

The intent of this individual project was to create a beautiful image of clouds that would allow me to observe atmospheric conditions. I attempted to take pictures of clouds at sunset from various locations, but it ended up being very difficult to get a photograph with good contrast. I also attempted to take photographs of individual clouds, but they did not end up being very revealing of the sky as a whole. This was my goal, so I ended up taking a photograph that included the fall landscape of Boulder as well as an expansive blue sky with clouds on a sunny day.

This photo was taken from the roof of my house at 11th and Pleasant in Boulder to try to avoid any obstructions. It was around 2:00 in the afternoon, facing west-northwest. The temperature was 70 degrees F, dew point was 28 degrees F, and it was very calm but there was a slight wind to the west at around 3mph. It was very clear and visibility was at 10 miles. The clouds photographed include cirrus and cumulus. The cirrus clouds are the more detached, wispy clouds throughout the image. The cumulus clouds are the very white denser, larger clouds with flat bottoms seen at the top of the image and further over the horizon.

The photo involves only the landscape of Boulder with trees changing color and the clouds in a calm sky. The bright sunshine was clearly ample, and the only appropriate lighting for this image.

To take this photo, I used a Canon T90 film camera body with a 70-200mm telephoto lens and Astron Skylight filter. Kodak film with ISO 200 was used. The negatives were developed and scanned at a resolution of 1536 x 1024 pixels. The lens was at 70mm and the shutter speed was set to 1/180 for an aperture of 19. I manually set the shutter speed so the camera would select this large aperture in order for the photo to have a large depth of field so everything from the nearby trees to the clouds far away would be in focus. The field of view is estimated to be 10 miles across at the farthest visible object in the photo. Photoshop was used to increase the contrast and brightness of the entire image, as well as to increase the blue levels in the sky portion.

I think this photo is very effective at conveying the entire environment, including the atmospheric conditions, the warmth of the day, and the fall landscape. I really like the gap of blue sky between the nearby clouds and those farther away above the horizon; it truly reveals the vastness of the blue sky and makes me feel like I am being pulled into the image. I am glad that I was able to keep the entire depth of field in focus. I like how white the clouds appear in the sunlight, but would like to have captured this with some more independently interesting clouds. Though I do enjoy the blue sky, I would like to successfully capture a similar image near sunset with a wider range of colors present.

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QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.