (12x18) 2 Black, 1 Single, 1 Double, 1 Silk	\$52.00	Week	3	\$156.00	\$156.00	\$0.00

<i>Description:</i>	<i>Rate in \$US</i>	<i>Per</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Cash Needed</i>
C-Stand (w Grip Head, Extension Arm and Shot Bag)	\$18.00	Week	3	\$54.00	\$54.00	\$0.00
Impact 7-in-1 Reflector (42" Round)	\$44.00	Week	3	\$132.00	\$132.00	\$0.00
Single Extension Cord (25 ft.)	\$6.00	Week	3	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$0.00
Single Extension Cord (50 ft.)	\$10.00	Week	3	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$0.00
Fellix Light Kit	\$252.00	Week	3	\$756.00	\$756.00	\$0.00
Equipment Rental Security Deposit (Refundable)				\$0.00		
Production Essentials						
Meals	\$5.00	Meal	9	\$45.00	\$0.00	\$45.00
Equipment Insurance				\$0.00		
Personnel Insurance				\$0.00		
Location Insurance				\$0.00		
Domestic Travel Expenses						
Gas Mileage	\$0.53	Mile	32	\$16.96	\$0.00	\$16.96
Lodging	\$0.00	Day		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Meals	\$5.00	Person	9	\$45.00	\$0.00	\$45.00
Production Sub Total:				\$51,710.86	\$51,603.90	\$106.96
Post-Production						
Editorial	\$1,850.00	Week	8	\$14,800.00	\$14,800.00	\$0.00
Color Correction (2K)	\$1,500.00	Flat Fee	1	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Animator	\$30.00	Minute	3	\$90.00	\$0.00	\$90.00
Sound Design		Day		\$0.00		\$0.00
Voice Over	\$150.00	Day	1	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$0.00
End Titles (2K)	\$500.00	Flat Fee		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
Media Storage	\$54.99	Flat Fee		\$54.99	\$54.99	
Cloud Storage	\$0.99	Month	12	\$11.88	\$11.88	
Digital Cinema Package	\$40.00	Minute	20	\$800.00	\$800.00	
Digi-Beta SD NTSC	\$250.00	Flat Fee	1	\$250.00	\$250.00	
Transcriptions				\$0.00		

<i>Description:</i>	<i>Rate in \$US</i>	<i>Per</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>In Kind</i>	<i>Cash Needed</i>
Deliverables				\$0.00		
Post Production Sub Total:				\$18,156.87	\$18,066.87	\$90.00
Distribution						
Errors and Omissions Insurance	\$758			\$758.00	\$379.00	\$379.00
Marketing Materials				\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Film Festival Entry Fees	\$50.00	Festival	6	\$300.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
Travel Expenses	\$379.00		3	\$1,137.00	\$568.50	\$568.50
Distribution Sub Total:				\$2,195.00	\$1,097.50	\$1,097.50

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