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In 2013, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognized a larger exterior boundary of the Wind River Indian Reservation than previously held by local, state, and federal governments, not since the early 1900s. In the months that followed, there was strong resistance to the EPA's decision and panic by state and local governments as well as by some individuals living in the communities ruled within the boundaries of the reservation. This thesis examines the reactions of local communities and governments as a moral panic, uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) to closely analyze the language used in newspaper articles and letters to the editor in *The Ranger* to uncover underlying ideologies and structures, and places this phenomenon in a larger context of how American Indians are (mis)represented. My analysis of this media discourse shows how during this moral panic the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe were cast as generalized and homogenous as well as subject to ever-persistent stereotypes and myths that have been used against American Indians for centuries.

MORAL PANIC AND LOCAL MEDIA: AN EXAMINATION OF SETTLER ANXIETY IN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR IN RIVERTON, WY

By

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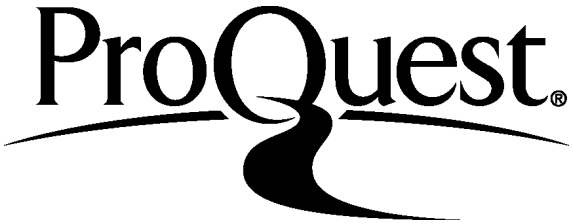

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INTRODUCTION

In 2004, the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska passed an alcohol beverage control ordinance that regulated and taxed alcohol on their reservation. The tribe sent notice to seven liquor stores in Pender, Nebraska, a small town within the boundaries of the reservation that is predominately white, that they would be subject to the ordinance and would have to pay licensing fees and taxes to the tribe. Three years later, the town and liquor stores sued the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska in federal court claiming that the town was not on the reservation and not subject to the ordinance because the reservation was diminished by an 1882 Act passed by Congress.[1] The State of Nebraska intervened on behalf of the town. Eventually the case landed before the United States Supreme Court.

Before the Court the State of Nebraska argued that the reservation was diminished, and thus the town of Pender was no longer on the reservation and that it was not under the jurisdiction of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska. Additionally, they argued that "if this Court upholds the lower courts' ruling that the disputed area remains part of the reservation, the practical consequences will be profound for the residents of the disputed area after over one hundred years of justifiable reliance upon Nebraska and local governmental institutions and services."[2] The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska argued that the reservation was

[1] ICTMN staff, "Nebraska v. Parker a Win for Omaha Tribe & Indian Country," *Indian Country Media Network,* March 24, 2016, accessed April 20, 2016, http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/03/24/nebraska-v-parker-win-omaha-tribe-indian-country-163900; "American FactFinder," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed April 20, 2016, http://factfinder.census.gov/.

[2] *Brief for Petitioners*. State of Nebraska. *Nebraska v. Parker*, filed September 1, 2015, 20.

not diminished, and thus the town was subject to the alcohol beverage control ordinance.[3] On March 22, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, "that the 1882 Act did not diminish the Omaha Indian Reservation."[4] It is important to note that the Court also stated, "we express no view about whether equitable considerations of laches and acquiescence may curtail the Tribe's power to tax the retailers of Pender in light of the Tribe's century-long absence from the disputed lands."[5] Even though the Court did not rule on the alcohol ordinances, they did rule that Pender was within the reservation boundaries.

At the time of the writing of this thesis, Pender, Nebraska still exists. The town appears to be functioning normally and nothing catastrophic has happened to it. A quick look at *The Pender Times* on April 16th shows the top stories were "Adding softball at PHS via co-op will be decided in May" and "PPS administrator contracts approved by school board."[6] Following the Supreme Court's ruling, Pender did not fall to ruin and it looks like it will remain that way even if it is now formally within the Omaha Tribe's reservation. This story about Pender, Nebraska and the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska is not unique.

According to the National Congress of American Indians, Policy Research Center's survey "Population and Land Area of Cities/Towns within Reservations or Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas," published in 2015, there are approximately "549 cities, towns, and villages overlapped or were within tribal areas in 22 states, and almost 1 million people

[3] Maame Esi Austin and Krsna N. Avila, "Nebraska, et al. v. Parker, et al. (14-1406)," *Cornell University Law School*, accessed April 20, 2016, https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/cert/14-1406/.
[4] *Nebraska v. Parker*, 577 U.S. (2016).
[5] Ibid.
[6] "Top Stories," *Pender Times*, accessed April 16, 2016, http://www.penderthurston.com/main.asp?SectionID=5.

(954,424 people), of whom at least 85 percent were non-Indian."[7] Some of those communities have predominately non-Native populations, but according to some federal Indian law professors many of these places have "a cooperative atmosphere [that] exists between tribal and city governments."[8] This is not the case, however, for every situation.

In 2014, the State of Wyoming filed suit against the Environmental Protection Agency after the agency ruled that several predominantly non-Native towns and cities were within the boundaries of the Wind River Reservation. Immediately following the EPA's decision, one town in particular, Riverton, saw an immense response from its citizens and politicians criticizing the EPA and the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe, who live on the reservation. The state's governor and Riverton's mayor denounced and promised to challenge the decision. The city's local newspaper, *The Ranger*, ran a number of articles and published letters to the editor that commented on the EPA's decision. Politicians and non-Natives in those communities were in an uproar over the supposed negative ramifications of the decision and how it would cause grief for their communities. For them this threat evolved into the Shoshone and Arapaho living on the reservation. The tribes' intentions were framed as ambiguous and they were portrayed as trying to take over the city.

It would not be surprising if these same reactions and arguments were used in the Pender, Nebraska case or any other that involved the cooperation between an American

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[7] "Population and Land Area of Cities/Towns within Reservations or Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas," *National Congress of American Indians, Policy Research Center*, December 18, 2015, accessed April 20, 2016, http://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai_publications/analysis-of-cities-and-towns-inside-reservations/.

[8] *Amicus Brief*. Indian Law Professors. *Wyoming v. EPA*, filed April 30, 2015, 16.

Indian Tribe and a state or local government. The fears espoused in Riverton are part of larger issues experienced by American Indians throughout the United States. I chose to open this thesis with the story of Pender because I feel that it showcases how these fears of threats and doom because of American Indian tribes asserting their sovereign rights are unfounded and imagined. The case involving the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho and Riverton is no different. This thesis will unpack the type of rhetoric and discourses used to describe and discuss the EPA's decision in the local newspaper through news articles and letters to the editor. It shows the dark underside of these kinds of debates and reactions, which is often normalized and taken for granted by most people.

In chapter 1, I will explain that what occurred in Riverton following the EPA's decision was a moral panic. I will first describe the details of the moral panic and historical context of the relationship between the city and tribes, which will shed light on the atmosphere in which this takes place. Next, I will unpack how I came to the conclusion that the phenomenon is a moral panic. Moral panics must demonstrate several characteristics in order to be considered as such, and I will show that this reaction does warrant this label. This chapter will also break down a series of events that took place and put them into the context of a moral panic. By doing so, I will lay the foundation for the next chapters, which will examine public discourse and rhetoric.

In chapter 2, I will examine the public discourse and rhetoric that occurred during the moral panic in Riverton from December 2013 until early 2014. I will begin by showing the connection between moral panics, as discussed in the first chapter, and media discourse, which is a principle actor in the creation and support of a moral panic. Next I will explain the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and describe the tools that I used in

my examination of several newspaper articles from *The Ranger*. I will then present a case study of my application of CDA on the first article published after the EPA's decision. I will end this chapter by presenting my aggregate data collected from nine articles published from December 2013 to January 2014. This data will show how social actors and the media were able to construct and present an imagined threat that was then consumed by the public.

In chapter 3, I will examine several letters to the editor (LE) published in The *Ranger* from December 2013 to January 2014. These are eight of the sixteen LE published in the newspaper that discussed the EPA's decision. I will also analyze two LE written by Governor Matthew Mead and Mayor Ronald Warpness during that time. Similar to chapter 2, I will use CDA to examine the LE and then discuss them individually and collectively. Next I will place the LE in a broader context of how non-Natives have and continue to stereotype and perpetuate certain tropes and myths about American Indians. I will end this chapter by describing how the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe as well as an organization called Equality State Policy Center, have commented on and responded to the reactions of the state and local governments and the public in Riverton and other communities to the EPA's decision.

CHAPTER ONE

The phenomenon that I am examining in this thesis takes place in the City of Riverton, Fremont County, Wyoming from roughly the end of 2013 until mid 2014. This chapter will explain that this was a moral panic in response to an Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decision on the Wind River Reservation's exterior boundaries. I will first explain the details of the moral panic and historical context, which will shed light on how this happening began. Next, I will unpack how I came to the conclusion that the phenomenon is a moral panic. Moral panics must demonstrate several characteristics in order for them to be considered as such, and I will show that this does. This chapter will break down a series of events that took place and put them into the context of a moral panic. By doing so, I will lay the foundation for the next chapters, which will examine public discourse and rhetoric.

The EPA's Decision and Reaction

While issues involving race, politics, and power have always been contentious in this area of Wyoming, the decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has acted as the catalyst for a moral panic. The city was founded on August 15, 1906.[9] This occurred after an Act of Congress opened land on the Wind River Reservation to settlement on March 3, 1905.[10] Today the city is amongst Wyoming's largest and is considered "the

[9] "History of Riverton," Riverton Chamber of Commerce, accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.rivertonchamber.org/live_and_work/history.aspx.
[10] "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Acts Of Fifty–Eighth Congress - Third Session, 1904–5," Oklahoma State University, accessed February 11, 2016, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol3/html_files /SES0117.html.

commercial and educational hub of west-central Wyoming."[11] The 2010 census records a total population of 10,615 residents, of which 83.5% identified as white and 10.4% as American Indian or Alaska Native.[12]

Surrounding the city is the Wind River Reservation, which is home to over 3,900 Eastern Shoshone and 8,600 Northern Arapahoe. It contains roughly "2,268,000 acres of land within its exterior boundary."[13] The Wind River Reservation predates the city of Riverton and Wyoming. It was established in 1863. Both the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho have inhabited the region for centuries prior to the settlement of Euro-Americans.[14]

In December 2008, the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe submitted to the EPA an "Application for Treatment In A Manner Similar To A State Under The Clean Air Act For Purposes of Section 105 Grant Program, Affected State Status, And Other Provisions For Which No Separate Tribal Program Is Required."[15] This "Treatment as a State" (TAS) status is available for American Indian tribes to apply for under three acts, the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), and the Clean Air Act (CAA). In order for American Indian tribes to qualify for this status they must pass the following requirements for eligibility:

1. be Federally recognized
2. have a governing body carrying out substantial governmental duties and powers

[11] "History of Riverton," Riverton Chamber of Commerce, accessed February 11, 2016.
[12] "American FactFinder," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed February 11, 2016, http://factfinder.census.gov/.
[13] "Wind River Agency," U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/RegionalOffices/RockyMountain/WeAre/WindRiver/.
[14] Henry E. Stamm IV, *People of the Wind River*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1993), 50.
[15] EPA to Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Northern Arapaho Tribe, and State of Wyoming, December 6, 2013.

3. have appropriate authority
4. be capable of carrying out the functions of the program.[16]

As of December 2015, ninety-nine tribes have been approved by the EPA and given TAS status under the Clean Air Act.[17]

In response, the EPA provided various entities with information that the tribes had submitted a TAS application and included information on how they list the geographic boundaries of their reservation. These entities included the Wyoming state government and various agencies, various federal government agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of Interior. In April 2009, the EPA published a public notice of the tribes' intent and "provided a 30-day opportunity for appropriate governmental entities and the public to provide written comments on the Tribes' reservation boundary assertion."[18]

The comment period was extended an extra thirty days. Various entities submitted comments, such as the State of Wyoming Attorney General, Fremont County representatives, members of the Wyoming House of Representatives and Senate, the Mayor of Riverton, US Congressmen, and various public individuals.[19] Some of the commentators disagreed with the tribes' assertion of the reservation boundaries. The EPA informed the tribes, and they responded to the concerns in May 2010. The EPA contacted the Department of the Interior (DOI) because it "was aware of existing disagreements

[16] "Tribal Assumption of Federal Laws - Treatment as a State (TAS)," EPA, accessed December 15, 2015, http://www.epa.gov/tribal/tribal-assumption-federal-laws-treatment-state-tas.
[17] "Tribal Air: Basic Information," EPA, accessed December 15, 2015, http://www3.epa.gov/air/tribal/backgrnd.html.
[18] "Approval of Application Submitted by the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe for Treatment in a Similar Manner as a State," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 5.
[19] Ibid., 5-8.

regarding the Reservation boundary" and believed the DOI had "expertise on Indian country issues."[20]

In December 2013, the EPA approved the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe's application for "Treatment as a State" (TAS) status under the Clean Air Act.[21] In a letter dated 6 December 2013 to the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, the EPA outlined what the TAS status means for the tribes. The EPA stated that this status "provides that Indian tribes may seek grant funding to support, among other things, air pollution related planning activities" and "certain notice and comment opportunities on nearby permitting actions that may affect their air quality."[22] According to the EPA, this would allow the tribes to "work more effectively on protection of air quality and human health on the Wind River Reservation."[23]

In the months and weeks that followed, there was a large public outcry over the EPA's decision. Politicians and local residents denounced the decision in the local newspapers with letters to the editor and public press releases. Newspapers also published articles covering the decision, which positioned it as a troubling overreach by the federal government and incredibly problematic for the local communities off the reservation. Politicians took to the airwaves and participated in interviews and vowed to overturn the EPA's decision.

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[20] "Approval of Application Submitted by the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe for Treatment in a Similar Manner as a State," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 8.
[21] EPA to Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Northern Arapaho Tribe, and State of Wyoming, December 6, 2013.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

The rhetoric and public discourse not only focused on the EPA and its decision, but also on the tribes living on the reservation. Over a handful of letters targeted not only the agency that ultimately approved the application, but also the communities that requested the status. Some of the letters were racist and focused on negative stereotypes of American Indians. These letters in particular moved away from appealing the decision to viciously attacking a group of people. What many of the letters and articles had in common, however, was the belief that the EPA's decision would cause major problems and harm to the local cities, which are predominately white and non-Native.

The state and local governments became involved in early 2014. The state of Wyoming and city of Riverton filed suit against the EPA over its decision. They argued that the language of a 1905 Act passed by Congress diminished the Wind River Reservation and therefore cities and towns such as Riverton could not fall within the boundaries of the reservation. They believed that the EPA's decision was incorrect and void.[24] Based on the news articles and rhetoric, one would have thought a threat or disaster to the surrounding communities was imminent. After only a short time following the EPA's decision (a few weeks at most) there was a great outcry and call for action and response to stop the changes and to "protect" the communities. Many of the concerns being voiced had little to do with the EPA's decision but were based on threats and changes that were not actually occurring. They were filled with fear and anxiety over changes to tax codes, criminal jurisdiction, health codes, private property, and political identity – none of which were affected by the EPA's decision. There were calls to action to stop the changes that were going to (not) happen.

[24] *Opening Brief*. State of Wyoming. *Wyoming v. EPA*, filed October 10, 2014, 81.

I argue that this phenomenon that took place from late 2013 until early 2014 was a moral panic. What will follow in this chapter is a much more detailed analysis of this phenomenon as such. A very basic definition of a moral panic is the "outbreak of a moral concern over a supposed threat from an agent of corruption that is out of proportion to its actual danger or potential harm."[25] This chapter will show that the phenomenon mentioned above can be seen as a moral panic and explore in further detail how and why these events can be labeled as such. This will also allow for analysis and examination of the public rhetoric and discourse that was used to the respond to the EPA's decision later in this thesis.

Moral Panics

The term "moral panic" can be traced back to sociologists writing in the 1960s, although a very loose understanding and application of the concept had been used long before. Societies have always been susceptible to moments of immense and intense fear over changes or events that take place. Marshall McLuhan first used the idea in his work, *Understanding Media*, in 1964.[26] Stanley Cohen and Jock Young further developed this idea into a concept in their research in the late 1960s.[27] Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* is regarded as a, if not the, foundational text for this kind of research and understanding of moral panics. His work focused on the United Kingdom's public reaction to the mods and

[25] Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "Grounding and defending sociology of moral panic," in *Moral Panic and the Politics of Anxiety*, ed. Sean P. Hier. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 21.
[26] Marshall McLuhuan, *Understanding Media*, (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1964).
[27] Julian Petley, Chas Critcher, Jason Hughes, Amanda Rohloff, *Moral Panics in the Contemporary World*, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 1.

rockers, two subcultural groups, in the 1960s. According to Cohen, a "moral panic" can be described in the following way:

> A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved (or more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible.[28]

As the title of his work suggests, Cohen's concept of "folk devils" plays a major role in the model of a moral panic. According to Cohen, "folk devils" are "social types" and "visible reminders of what we should not be."[29] This group is considered the threat or what the public is responding to. It is usually labeled deviant by the offended group and media.

Other scholars have taken the concept of a moral panic and Cohen's understanding of it and furthered it. Most notably have been Erich Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, who I will draw heavily on throughout this chapter. Their work, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, remains, along with Cohen's, at the foundation of the study of the phenomenon. I rely on Goode and Ben-Yehuda because they have set out very specific characteristics of moral panics, which I believe offer a great framework for unpacking the phenomenon that I am concentrating on in Riverton. Goode and Ben-Yehuda describe a moral panic as an "outbreak of a moral concern over a supposed threat from an agent of corruption that is out of proportion to its actual danger or potential harm."[30] Later in this chapter, I will explain and apply the work of Goode and Ben-Yehuda.

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[28] Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1.
[29] Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, 2.
[30] Erich Goode, Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "Grounding and defending sociology of moral panic," in *Moral Panic and the Politics of Anxiety*, ed. Sean P. Hier. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 21.

Since the 1960s, research about moral panics has significantly increased and scholars have examined an array of phenomena that have occurred all over the world. These have included moral panics in response to or over AIDS, Satanism, drugs, children at risk or missing children, and asylum seekers, although those are only a few examples.[31] Most recently, studies have examined Islamophobia and human and sex trafficking. The study of moral panics has also moved beyond sociology and into other fields such as cultural and media studies.

I hope that my thesis will add to this chorus of other scholars' works that have contributed to better understanding these phenomena. My use of this concept, while certainly drawing heavily on sociologists and others, is not to be understood as solely rooted in the social sciences. It is important to state that this thesis is an American studies examination of a particular set of events, which will draw heavily on concepts and scholars inside and outside of the field. Other fields will include history, linguistics, discourse studies, media studies, and anthropology. Moral panics and the characteristics and methods that are used to understand them allow for a solid groundwork for examining what took place in Riverton. Therefore, I will apply moral panic literature in an interdisciplinary fashion as others have done outside of sociology.

The concept of moral panics offers scholars an opportunity to examine a unique event that is widely public and takes place usually in a specific time frame. Scholars Goode and Ben-Yehuda put it best when describing why this kind of perspective works to examine these types of phenomena:

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[31] Chas Critcher, *Critical Readings: Moral Panics and the Media*, (New York: Open University Press, 2010), vi-vii.

> Deeper, unacknowledged reasons underlie the concern, fear, hostility, and outrage felt and ventilated about myriad issues and threats. Like any good detective investigating a murder mystery, the moral panic analyst searches out what's going on beneath the surface; sleuths conducting research on a multitude of scares have reaffirmed that the moral panic exemplifies what may be sociology's central maxim: 'things are often not what they seem.'[32]

This concept offers an alternative perspective to a series of events that will show how one group of people have constructed and perpetuated a fear about events that are unlikely to occur. My alternative interpretation will show how this anxiety has been constructed and disseminated throughout a community.

Historical Context

There is a long history of disagreements and animosity between those living in Riverton, predominately non-Natives, and the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe. A specific string of historic events need to be discussed before further examining this moral panic and how a predominately white settler town could even be in the position of falling within the boundaries of an American Indian reservation. A series of treaties and congressional legislations caused this. This is what makes this case unique. While there have been other instances in which a settler town or non-Natives have fallen within Indian Country, the case of Riverton and other towns such as Kemmerer and Pavillion is different because of the specific acts that affected it. This has resulted in a long period of time in which the exterior boundaries of the reservation have been under dispute. For over one hundred years, there has not been a substantial ruling on the issue.

[32] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, 34.

This brief historic overview begins with the first treaty between the Eastern Shoshone and the United States federal government signed in 1863.[33] This is known as the First Treaty of Fort Bridger and vaguely described Shoshone territory. It did not actually create a reservation, however. Instead it outlined the territory belonging to the Eastern Shoshone and set up a formal agreement with the United States. The actual text of the treaty referring to the boundaries provides a rough outline of how the Eastern Shoshone territory was described:

> It is understood the boundaries of the Shoshone country, as defined and described by said nation, is as follows: On the north, by the mountains on the north side of the valley of Shoshone or Snake River; on the east, by the Wind River mountains, Peenahpah river, the north fork of Platte or Koo-chin-agah, and the north Park or Buffalo House; and on the south, by Yampah river and the Uintah mountains. The western boundary is left undefined, there being no Shoshones from that district of country present; but the bands now present claim that their own country is bounded on the west by Salt Lake.[34]

The first treaty did not last long, and the Second Treaty of Fort Bridger was signed between the United States and the Eastern Shoshone in 1868.[35] A comparison of the boundary descriptions in the First Treaty of Fort Bridger to the Second shows how much more specific the parameters of their territory became:

> Commencing at the mouth of Owl Creek and running due south to the crest of the divide between the Sweet-water and Papo Agie Rivers; thence along the crest of said divide and the summit of Wind River Mountains to the longitude of North Fork of Wind River; thence due north to mouth of said North Fork and up its channel to a point twenty miles above its mouth; thence in a straight line to head-waters of Owl Creek and along middle of channel of Owl Creek to place of beginning, shall be and the same is set apart for the absolute and undisturbed use and occupation of the Shoshone Indians herein named, and for such other friendly tribes or individual

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[33] Jeffery O'Gara, *What You See in Clear Water*, (New York: Knopf, 2002), 18.
[34] "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: First Treaty of Fort Bridger -1863," Oklahoma State University, accessed December 15, 2015, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/sho0848.htm#mn5.
[35] Stamm, *People of the Wind River*, 84.

> Indians as from time to time they may be willing, with the consent of the United States, to admit amongst them.[36]

This treaty significantly decreased the lands previously agreed upon and also established the Shoshone Indian Reservation in central Wyoming.[37]

By 1872, settler encroachment and trespassing became overwhelming for the Eastern Shoshone in the southern part of their reservation. The settlers who lived in the area and the United States federal government saw only one solution – get ownership of that land. That fall, the United States federal government entered into negotiations with the Eastern Shoshone to purchase the land. Felix R. Brunot was sent on behalf of the United States federal government to attempt to work out some kind of agreement.[38] After much negotiating on both sides, it was agreed that the Eastern Shoshone would sell their land in the Popo Agie River Valley:

> The United States agree to pay to the Shoshone (Eastern Band) or tribe the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars; said sum to be expended under the direction of the President for the benefit and use by said Indians in the following manner, viz: On or before the tenth day of August of each year, for the term of five years after the ratification of this agreement, five thousand dollars shall be expended for the purchase of stock cattle, and said cattle delivered to the Shoshones on their reservation. Second. The salary of five hundred dollars per annum shall be paid by the United States for the term of five years to Washakie, chief of the Shoshones.[39]

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[36] "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Second Treaty of Fort Bridger - 1868," Oklahoma State University, accessed December 15, 2015, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/sho1020.htm#mn6.
[37] Stamm, *People of the Wind River*, 50.
[38] Ibid., 87-88.
[39] "1874 Brunot," Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum, accessed December 15, 2015, http://jacksonholehistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1874-Brunot-confirm.pdf.

This agreement became known as the Brunot Treaty or Lander Purchase. Congress went on to pass the agreement in 1874, several years after the deal of was signed upon due to the Panic of 1873.[40]

Almost five years after the Lander Purchase, the Northern Arapaho joined the Eastern Shoshone on their reservation. Like the Eastern Shoshone, the Northern Arapaho were a band-oriented tribe of nomadic hunters and gatherers who moved around the Central Plains. Before that the Northern Arapaho are believed to have lived and farmed the Red River Valley in present-day Minnesota.[41] As settlers began moving westward and encroaching on their lands, the Northern Arapaho moved further west. It is uncertain however when exactly this move took place.[42]

In 1878, the Northern Arapaho were escorted by the United States military to the Shoshone Reservation. By this time, the Northern Arapaho were one of the few remaining American Indian tribes to not have been forced to permanently settle on a reservation. [43] This was almost ten years after the signing of Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868, which was between the United States government and Northern Arapaho and Northern Cheyenne. Between the signing of the treaty and their armed escort to the reservation, the Northern Arapaho had been searching for land to settle.[44] A stipulation of the 1868 Treaty was that the Northern Arapaho had to settle on a reservation:

> The Indians, parties to this treaty, hereby agree to accept for their permanent home some portion of the tract of country set apart and designated as a permanent

[40] "1874 Brunot," Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum, accessed December 15, 2015, http://jacksonholehistory.org/wp-content/uploads/1874-Brunot-confirm.pdf.
[41] O'Gara, *What You See Clear Water*, 67.
[42] Loretta Fowler, *Arapaho Politics, 1851-1978*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1986), 13-16.
[43] O'Gara, *What You See Clear Water*, 67.
[44] Stamm, *People of the Wind River*, 48-52.

> reservation for the Southern Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians by a treaty entered into by and between them and the United States . . . . and it is hereby expressly understood that one portion of said Indians may attach themselves to one of the afore-mentioned reservations, and another portion to another of said reservations, as each part or portion of said Indians may elect.[45]

Even though the Eastern Shoshone protested, the Northern Arapaho were placed on their reservation. The United States government never compensated the Eastern Shoshone for settling the Northern Arapaho on their land or for the governmental benefits that were then split between the two.[46]

Almost twenty years later, another portion of the reservation was ceded to the federal government. After two delegations of commissioners met with tribal leaders beginning in 1891, the tribes signed an agreement with the federal government that ceded the northeastern tip of the Wind River Reservation. This purchase was ratified by Congress in 1897, and is known as the Thermopolis Purchase. The land that was ceded was ten square miles surrounding the natural hot springs. In return the tribes would be paid a sum of money and given rations and cattle.[47]

The most significant event occurred in 1905, when the United States Congress passed an act that would open 1.48 millions acres of the Wind River Reservation to white settlement. This would leave the tribes with approximately 808,500 acres south of the Wind River for allotment. James McLaughlin informed the tribes in 1904 that after a recent Supreme Court decision, the federal government "did not need to secure the tribes' consent to open up 'surplus lands' to white settlement, and that the government was extending

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[45] "Indian Affairs: Treaty of Fort Laramie -1868," Oklahoma State University, accessed December 15, 2015, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/nor1012.htm#mn8.
[46] Fowler, *Arapaho Politics, 1851-1978*, 196-197.
[47] Ibid., 92-93.

them a courtesy in discussing the matter at all."[48] McLaughlin was unable to secure an agreement in 1904, and thus that act was abandoned, even though it was replaced by a new act the following year.[49] Congress ratified the 1905 Act on March 3, 1905. The United States government was to remit to the tribes payment for lands purchased and leased on the open portion of the reservation. Portions of the opened area were designated "town sites" which included what today is Riverton.[50]

In 1937, however, the Eastern Shoshone filed suit against the United States for breaking the conditions of the Second Treaty of Bridger by placing the Northern Arapaho on their reservation. This suit resulted in the United States government paying the Eastern Shoshone $4,408,444 in damages and making official the Northern Arapaho's residence on the reservation. After this settlement the Shoshone Reservation was renamed Wind River Reservation.[51] In 1939, the judgment sum was divided. Of the approximately $4 million dollars, $1 million was set aside so the tribes could purchase land from non-Natives. In the years that followed, the size of the reservation grew. In 1940, "the secretary of the interior signed an order of restoration that returned approximately 1.25 million acres in the ceded portion to joint tribal ownership."[52] The order of restoration read:

> Whereas, pursuant to the provisions of the Act of March 3, 1905 (33 Stat. 1016), the Shoshone-Arapaho Tribes of Indians in Wyoming ceded to the United States a large area of their reservation in the State of Wyoming, established under the Treaty of July 3, 1868 (15 Stat. 673), and
>
> Whereas, there is now remaining undisposed of within the ceded or "opened" portion of the Wind River Reservation, an area of approximately 1,250,000 acres of such ceded lands, most of which is urgently required as grazing land for the use of

[48] Ibid., 93.
[49] Ibid., 93.
[50] Ibid., 95-96.
[51] Ibid., 196-197.
[52] Ibid., 197.

> the Shoshone-Arapaho Tribes of Indians in order to properly support and develop their rapidly expanding cattle industry, and
>
> Whereas, the Tribal Council, the Superintendent of the Wind River Reservation, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs have recommended restoration to tribal ownership of all the following described undisposed-of ceded lands within established land use districts, of which no part of the land is under lease or permit to non-Indians but only under permits issued to the Indians.[53]

These series of events, beginning in 1905 and ending roughly in 1940, are the reason that several settler towns with high non-Native populations fall within the exterior boundary of the Wind River Reservation.

In addition, there have also been several incidents in the past fifty years that show the turbulent relationship between the reservation and Riverton. One example occurred in the 1960s. Datel wanted to build a battery factory in Riverton. The company needed the tribes' endorsement in order to secure funds through the Economic Development Agency (EDA), which would help as long as "depressed areas" consented. The tribes supported the plan, and Datel received a grant of $95,000 plus a large loan from the EDA, which matched local business support in Riverton. For their support, the tribes were "promised 150 jobs for Indians by the end of 1967 and 300 jobs eventually" by Datel.[54] This did not happen. Instead, only nine trainees were hired and all were eventually laid off. Even a few years later in 1969, only a handful of American Indians were working at the factory. This incident caused considerable "bitterness over the alleged discrimination" among the tribes.[55]

Another incident took place in 1972 when a contract high school was established in Ethete, a small town on the Wind River Reservation. This was in response to the federal

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[53] "Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Wind River Reservation, Wyoming—Order of Restoration," Oklahoma State University, accessed February 11, 2016, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol7/html_files/v7p1432c.html.
[54] Fowler, *Arapaho Politics, 1851-1978*, 233.
[55] Ibid., 233.

government working with American Indian tribes to grant them more self-determination and control over the education of their children. Non-reservation public school officials in Lander and Riverton, however, opposed the establishment of the high school. These officials "were wary of losing Indian students and with them the federal funds designated for their education."[56] This is another example of how complex and adverse the relationship has been between the predominately non-Native towns and the tribes.

Since the 1970s, there have been disputes between non-Native farmers and ranchers, the state, and the tribes over water rights. Geoffrey O'Gara in *What You Seen in Clear Water* chronicles these disputes and how history, culture, and natural resources have contributed to the turbulent relationship between these groups. His work shows how even though water rights were at the center of the legal disputes, it was more than just about water. O'Gara shows the complexities of this part of Wyoming, and the people that live there. His descriptions of Riverton and the reservation are telling: "reservation residents claim that another aspect of Riverton persists to this day: indifference or hostility to Indians."[57] His work showcases the continued troubled relationship between these communities.

These incidents, beginning in the late 1800s, help explain and situate the ongoing troubled relationship between Riverton and the reservation. In particular, they provide a rough sketch of how today's behavior and ideologies can best be explained, especially the state and public's response to the EPA's decision. Memories of these events are surely known to those living in the area, either by personal experience or through passing down of familial stories. Even though the public's response in Riverton has focused on the EPA's

[56] Fowler, *Arapaho Politics, 1851-1978*, 241.
[57] O'Gara, *What You See Clear Water*, 50.

decision, it is clear that such negative rhetoric and behavior has bubbled beneath the surface for a long time.

This Phenomenon as a Moral Panic

According to Goode and Ben-Yehuda, there are five indicators of a moral panic. I will use their criteria to position the phenomena that happened in Riverton as a moral panic. This will also help to explain the different elements of a moral panic and the specifics of the one that I am concentrating on. It is important to note that Goode and Ben-Yehuda are approaching moral panics as sociologists, and therefore, I will be making some slight changes and substitutions to their criteria, since this is an American studies thesis. I will use an interdisciplinary approach to conduct my research and focus on a variety of documents and sources. This thesis will draw on a variety of disciplines, including but not limited to American studies, sociology, history, anthropology, linguistics, and media studies. Even though I may use different information and evidence to support my claims, beyond just quantitative data, the basic structure of a moral panic still applies.

Goode and Ben-Yehuda first identify that "there must be a heightened level of concern over the behavior of a certain group or category and the consequences that that behavior presumably causes for the rest of society."[58] This can be measured through several different ways, which include public opinion polls, public commentary in the form of media attention, proposed legislation, and social movement activity.[59] In their 1978 study, Stuart Hall and his colleagues analyzed letters to the editor and other forms of media

[58] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 33.
[59] Ibid., 33.

as part of their examination of moral panic and muggings in the United Kingdom.[60] For my thesis, I will be concentrating on articles and public commentary in a local newspaper.

Riverton's local newspaper, *The Ranger*, is a small paper that has been family-owned and is published daily in the city since 1949. It also serves Fremont County and the rest of Wyoming.[61] In the weeks and months following the EPA's decision, this newspaper was filled with letters to the editor and articles detailing how the decision would have negative consequences on the people living in Riverton and surrounding communities. Commentators feared that decision would make the city a part of the Wind River Reservation. What followed that fear was even more concern over the status of city residents, their properties, government functions, and their identities. Some examples of the headlines include:

- "EPA ruling must be challenged." *The Ranger*. 12 February 2014.
- "Legal landowners 'thrown under the bus' by EPA ruling." *The Ranger.* 27 January 2014.
- "Mead says state won't honor EPA rez ruling." *The Associated Press.* 20 December 2014.
- "Overreaching." *The Ranger.* 11 December 2013.

The second and third chapter of this thesis will use critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze the public discourse and rhetoric found in the newspaper articles and letters to the editor. Mass media, politicians, and the public are considered "principle 'actors'" in moral panics, and so I will be concentrating on them.[62]

Even before the EPA's decision was released in December 2013, Wyoming Governor Matthew Mead contested it and advised the EPA that the state would not follow the

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[60] Stuart Hall, et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, (London: The Macmillan Press, 1978).
[61] "The Ranger," *The Ranger*, accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.dailyranger.com/.
[62] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 21.

decision. The governor wrote that the decision would have serious negative implications for non-Native communities such as changes to political and criminal jurisdictions, taxation, and property rights. Mead asked the Wyoming Attorney General "to take aggressive steps to overturn it."[63] Within a few weeks of the EPA's decision, the state announced that it would sue the EPA in the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Beyond just the Governor of Wyoming and the Mayor of Riverton, state and national politicians also got involved. A delegation made up U.S. Senators Mike Enzi and John Barrasso and Representative Cynthia Lummis, all of Wyoming, planned to "introduce legislation to reverse the EPA's decision to place Riverton under the jurisdiction of the Wind River Indian Reservation."[64] While the legislations' intent was to clarify the boundaries, the politicians also wrote that they hoped it "would also provide the citizens of Wyoming with certainty that the State of Wyoming has jurisdiction over the areas not part of the reservation, including the City of Riverton."[65] Shortly after the decision, the Wyoming State Legislature announced that it was going to earmark money to contest the EPA's decision. Representative David Miller, R-Riverton, a co-sponsor of the legislation, said that the EPA's decision was "not a good thing for our community."[66] The legislation does not mention the EPA, tribes, or Riverton, but it is generally well known that the money would

[63] Matthew Mead, "EPA Action on rez 'is unlawful'," *The Ranger*, January 8, 2014, accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.dailyranger.com/story.php?story_id=10738&headline=EPA-action-on-rez-.
[64] "Delegation to EPA: Butt out of Wyoming borders," Office of Senator Mike Enzi, April 3, 2014, accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.enzi.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/news-releases?ContentRecord_id=f5109739-80e9-453e-8fa5-64d509b8c3af.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Kyle Roerink, "Wyoming legislators want money to fight ruling that Riverton is on Wind River Indian Reservation," *Casper Star-Tribune*, February 10, 2014, accessed February 11, 2016, http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/govt-and-politics/wyoming-legislators-want-money-to-fight-ruling-that-riverton-is/article_e83b3dd4-c30b-5da8-a385-ed46b6606270.html.

go to the legal fees as a result of the court battle. Some politicians acknowledge that the public wants legislative action over the issue. Wyoming State Representative Nathan Winters, R-Thermopolis, was quoted saying, "the people are looking for their Legislature to stand up."[67] It is clear that national, state, and local politicians believe that a majority of the public, specifically in Riverton, wants them to legislate against the EPA decision.

The next criterion that Goode and Ben-Yehuda uses is "an increased level of hostility toward the group or category regarded as engaging in the behavior in question."[68] Often the "other" or folk devils are seen as the enemy, a threat that is harmful to the offended society. They are often seen as "responsible for the threat."[69] There are several letters to the editor and articles in *The Ranger* that portray the tribes as being hostile and damaging to the city and its inhabitants. These letters play on traditional stereotypes and tropes that have been used against American Indians in the past. This very much presents the reservation communities as to blame for the threat, which is another criterion that Goode and Ben-Yehuda attribute to hostility. This positioning of an "other" presents a "us vs. them" dichotomy, another signature feature of this characteristic of a moral panic. One letter published in *The Ranger*, exemplifies this. William L. Morgana wrote, "it is so obvious that it really is about trying to change the form of city government here and making Riverton part of tribal government, then it needs to be challenged."[70] Morgana positions the tribes against the Riverton community, and even suggests that they want to take over the city. Other letters become incredibly racial with non-Natives portraying American Indians

[67] Roerink, "Wyoming legislators want money to fight ruling that Riverton is on Wind River Indian Reservation."
[68] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 33.
[69] Ibid., 33.
[70] William L. Morgana, "EPA ruling must be challenged," *The Ranger*, February 12, 2014.

as violent, aggressive, and dangerous. One letter in particular that was reprinted in *The Ranger* asks for more police presence in the area where the writer lives because of the threat of violence from the reservation communities. Janet Conover, who lives in Pavillion, another town that like Riverton falls within the boundaries, wrote a letter to the Fremont County sheriff's department about violence against non-Natives. After requesting more police patrols, she wrote, "there is a cohort that will see the jurisdictional ambiguity as an invitation to take what they long perceived as their own."[71] It is clear that Conover is writing about American Indians on the reservation, and portraying them as violent individuals who will seek revenge for past transgressions. These examples of hostilities against American Indians on the Wind River Reservation are overt samples, however, as I will show in my second and third chapters, there are many covert ones too. Whether covert or overt, this kind of racist and prejudicial rhetoric increases and creates a more volatile moral panic.

The third criterion that Goode and Ben-Yehuda identify is "substantial or widespread agreement or consensus – that is, at least a certain minimal measure of consensus in the society as a whole or in designated segments of the society – that the threat is real, serious, and caused by the wrongdoining group members and their behavior."[72] In Riverton there were many public comments that the EPA decision would have severe consequences on the city. Citizens who live in the town commented widely on it in the newspaper, and elected officials both at the local and national level agreed that the decision would be negative on the community. There was agreement over the concern and

[71] Janet Conover, "Legal landowners 'thrown under the bus' by EPA ruling," *The Ranger*, January 27, 2014.
[72] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 34.

panic of this decision at many levels of the community. This does not mean that everyone in the city shared these same beliefs and concerns, but as the public discourse will show, a significant group did.

As my second and third chapters will show, there was a significant consensus among people involved in this panic that the city would become a part of the reservation. Goode and Ben-Yehuda have observed "the population who feels this way need not be universal or, indeed, even make up a literal majority" since "moral panics come in different sizes."[73] Moral panics can occur at the international, national, regional, or local levels.[74] The moral panic I am examining is unique, but not unrelated to other moral panics that have occurred in the United States regarding American Indians. Others could include moral panics over land rights, fishing and hunting rights, and peyote, to name a few.

The fourth characteristic that Goode and Ben-Yehuda identify as a signal of a moral panic is

> a sense on the part of many members of the society that a more sizeable number of individuals are engaged in the behavior in question than actually are, and the threat, danger, or damage said to be caused by the behavior is far more substantial than, is incommensurate with and in fact 'is above and beyond that which a realistic appraisal could sustain.'[75]

In the case of the moral panic in Riverton, much of the concern and anxiety was over the city becoming a part of the reservation. The letters to the editor and newspaper articles discuss how this would change significant features of the city, including jurisdictions and tax codes. Contributors also suggested that this would change the moral and cultural

[73] Ibid., 34.
[74] Ibid., 34.
[75] Ibid., 36.

characteristics and identities of the city and people living there. This is disproportionate to the actual change that was supposed to take place.

The EPA's decision concerned regulating air quality standards and grant eligibility but changed nothing regarding jurisdiction of the city's status. According to Goode and Ben-Yehuda, "the degree of public concern over the behavior itself, the problem it poses, or condition it creates is far greater than is true for comparable, even more damaging, actions."[76] In the EPA's letter approving the tribes' application they wrote: "This TAS approval will enable the tribes to work more effectively on protection of air quality and human health on the Wind River Reservation."[77] In the decision document that accompanied the letter, the EPA outlined what the TAS status meant for the tribes. It did not include any indication that the tribes have regulatory power outside of the scope of the Clean Air Act. The EPA further explained and addressed the concerns filed by the Governor's Office in their legal brief before the 10th Circuit Court. They write that the state and other parties "exaggerate and misconstrue how jurisdiction impacts non-Indians in Indian Country and present a false picture of jurisdictional chaos."[78]

The fifth and final criterion that these scholars suggest is volatility; "they erupt suddenly (although they may lie dormant or latent for long periods of time, and may reappear from time to time) and, nearly as suddenly subside."[79] The moral panic that took place in Riverton lasted from the end of 2013 until about the end of 2014. This can be measured by looking at when the most letters to the editor and news articles about this

[76] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 36.
[77] EPA to Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Northern Arapaho Tribes and State of Wyoming, December 6, 2013.
[78] *Opening Brief*. Environmental Protection Agency. *Wyoming v. EPA*, filed April 6, 2015, 66.
[79] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 38.

issue were published in *The Ranger*. The first appeared in December 2013 and peaked in early 2014, and then slowly faded away by the second half of the year. Just because the moral panic in the mass media faded away does not mean that hostility or anxiety towards the American Indian population living on the reservation subsided completely or went away. Moral panics are very much centered in mass media since this is a central location where commonly held ideas and beliefs can be centered and disseminated.

This does not mean however that moral panics do not have "structural or historical antecedents."[80] Moral panics can come and go, but what causes them and the anxieties that they are driven by can bubble beneath the surface before and after the panic. As I have shown earlier in this chapter, the historic relationship between the city and the reservation is long and complex. There have been numerous incidents that have showcased the anxiety of the people living in the city. While this thesis does not explore earlier moral panics in the city, I am sure such existed. In any case, even if the moral panic in Riverton regarding the EPA's decision only lasted a year, it is important to understand and acknowledge that racism, hostility, and anxiety towards the reservation communities have a longer history than I can present in this thesis.

In the next chapter, I will examine the public discourse and rhetoric that occurred during the moral panic in Riverton from December 2013 until mid 2014. I will start by showing the connection between moral panics and media discourse. Then I will explain the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and present a case study of my application of CDA on the first article published after the EPA's decision. I will end the chapter by

[80] Ibid., 39.

presenting my aggregate data collected from the ten articles published from December 2013 to January 2014 and my analysis of those data.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter will examine the public discourse and rhetoric that occurred during the moral panic in Riverton from December 2013 until mid 2014. First, I will show the connection between moral panics, as discussed in the first chapter, and media discourse, which is a principle actor in the creation and support of a moral panic. Next I explain the method of critical discourse analysis, and describe the tools that I used in my examination of several newspaper articles from *The Ranger*. I will then present a case study of my application of CDA on the first article published after the EPA's decision. I will end this chapter by presenting my aggregate data collected from ten articles published from December 2013 to January 2014. These data will show how social actors and the media were able to construct and present an imagined threat that was consumed and shared by the public. My third chapter will show how letter to the editor writers used the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe as the epitome of this threat.

Moral Panics and Media Discourse

It is important to establish why this chapter and the next will explicitly examine news articles from the local newspaper *The Ranger* in Riverton. As I discussed in the first chapter, moral panics are, according to Goode and Ben-Yehuda, an "outbreak of a moral concern over a supposed threat from an agent of corruption that is out of proportion to its actual danger or potential harm."[81] The threat that drives a moral panic has to be publicized and brought to the attention of the public. One way of doing this is through the media. Mass media, politicians, and the public are considered "principle 'actors'" in moral

[81] Goode and Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance,* 21.

panics.[82] This means that *The Ranger* as well as state, local, and tribal representatives played a role in contributing to this moral panic. Most importantly, *The Ranger* was the central force in disseminating information about the EPA's decision and its effects on the general public in Riverton.

Most often we see the media and journalists as merely observers of events. Many people think they act to "tell us about important things that are going on so that we can remain informed, so that we can call upon our politicians to make the decisions necessary to make our societies operate in the best possible way."[83] Often, however, this is not the case. Instead the news is a "very peculiar social construction of reality."[84] Viewing media as a construction can change the way in which we interact and consume the language it presents us.

These sources of information are "important social institutions" that act as "presenters of culture, politics, and social life, shaping as well as reflecting how these are formed and expressed."[85] The power of the media may come as a surprise to many who simply assume that what they are being told is unbiased and completely factual. This chapter is most concerned with how the media shapes and presents aspects of our social and cultural world. I am specifically interested in the framing of events, people, and language by news writers.

News stories are a product that is consumed by the public. Because they are consumed, many news agencies have to ensure that they are producing stories that seem

[82] Ibid., 21.
[83] David Machin and Andrea Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012), 22.
[84] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis,* 23.
[85] Allan Bell and Peter Garrett, *Approaches to Media Discourse*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1998), 64.

appealing enough to their audiences. After all, these agencies are businesses that have to sell newspapers or gain viewers to ensure that they can keep their businesses open. Since news articles are constructed, they can be deconstructed. Through different methods, such as CDA, the product or story can be unpacked, showing its complexities and how it was created.[86] This is especially important since most stories may at first appear to be straightforward but are in fact "replete with ambiguity, unclarity, discrepancy and cavity."[87]

Much of what is ambiguous in the media relates to power and ideology – two things that CDA works to uncover. As Norman Fairclough notes, "mass media discourse is interesting because the nature of the power relations enacted in it is often not clear, and there are reasons for seeing it as involving hidden relations of power."[88] When stories are produced, writers and editors have "sole producing rights and can therefore determine what is included and excluded, how events are represented, and even the subject positions of their audiences."[89] This means that they choose what makes it into the story and what does not. Because journalists have an audience this means that they must also write to what they think will be interesting to those reading their article. My analysis will offer some insight into how *The Ranger* sees its audience in Riverton and what it believes they want to read about, especially how they relate to the EPA's decision.

The best way to understand the media and its productions is to use a comprehensive deconstructing and pulling apart of the articles. For instance, as Fairclough writes, while "the unequal influence of social groupings may be relatively clear in terms of

[86] Bell and Garrett, *Approaches to Media Discourse,* 65.
[87] Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 3rd ed., (New York: Routledge, 2015), 66.
[88] Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 78.
[89] Ibid., 79.

who gets to be interviewed, for example, it is less clear but nevertheless highly significant in terms of whose perspective is adopted in reports."[90] This means that even simple nuanced parts of articles must be given a closer look. This is powerful since the media can act as an "expression and reproduction of the power of the dominant class and bloc."[91] For my work on responses to the EPA's decision, *The Ranger*'s reporting is incredibly important. I am not suggesting that the newspaper, editors, and writers are actively working closely with local or state politicians to write their articles. Such a notion misses the point and simplifies the concept that I present beyond comprehension. Both groups can still hold and support the same ideologies and beliefs without compromising their ethics of journalism and politics.

Mass media can act as a catalyst for moral panics through the use of newspapers, radio shows, TV programs, and more. During these productions, editors and writers choose "what sorts of social identities, what versions of 'self', they project and what cultural values (be it consumerism, individualism or a cult of personality) these entail."[92] These actors shape the stories they report on and also the public's perception. Critically analyzing these productions is key to understanding the ideologies and beliefs that support and ground these constructions. For my analysis of Riverton's moral panic and the public's response, it is critical to understand *The Ranger*'s production and representation of the EPA's decision and the people and groups involved in it.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

[90] Ibid., 79.
[91] Ibid., 80.
[92] Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 17.

In the previous section, I discussed how mass media, specifically newspapers, fit into my analysis of a moral panic. In this section, I will unpack the specifics of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and some of the tools that I used in analyzing several newspaper articles for this chapter. According to David Machin and Andrea Mayr, CDA is "a loose combination of approaches founded in linguistics."[93] In fact, there is no one simple way of applying CDA. Instead there is "a whole range of critical approaches which can be classified as CDA."[94] Many CDA scholars, such as Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, and others have developed their own mixture of approaches and tools, which they use on a variety of different forms of media, such as television, radio, and newspapers.[95] As this shows, CDA is a widely used and accepted form of linguistic analysis in academic scholarship. While this approach is different from other forms of analysis such as rhetoric or critical linguistics, CDA is still an interdisciplinary application that incorporates and is incorporated by other fields. For instance, some scholars have called for CDA to be used more in the field of rhetoric and composition citing that it "enables writing researchers to move beyond traditional analytic modes of interpretation and criticism into examining the impact that contexts, power dynamics, and social interaction have on written texts and processes."[96]

In addition to unpacking CDA, I think it is important to breakdown what the name of the method means. According to Machin and Mayr, "critical" means "'denaturalizing' the language to reveal the kinds of ideas, absences, and taken-for-granted assumptions in

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[93] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis,* 1.
[94] Ibid., 4.
[95] Bell and Garrett, *Approaches to Media Discourse,* 5-14.
[96] Thomas Huckin, Jennifer Andrus, and Jennifer Clary-Lemon, "Critical Discourse Analysis and Rhetoric and Composition," *College Composition and Communication* 64:1 (2012): 110-111.

texts" and "discourse" as "language in real contexts of use."[97] Together these terms show how this approach can be used to deconstruct the naturalized appearance of language as it is being used. Newspapers appear as parts of our everyday routines and often what we read in them is taken as simple unbiased reporting. CDA offers a critical lens to examine the normalization of newspaper language and further tease out what is covertly being conveyed and how.

CDA allows scholars and researchers to go beneath the surface of texts to identify and understand what is not obvious and overt to the reader. It is concerned with more than just the content and grammar of the language. CDA, according to Machin and Mayr, "can allow us to reveal more precisely how speakers and authors use language and grammatical features to create meaning, to persuade people to think about events in a particular way, sometimes even to seek to manipulate them while at the same time concealing their communicative intentions."[98] Applying CDA to the newspaper articles that discuss the EPA's decision will show these subsurface workings of language.

In summary, CDA is a powerful tool that aims to reveal hidden ideologies and show the "link between language, power, and ideology."[99] For my work, it will allow me to show how political and media language can reproduce power relations, and in this case, contribute to the moral panic in Riverton. Most importantly, it is a method of exposing how normalized language that appears simple and "common sense" is actually constructing and/or reinforcing "hegemonic attitudes, opinions and beliefs."[100] My aim is to

[97] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis,* 5, 20.
[98] Ibid., 1.
[99] Ibid., 4.
[100] Ibid., 25.

demonstrate how the news articles in *The Ranger* are not neutral but constructing a certain narrative, fueled by an ideology.

Methodological Tools of CDA

In this section, I will briefly discuss the CDA tools that I use in my analysis of the newspaper articles. Since this method is a loose collection of approaches to language, I think it is important to briefly present each of the tools before showing how I apply them to the language in the news articles. I have chosen to mainly draw on the ones used by linguists David Machin, Andrea Mayr, and Norman Fairclough. Each of these tools serves a specific and different purpose in critically examining language. Used together, however, they present a holistic analysis of the texts.

One area of interest of mine is what Machin and Mayr call the "classification of social actors."[101] This is the way in which writers discuss and present groups of people in their articles. I am mainly concerned with the generalizations and specifications of how the writers position local and state, tribal, and federal government authorities. Examining these strategies of language can show how some groups are positioned more positively or given more agency and authority, while others are anonymized and have their agency reduced or completely hidden.[102] Identifying these will show how specific groups are treated by writers and offer valuable insight into understanding how these articles are constructed.

Modal verbs also play an important role in my analysis of the newspaper articles. These verbs are used with other verbs to convey things such as ability, obligation, and

[101] Ibid., 79.
[102] Ibid., 79-83.

possibility. By using CDA, they can "tell us something about the author's identity and crucially, therefore, how much power they have over others and over knowledge."[103] Modals can include verbs such as "would", "could", "can", "may", "might", "must", and "will" to name a few. These can also act as indicators of hedging, since they can create ambiguity and conceal power and time.[104] For my work, observing these are valuable since they can also "have a function in concealing power relations."[105] Examining modal verbs are an important aspect of analyzing the language used in these newspaper articles.

I also closely examined hedging. This is a strategy used by writers and speakers to create vagueness and distance themselves from what is being communicated. According to Machin and Mayr, "it means that a speaker avoids directness or commitment to something."[106] It can also be used to distance oneself from what is being written and to downplay what they are writing. Another key thing it does is that it can "reduce [the text producer's] chances of any unwelcome responses."[107] Hedging can be deployed through various ways. This can include the use of modal verbs, approximators, vague statements or phrases, non-factive verbs, and references to specific times, history, and official documents.[108] The main point to understand about hedging is that it conceals the writer's opinion and stance on something through vagueness and ambiguity. This is important to identify in *The Ranger* articles because it shows how the writers position the "negative" ramifications of the EPA's decision, specifically the uncertainty surrounding the effects it will have on the community in Riverton.

[103] Ibid., 190.
[104] Ibid., 190.
[105] Ibid., 190.
[106] Ibid., 192.
[107] Ibid., 192.
[108] Ibid., 192-198.

In addition to seeing how social actors are classified, I also examined speaking or quoting verbs. These are verbs that are used by writers to indicate that someone else is speaking or being quoted. A few examples of these verbs are said, declared, and mentioned. They can be clues to understanding how a writer views a speaker and language. Machin and Mayr write, "these simple word choices, describing how someone has spoken, can have a considerable impact on the way that authors shape perception of events."[109] For instance, some of these verbs are neutral, while others can convey a specific meaning along with what is being quoted. Analyzing speaking and quoting verbs can offer a lot of insight into the covert messages and actions conveyed through language. For my analysis of *The Ranger* articles, identifying and deconstructing these verbs will show how the writers position local and state politicians as well as tribal representatives and what they are saying to their readers.

The final area of interest of mine is examining the representation of discourse in the news articles. According to Fairclough, "the representation of discourse in news media can be seen as an ideological process of considerable social importance."[110] This is important to examine because it shows how the writer communicates the voice and message of a speaker. Fairclough identifies three types of discourse: direct discourse (DD), direct discourse slipping (DDS), and indirect discourse (ID). In the next section, I will expand upon each of these discourses further, but for now, what is important to understand is how the representation of discourse can reflect the positioning of power and agency and how the writer interacts with discourse and speakers.

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[109] Ibid., 58.
[110] Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, (Harlow, UK: Longman Group Limited, 1995), 65.

These CDA tools are the ones that I used in my analysis of newspaper articles published in *The Ranger* from December 2013 to January 2014. Used collectively, they can uncover themes and patterns in the use of language in the newspaper articles as they relate to the EPA's decision. The representation and positioning of these events and people are critical to how the public was being told about the events. In chapter 3, I will show how my findings in the articles connect to what I found in the letters to the editors written by politicians and people in Riverton.

An Example of Applying CDA

In this section I will present an example of how I applied each of the tools I describe above to one of the news articles I examined. Even though I applied all of these tools to each of the news articles, this master's thesis does not allow me enough space to go into great detail for each article. Instead, I will present one example of how I conducted CDA and in the next section present my aggregate data and my interpretation of it.

The article that I am analyzing in this section was published on December 10th, 2013 in *The Ranger* and attributed to staff and wire reports.[111] This was four days after the EPA sent a letter to the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe approving their application for TAS status. According to the article byline, it was credited to staff and wire reports. This is also the first article published in the newspaper that addresses the EPA's decision following their announcement. I have selected this article as the example for no other reason than that it was the earliest published article in the collection.

[111] Staff and Wire Reports, "Federal agency says Riverton still is part of 'Indian Country'," *The Ranger*, December 10, 2013.

Identifying generalizations and specifications can provide insight into how certain groups are positioned and presented in the article, since it shows how writers describe social actors and groups. For my work I was interested in how the writer of the article was describing the main social actors involved in the EPA's decision. As my first chapter shows, the EPA's decision involves roughly four primary actors: the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, the Northern Arapaho Tribe, the State of Wyoming, and the City of Riverton. Of course that list is not limited to just those four, certainly the people living in those communities play an important role in this event too as my next chapter will show, but those are the four entities that I will be concentrating on. I am mainly interested in how politicians and representatives act as stands-in for those groups.

As a way to understand how each group is framed, I chose keywords related to each. The keywords were also similar to each other in how they are deployed in the article. I only counted keywords that represented a group or entity, and not a location. I am looking for keywords used as replacements for representative entities. The keywords that I identified represent generalizations. They do not specify who is included or excluded and they are vague. For instance, the keyword "tribe" does not specify which tribe is being mentioned, and the same can be extended to the other keywords, which included: state, city, and federal agency. These keywords lack specificity. Below is a chart showing the keyword and number of times it appeared in the article.

Keyword	**#**
Tribe	11
City	3
Federal Agency	2
State	0

As we can see from the chart, the most generalized keyword had "tribe" as the root. This appeared eleven times in the article. The second most generalized keyword was "city" which only occurred three times. The difference in the reoccurrence between of the first and second keyword is overwhelmingly large. This shows that the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe were frequently lumped together, and anonymized. By doing this, the tribes have their agency eliminated by the writer. Most often, when just "tribe" is used the reader has no idea which tribe the writer is referencing.

In addition to examining generalizations in this article, I also looked for specifications. Similar to how I looked for generalizations, I selected keywords to represent the social actors I mentioned above. Unlike those keywords in the previous chart, these ones include specific language to indicate more accurately what group is being referenced. For this analysis, I looked for the specific names: Eastern Shoshone, Northern Arapaho, City of Riverton, State of Wyoming, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The chart below shows how many times each keyword appeared in the article.

Keyword	**#**
EPA	11
City of Riverton	4
State of Wyoming	2
Eastern Shoshone	1
Northern Arapaho	1

The keyword that appeared the most was "EPA" followed by "City of Riverton". What is significant about this chart is how infrequently either Eastern Shoshone or Northern Arapaho appeared in the article. Both were only mentioned once, and that was not until the fourth paragraph of the article, even though the keyword "tribe" had already been mentioned twice in the article and would appear another nine times. An emphasis of

specification was placed on the first two keywords, possibly the third, but it is clear that Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho were of little importance as specifically identifiable entities.

The representation and use of specific authorities, specifically individuals who are referenced or quoted who are speaking on behalf of a group and hold some kind of power or influence, is another way I examined how social actors are positioned in this article. For this analysis, I made five categories for each of the social actors: Wyoming, Riverton, Northern Arapaho, Eastern Shoshone, and EPA. Individuals from each of these groups have publically addressed the EPA's decision. For this analysis, I wanted to break down how many authorities were referenced by the group they fell under. The table below lists the name of the authority and where they fit in the categorization of the social actors.

Wyoming	**Riverton**	**Northern Arapaho**	**Eastern Shoshone**	**EPA**
1. Governor Mead 2. WY AG Salzburg 3. Spokesmen MacKay	1. Mayor Warpness	1. Chairman D. O'Neal Sr.	None	None

The table above shows that three authorities were referenced in the article that represented or were related to the State of Wyoming, while only one from Riverton and one the Northern Arapaho Tribe were mentioned. No authorities on behalf of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe or EPA were referenced. This is significant because it shows the overrepresentation of state authorities in comparison to the other groups. The writer of this article has chosen to include actual people to represent the state, thereby humanizing it, while the other groups, especially the tribes, are represented more by generalizations than representational individuals.

Together these charts show how in every case the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho are marginalized from the article. This distorts their identities and agency, as well as presents them in a more secondary position. In comparison, the language used to describe Wyoming and Riverton representatives is often more specific and actual individuals appear more often. These charts represent how the tribes are treated and presented in the language of the articles. The writer of this article has chosen to position the tribes as a homogenous group with little agency or involvement.

Another thing I looked for in this article were hedges. As I described in the previous section, hedging is a strategy in which the writer does not commit to something or shows their opinion. Instead, it is often framed as a possibility or something vague. Modal verbs can be an indication of hedging, as well as some of the other signs that I mentioned before. Below are two examples of hedging found in the article:

1. Tribal activists have said a federal ruling that Riverton is Indian Country would require changes in taxation, law enforcement and other issues in which the tribes would assume precedence over municipal control. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

2. "The tribes' application, if granted, has implications for criminal law, civil law, water law and taxation," Mead wrote the EPA in August. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

In the first sentence, the bolded words signal that the writer is hedging. Using "would" implies that there is a possibility that the changes would take place. Stating such a possibility is much different from taking that stance or writing that the changes will or are taking place. Using "would" allows the writer to present the changes in taxation and other areas as possibilities without having to take a definitive stance on the issue and without demonstrating there is certainty for these changes to take place. The second sentence, which is a quote by Governor Mead, is also an example of hedging. Here Mead deploys "if granted" to signal that the implications he lists might happen but he is not taking a definite

stance that they will. He is presenting a possibility. This allows for the writers and speaker to present something hypothetical, but still distance themselves from fully supporting it and also shielding themselves from criticism for being wrong.

Hedging is important to identify for my examination of this moral panic because of how it presents possibilities. Even though these negative effects are presented as possibilities, that is enough to warrant concern since it is an unknown. It is interesting to note that hedging in this article only occurred when the effects of the EPA's decision were discussed. What caused and continued to fuel the moral panic in Riverton was the threat that the city would negatively change and the tribes would take over. Even though hedging shows that the speaker and writer are taking vague and uncommitted positions on the outcomes stemming from decision, they are presented to the reader as more definite and threatening. It can be assumed that most readers will read those sentences and not see that hedging is taking place and that those social actors are not committing to taking explicit positions that the changes will take place. Remember, these sentences are in a newspaper article, which many see as a factual and observation-driven document, unlike an editorial or opinion piece.

Two additional notes on the sentences above are needed. In the first sentence, it begins with "tribal activists," which is a generalization. As the beginning of this section explored, there are two American Indian tribes on the Wind River Reservation. Using the term "tribal activists" does not specify to which tribe these activists belonged. Instead, it generalizes and lumps the two tribes together and anonymizes the activists. As readers, we do not know much about them except for what the writer has told us, which is indirect discourse, meaning the writer is not providing us with direct quotes but instead with more

of a paraphrase. Discourse representation is something I will explore more in depth later on in this section.

In the newspaper article I also identified four sentences that contain modal verbs. One of those sentences, number one above, I have already discussed as the modal verb is used to hedge. These other sentences are not hedges, but taking a closer look at the modal verbs used can show how the writer is positioning certain language in the article.

1. Objection the EPA's determination was swift from the City of Riverton, which claims that the city's legal status as separate from the reservation can be changed only by federal court order. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

2. "Future changes in legal status will only be recognized when issued by a legal court authority with the proper jurisdiction to rule on such matters." (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

3. The ruling is certain to be challenged, and no immediate changes will take place. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

In the three sentences above, "can be" indicates a weak possibility, while the two uses of "will" indicate strong predictions.

In this article I also looked for and categorized quoting and speaking verbs. These are verbs used by writers to mark that something is being quoted, in addition to quotation marks, or that they are paraphrasing the words by someone else. These types of verbs can indicate how the writer is positioning the quote and show how they see the speaker conveying their language. Speaking verbs can represent a variety of meanings. Below is a chart that organizes speaking verbs by speaker and also lists their potential meaning.

Quoting/Speaking Verbs

Speaker	Verb	Classification[112]

[112] Assertive and expressive verbs are metapropositional verbs according to Caldas Coulthard, but for this chart, they have been separated based on their subcategory. From Coulthard (1994), quoted in Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 59.

City of Riverton	responded, claims	neutral, expressive
City of Riverton and the State of Wyoming	dismiss	assertive
EPA	agreed	assertive
Federal agency	says	neutral
Federal entity	say	neutral
MacKay	said	neutral
Mead	wrote, said (2)	neutral, neutral
O'Neal	said	neutral
Salzburg	wrote	neutral
Tribal Activists	said	neutral
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	determined	assertive

Most of the speaking verbs in this article were neutral structuring verbs.[113] These kinds of verbs can cast speakers as impartial and unbiased. This also makes them look relatively stable to the reader. Verbs such as "yelled" or "demanded" would do the opposite. In only three cases were non-neutral speaking verbs used. These verbs are considered metapropositional verbs.[114] Two of these instances involved the City of Riverton (and the State of Wyoming), and the other involved the EPA. The verbs "dismiss" and "determined" are considered assertive speaking verbs. These verbs reflect how the writer views the speaker and how their language.

1. Both the City of Riverton and the State of Wyoming were quick to dismiss the order as an isolated ruling in a larger case involving tribal jurisdiction over Riverton, which was removed formally from the reservation by an Act of Congress in 1905. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

2. Ruling on a case involving monitoring of air quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determined that from its point of view, congressional action more than a century ago didn't change the legal status of nearly 1.5 million acres around Riverton as "Indian Country." (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

The sentences above show how these verbs are used in the actual language of the sentences. The writer's use of these verbs presents their language as confident in their

[113] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis,* 59.
[114] Ibid., 60.

position. The use of "dismiss" in the case of the city and state is much different from using another verb such as disagree, which is more neutral. "Dismiss" is a directive and has a degree of power associated with it. This presents a stronger stance than a neutral speaking verb such as "said" would. "Determined" is cast in a similar way. The writer's use of this speaking verb casts the EPA and their actions asserting something decisive. It carries a much stronger tone than if the writer would have used a neutral verb such as said or wrote.

The speaking verb "claims" on the other hand is expressive and carries a different potential meaning than those verbs discussed above.

3. Objection [sic] the EPA's determination was swift from the City of Riverton, which claims that the city's legal status as separate from the reservation can be changed only by federal court order. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

This is an interesting sentence for several reasons. Not only can we further examine the speaking verb, but also the speaker. The "City of Riverton" is the speaker but cities cannot talk. As readers, we assume that this word is standing in for perhaps the mayor or city government, but there is no way to know that since the sentence lacks any specifics. The writer's choice to use city rather than mayor or some other figure, enlarges who is being credited for this claim. It is presented as not one person but an entire city.

The speaking verb "claims" presents this as an argument or a belief. As Machin and Mayr have stated, "claims are not factual but can be contested and the use of this word invites doubt."[115] While this may be the case, I think it is important to also examine this verb in relation to the speaker. As my earlier analyses have shown, particularly that on specification and authorities, the city and state governments have been positioned as important authoritative figures. But even if this speaking verb invites doubt, that would

[115] Ibid., 61.

still add to the theme of ambiguity and speculation in the article about the effects of the EPA's decision.

It is not surprising that the only cases in which non-neutral verbs appeared in this article were in language that was non-direct discourse. This type of discourse representation allows the writer greater freedom for constructing the sentence and its meaning since they are not using direct quotes. Instead they are paraphrasing what they heard or read and then presenting it to the reader.

In this article, I also focused on categorizing and listing the representation of discourse. An examination of how a writer represents discourse can reflect how they see themselves and the speaker as well as the discourse being presented. Below I will provide an example of each of the types of discourse representation, and then show how this was distributed in the article by speaker and representation type.

Direct discourse (DD) occurs when speaking verbs and quotation marks signal the voice is that of someone other than the reporter creating the discourse. In the example below, the speaking verb and quotation marks can be clearly identified.

1. "We are extremely pleased with the EPA action," said Darrell O'Neal Sr., chairman of the Northern Arapaho Business Council, in a prepared statement. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

This kind of representation can be used for a variety of reasons. Fairclough states that this often occurs for four reasons:

> a) the secondary discourse is important, dramatic, pithy, witty,
> b) the secondary discourse emanates from an authoritative source
> c) the representer wishes to associate with, or distance from, the secondary discourse – a common motivation for slipping
> d) the report has ample space assigned to it[116]

[116] Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 56.

The article contained seven instances of direct discourse. This type of representation also carries with it a commitment to accuracy since the language is being quoted directly.

Another type of discourse representation that I identified was direct discourse slipping (DDs), which is similar to direct discourse but is the "'slipping' between modes."[117] This can be thought of as a hybrid. An example from the article is:

2. Ruling on a case involving monitoring of air quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determined that from its point of view, congressional action more than a century ago didn't change the legal status of nearly 1.5 million acres around Riverton as "Indian Country." (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

In this sentence there is a speaking verb to indicate the voice of the EPA, however, quotation marks for direct speech do not occur until the very end of the sentence. These marks indicate that "Indian Country" is being directly quoted from something stated by the EPA. The writer has slipped from indirect discourse to direct.

Indirect discourse (ID) contains speaking and quoting verbs, but not quotation marks. It does not represent a direct quote from the speaker, but instead a paraphrased version of what was said. This means that the writer has some freedom in what language they use to construct this discourse. Often this type of discourse makes the voice of the writer or speaker ambiguous or vague since the speaking verb is the only marker and the language is not directly reprinted. Below is an example from the article:

3. Renny MacKay, spokesman for Mead, said EPA officials met with representatives of the governor's office and the Wyoming attorney general's office Monday evening. (Staff and Wire Reports, 12/10)

Compared to sentences 1 and 2, there is a clear difference in how this discourse is represented. The reader is getting information filtered through the voice of the writer of the article and not directly from the source.

[117] Ibid., 55.

Below is a chart that shows the distribution of discourse representation in the article by social actors.

	Tribal	State	Local	Federal	Total
DD	2	4	1	0	7
DDs	0	0	0	2	2
ID	1	2	1	2	6
Total	3	6	2	4	15

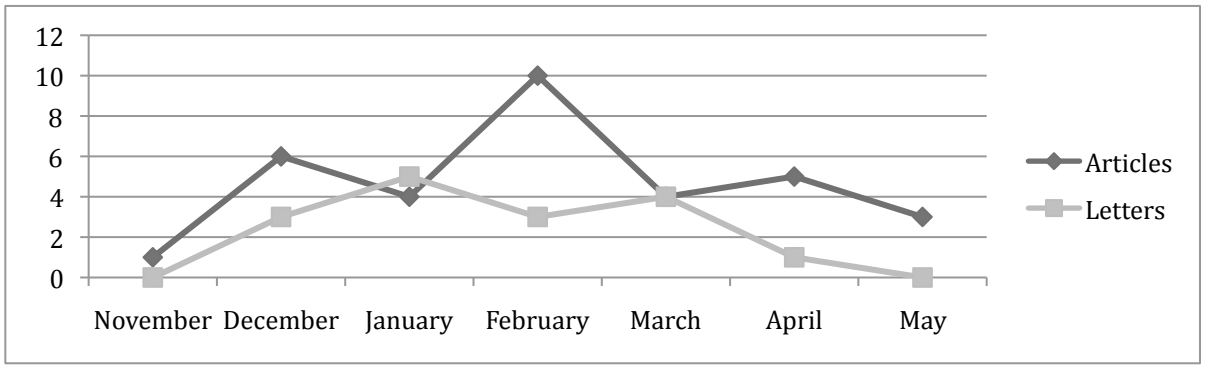
The data in the chart above shows an interesting distribution between the social actors. Discourse attributed to tribal and local speakers is evenly dispersed, however, state and federal is disproportional. The state has a high amount of direct discourse (DD), while the EPA has a high amount of direct discourse slipping (DDs) and indirect discourse (ID). Based on the reasons for direct discourse mentioned above, it appears the writer views the state's discourse very highly and wants to make sure they present it as accurately as possible. As for the EPA, more direct discourse slipping (DDs) could mean that the writer is trying to distance himself or herself from the speaker. Using indirect discourse (ID) also allows the speaker to paraphrase the discourse and present it as secondary discourse rather than primary. This type of representation can cast the discourse as less important.

This section served as an example of how I applied CDA to the nine newspaper articles that I analyzed. I used the same steps and methods on each of the news articles from December 2013 to January 2014. This provided me with a large collection of data, which I will examine and interpret in the next section. Combining these individual examinations will show patterns and themes within the articles.

Aggregate Data

From December 2013 until May 2014, thirty-two articles about the EPA's decision were published in *The Ranger*.[118] I believe the moral panic can be set as taking place during that time as well. An examination of the number of articles and letters to the editor published by month reflects a moral panic.

Published	**Articles**	**Letters**
November 2013	1	0
December 2013	6	3
January 2014	4	5
February 2014	10	3
March 2014	4	4
April 2014	5	1
May 2014	3	0
Total	33	16



The graph above shows the peak of the moral panic from January to March. This can be seen by the gradual increase in letters to the editor and articles about the EPA's decision. It also reflects the start of the moral panic in December and its wane and eventual end in May. The graph also shows a number of peaks in the publication of letters to the editor following larger article peaks. This graph supports my claim that this is in fact a moral panic, and shows how an increase in reporting by *The Ranger* led to an increased response by the public, as shown through a quantitative reading of the newspaper data.

[118] In November 2013, an article in *The Ranger* discussed the upcoming EPA decision, however, it is not included as part of the sampling.

Because of the large quantity of articles published from December to May and the limited time and space of this thesis, I decided to concentrate on a sample of the overall publications. This sample size makes up over 25% of the total articles published. The articles I examined were published from December 2013 through January 2014. There were a total of ten articles published in print during that time.

I applied CDA to all of the articles, in the same fashion as I showed in the example I provided in the section above. These are the articles examined in my sampling:

Article Sampling

Date	Title	Author
10-Dec-13	Federal agency says Riverton still is part of 'Indian Country'	Staff and Wire Reports
11-Dec-13	State ready to fight reservation border decision by EPA	Katie Roenigk
11-Dec-13	Tribe says it is ready for talks with Riverton leaders	Katie Roenigk
12-Dec-13	EPA decision won't have larger impact, most officials predict	Eric Blom
16-Dec-13	EPA says it has right to set rez border, but the intent is limited	Katie Roenigk
20-Dec-13	Mead says state won't honor EPA rez ruling	Ben Neary
7-Jan-14	State files petition protesting reservation border decision	Alejandra Silva
17-Jan-14	Tribe declines to give formal testimony on EPA decision	Staff Reports
19-Jan-14	FCAG backs challenge to rez border ruling; calm response urged	Alejandra Silva
23-Jan-14	Tribe fires back at state's challenge of EPA border ruling	Staff reports

Below is my aggregate data, followed by a brief summary and analysis of each section. After all of the data is presented, I will explain my overall analysis of my findings.

Generalizations

KW	Tribe/Tribes/Tribes'	State/State's	City/City's	Agency/Agency's
Total	52	25	6	9

The table above demonstrates the amount of times each generic keyword was used in the articles. These keywords are broad ways to identify the social actors I am examining in my thesis. Generalizations lack specifics and tend to homogenous and take agency away from what they are supposed to be representing. Variations of "tribe" were found fifty-two times, the highest out of the four keywords, by an overwhelming margin. Variations of "state"

were the second most used at twenty-five times, while the keywords "city" and "agency" were found the least at six and nine.

Specifications

KW	Eastern Shoshone	Northern Arapaho	Wyoming	Riverton	EPA
Total	14	26	20	20	105

These keywords, unlike those in the table above are specifications. They are names of groups that reflect certain communities referenced in the article. These keywords provide more details about these groups and provide them with some agency. Of the five keywords that I searched for, "EPA" variations were found 105 times. This was significantly more than any of the other keywords by a huge margin. The keywords "Northern Arapaho", "Wyoming", and "Riverton" were used roughly the same amount of times, however, "Eastern Shoshone" was used the least.

Specific Authorities (# of articles mentioned in)

State	Local	EPA	EST[119]	NAT[120]
1. Governor Mead (6) 2. Former WY AG Salzburg (1) 3. Gov. Mead Spokesman MacKay (1) 4. WY AG Michael (2) 5. Assistant WY AG Williamson (1) 6. WY State Senator Case (2) 7. WY State Representative Goggles (1) 8. WY State Senator Bebout (2) 9. WY Highway	1. Riverton Mayor Warpness (5) 2. Fremont County Commissioner Becker (1) 3. Fremont County Commission Chairman Thompson (1) 4. Pavillion Mayor Hamlin (1) 5. Shoshoni Mayor Peters (1) 6. Lander Community Resource Coordinator Michaud (1) 7. Fremont County Commissioner Whiteman (1)	1. Administrator McCarthy (1) 2. Spokesmen Mylott (1)	1. Tribal Liaison Robinson (1)	1. Councilman Goggles (1) 2. NABC Chairman O'Neal (2) 3. Mark Howell (2) 4. Tribal Liaison Collins (1) 5. NABC Chairman St. Clair (1)

[119] Eastern Shoshone Tribe
[120] Northern Arapaho Tribe

Patrol Admin. Butler (1) 10. WY State Representative Larson (1)				
Total: 18	**11**	**2**	**1**	**7**

The table above shows the authorities referenced in each of the articles and breaks them down by corresponding social actor group. Authorities representing the State of Wyoming numbered ten, and could be found eighteen different times in the sample of articles. Local government authorities numbered seven and were referenced eleven different times. Northern Arapaho Tribe authorities numbered five and were referenced seven different times. EPA and Eastern Shoshone authorities were overwhelmingly underrepresented in these articles.

Speaking and Quoting Verbs[121]

	Neutral	**Assertive**	**Expressive**	**Transcript**	**Total**
Tribes	42	3	0	1	46
Local	19	2	2	2	25
State	50	2	1	0	53
EPA	12	9	0	0	21
Total	123	16	3	3	145

This table shows a breakdown of speaking and quoting verbs based on the social actor group. Many of the verbs used were neutral verbs, which were identified 123 times, while the second most used were assertive verbs at sixteen. Of the assertive speaking verbs used, over half were associated with the EPA. There were also a high number of neutral speaking verbs used in relation to the tribes and state.

Modal Verbs by Classification

[121] Assertive and expressive verbs are metapropositional verbs according to Caldas Coulthard, but for this chart, they have been separated based on their subcategory. From Caldas Coulthard (1994), quoted in Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 59.

Type[122]	Volition/Prediction	Permission/Possibility/Ability	Necessity/Obligation	Total
	Will – 22 Would – 43 Shall – 0	Can – 10 Could – 10 May – 5 Might – 2	Must – 1 Should – 7	
Total	65	27	8	100

This chart represents all of the modal verbs found in the articles. Because of the limited space of this thesis, they have been divided into three basic categories according to Douglas Biber.[123] This table shows that most of the modal verbs used in these articles belonged in the violation/prediction category, indicating an emphasis on strong logical possibilities.[124] The modal verb "would" which is a conditional verb form was used the most. This is relevant because it shows how many of the writers focused on using language that expressed strong predictions in the form of the modal verb "would" and to a lesser degree "will", which indicates that what they were discussing was highly probable, even though it is important to point out that "would" is a less strong modal verb to express prediction than "will". The overall feeling from the articles is that something is likely to happen *if* this other thing happens. It strongly reflects that *if* the EPA's decision is upheld then there will be consequences.

Hedging Using Modal Verbs

Speaker	Number of Hedges
St. Sen. Bebout	7
WY AG Michael	2
Mayor Warpness	3
Highway Patrol Admin. Butler	1
Total	13

Group	Number of Hedges
Local	3
State	10
Total	13

[122] Douglas Biber, et al., *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, (London: Longman, 1999), 485.
[123] Ibid., 485.
[124] "Modals," The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, accessed April 19th, 2016, http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/modals/.

This chart uses modal verbs as signals for hedging regarding the effects of the EPA's decision. It represents the data collected from examining those phrases containing modals. Only instances in which specified speakers were invoked were examined, generalizations attributed to speech that included hedging were excluded. Of those instances of hedging, all but three were attributed to a state authority. The remaining three were by a local authority. There were no instances of hedging the effects of the EPA's decision using modal verbs by authorities representing the EPA or tribes.

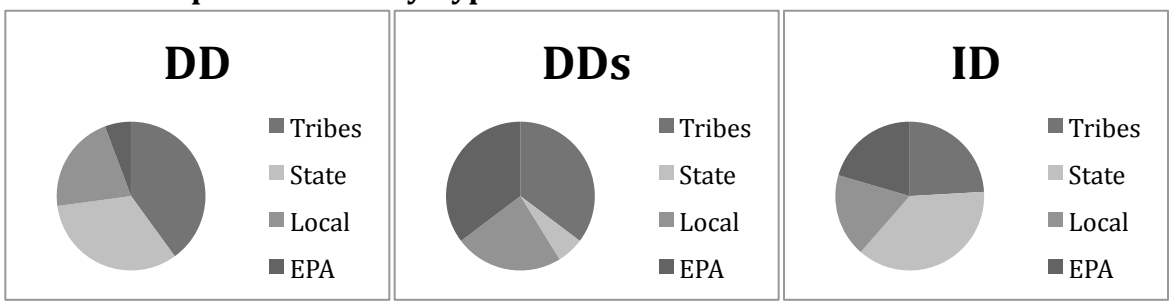
Overall Discourse Representation by Social Actor Group

Speaker	DD	DDs	ID	Total
Tribes	28	12	20	60
Local	15	8	15	38
State	23	2	31	56
EPA	4	12	17	33
Total	70	34	83	187

DD: Direct Discourse
DDs: Direct Discourse Sliding
ID: Indirect Discourse

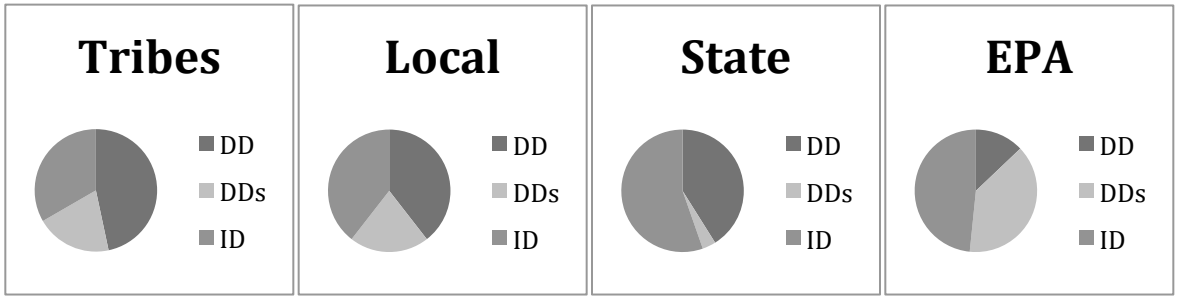
The overall distribution of discourse representation by social actor group is represented in the table above. Indirect discourse (ID) was identified eighty-three, while direct discourse (DD) was used seventy times. The least used was direct discourse sliding (DDs) at only thirty-four times. The total amount of discourse representations was 187. The graphs below show distribution by social actor group.

Discourse Representation by Type



These charts show the breakdown of discourse representation by social actor group. For these charts, it is important to look at the groups with the largest and smallest representations for each type. The tribes had the most direct discourse (DD) attributed to them, even though the state was only a bit less. The least amount of direct discourse (DD) was attributed to the EPA. Of the direct discourse slipping (DDs) representation, most of it was attributed to the EPA and tribes, which shared the same amount of representation. The state claimed the largest amount of indirect discourse (ID), while the three other groups had the almost the same amount.

Discourse Representation by Social Actor Group



These charts show the breakdown of discourse representation by social actor group. It reflects the overall representation distribution of each. A majority of the tribes' discourse was represented by direct discourse (DD), while most of the local discourse was almost evenly split between direct (DD) and indirect (ID). State discourse was overwhelmingly represented as indirect discourse (ID), while the EPA's discourse slightly more represented by indirect discourse (ID), although direct discourse sliding (DDs) was also used frequently.

Overall, this aggregate data shows how ten newspaper articles represented social actors and their discourse. Based on my observations of the individual analyses and collectively, I think there are some clear things at work. The Eastern Shoshone and

Northern Arapaho Tribes are more often referred to as "tribes" than their specific names. This is incredibly problematic since it generalizes these two very distinct tribes and lumps them together as one homogenous group. By doing so it takes away their identity and agency. The EPA's representation is almost the complete opposite. The agency is rarely generalized compared to the others, but it is overwhelmingly specified. The name of the agency is overused to the point that there are only a few actual authorities, individually named people, associated with the organization. Even though the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe and the EPA are at opposite spectrums when it comes to generalizations and specifications – the end result is still the same. These groups are incredibly marginalized and represented as imprecise, homogenous, and rarely depicting being made up of individuals.

The State of Wyoming and Riverton (including other local governments) are represented evenly when it comes to generalizations and specifications. Even though there are low numbers in each of these categories, they have incredibly high numbers when it comes to individual authorities referenced. Unlike how the EPA and tribes are treated, the state and local governments are made human by having specific people, such as Governor Mead or Mayor Warpness, speak on behalf of the state or city. Even other local officials, mayors of other towns, are referenced. Almost no authorities on behalf of the EPA or Eastern Shoshone Tribe can be found in any of the articles. While the Northern Arapaho do have some authorities referenced or represented in the articles, it is still small compared to the state and local governments. Even if the Northern Arapaho do have some representation, they are already incredibly marginalized based on my previous analyses regarding generalizations and specifications.

The data on speaking verbs shows a really interesting way in which these social groups have been positioned throughout the narrative constructed by the newspaper articles. Based on the speaking and quoting verbs, we can see how different speakers are represented. For the most part, all of them are framed as neutral, unbiased, and trustworthy. This is based on the fact that almost all of the speaking verbs are the same for tribal, local, and state speakers. The EPA has a high amount of assertive speaking verbs attributed to it, indicating that most of the discourse is about or from the EPA's decision rather than individuals from the EPA speaking. This ties in with the keyword "EPA" being overly used with few, if any, individual authorities mentioned. It also positions the EPA as being forceful, but offering little to no explanation.

The data on modal verbs show a more general picture of the articles. It is important to remember that modal verbs indicate modality. This high number of volition/prediction verbs shows how these articles are full of indications on willingness and possibilities, in comparison to the other categories. The modal verb "would" which is a conditional verb form was used the most. This is relevant because it shows how many of the writers focused on using language that expressed strong predictions in the form of the modal verb "would" and to a lesser degree "will", which indicates that what they were discussing was highly probable, even though it is important to point out that "would" is a less strong modal verb to express prediction than "will". The overall feeling from the articles is that something is likely to happen *if* this other thing happens. It strongly reflects that *if* the EPA's decision is upheld then there will be consequences. This presents a concerning picture of the effects of the decision, and how it is possible that it will hurt the communities. No one is sure that these things will happen, but they believe that they are probable.

Modal verbs can also indicate or signal hedging. All of the hedging that commented on the EPA's decision and its effects on the non-reservation communities were from state and local authorities. These authorities are framed as trustworthy and stable individuals through the use of neutral speaking and quoting verbs, which I commented on earlier. What this shows is that state authorities, who are seen as powerful individuals that the public looks to for protection and action on their behalf, are injecting their thoughts on hypothetical scenarios on the effects of the EPA's decision. They are able to present the unknown of something harmful in a way that allows them to at the same time distance themselves from fully committing to it. This is important because the public looks to these officials to have their best interests in mind, and to protect them. My next chapter will show how these possibilities and hypothetical scenarios can evolve into individuals believing that they will happen; they have come to believe that the hypothetical scenarios and possibilities have evolved from potentialities into actual, immediate threats.

The data on discourse representation shows how the writers of these articles used direct discourse (DD) representation when it came torepresenting tribal discourse. This could be because the writers want to ensure they are representing their voices correctly, and do not feel comfortable paraphrasing their words. Fairclough suggested direct discourse slipping (DDs) can indicate a way for writers to distance themselves from or towards discourse and speakers.[125] Based on the other data, I think the writers are trying to distance themselves from the EPA since they rarely use DD when representing EPA discourse. This is an interesting observation, as the EPA has published its decision and the scope of governmental effects it expects this decision to influence. Such documents offer

[125] Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 56.

stable sources from which to quote. For EPA discourse representation, DDs and ID are relatively close in occurrence, however, I think because the writers are working more so with the EPA's decision rather than individual people's speech, they feel they have more freedom to represent it. State discourse is overwhelmingly represented through indirect discourse (ID) which I think shows how the writers feel more comfortable mixing their voice with the states. ID creates ambiguity when it comes to voice. Local government discourse representation is rather even and I do not think it shows any specific feelings on behalf of the writers. This analysis shows how just by looking at discourse representation, we can understand how writers view certain speakers and groups.

Overall, this aggregate data shows a few things that are very important. First, the tribes are overgeneralized and underrepresented when it comes to authorities (the state and local governments are the opposite). The EPA is treated similarly as a very distant imaginary, represented not by people but just a name (EPA). The tribes and EPA are positioned as foreign and distant. The state, and to some degree Riverton, are treated in a much different way. Rarely are they generalized, and authorities representing these communities are referenced often. Based on discourse representation, the writers do not feel comfortable paraphrasing or mixing their own voice to the tribal discourse, but do feel comfortable doing this when it comes to the state's discourse. Based on the aggregate date, a conclusion can be made about how the writers see their relation to the social actors. By showing the representational proximity of each of the social actor groups, we can see where these social actors fall in relation to the writers and their audience. Social actors closer to the circle received more representation and there was a willingness to engage more with them in the articles. Moving further from circle shows not only distance, but also

less specifications and representation given to those social actors. The tribes and EPA are the furthest from the circle, showing how in the overall analysis of the articles how they were portrayed and treated in very generalized ways. We can also see how closely positioned the local communities are to the tribes. Even though the EPA is responsible for their decision, it is the tribes that are positioned as the focus, while the EPA is portrayed as distant (in Washington, D.C.) and therefore of little immediate concern. The tribes, the closest "other" group to the circle, are of most concern.

Remember, however, this was the EPA's decision to acknowledge the larger reservation boundaries and approve the tribes' application for TAS status. The state and Riverton sued the EPA over their decision. Even though the tribes completed the application and would gain TAS status, the EPA had to approve it. The two main groups in this process and who make up the two sides of the court case *Wyoming v. EPA* are the state and EPA, yet, based on the data from the newspaper articles, the framing is the state versus the tribes. My next chapter will show how the newspapers' emphasis on framing this situation as "state vs. tribes," the representation of the tribes as homogenous and distant, and the EPA as an impersonal outlying entity, was shared by and possibly influenced the way in which the people who submitted letters to the editor saw these events and the tribes. The writers of the letters to the editor used the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe as the epitome of the threat discussed in the articles examined previously.

CHAPTER THREE

This chapter will examine several letters to the editor (LE) published in *The Ranger* from December 2013 to January 2014. These are eight of the sixteen LE published in the newspaper that commented on the EPA's decision.[126] These included two LE written by Wyoming Governor Matthew Mead and Riverton Mayor Ronald Warpness during this time. Similar to chapter 2, I will use CDA to examine these LE and then discuss them individually and collectively. Like the newspaper articles, I am looking for normalizations of language that hide writers' ideologies and beliefs. I am interested in not only the content of their letters, but also how they are communicating their ideas through language. I will then briefly examine how the LE compare to the newspaper articles I examined in chapter 2. Next I will place these LE in a broader context of how non-Natives have stereotyped and continue to stereotype and perpetuate certain tropes and myths about American Indians. I will end this chapter by describing how the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe as well as the Equality State Policy Center (ESPC) have commented on and responded to the reactions of the state and local governments and public in Riverton and other communities to the EPA's decision.

Letters to the Editor (LE)

Letters to the editor (LE) are a unique part of newspapers since they provide space for public comments on issues that are relevant to the readers and to the newspaper itself. The reason that people write LE is not entirely clear since there are many reasons for doing so. As Gabrina Pounds points out, these can include "expressing protest, outrage, criticism,

[126] Some of the LE have been published and then republished on different dates.

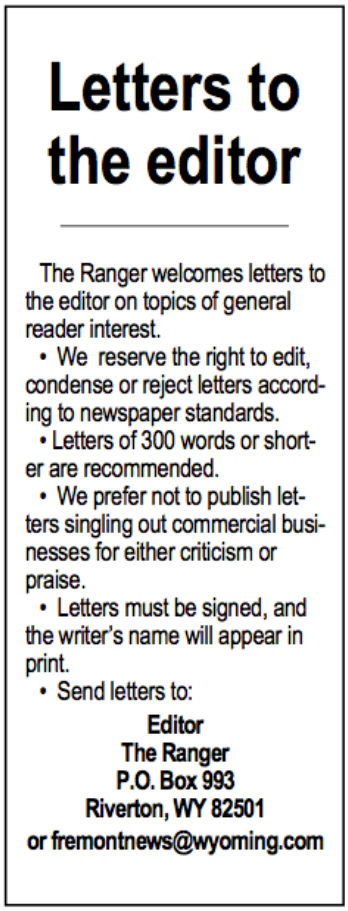
providing or requesting clarification and information, or advocating a course of action."[127] Many of the LE that I will be examining in this section are critical of the EPA's decision and support state resistance to the decision.

Opinion sections are distinctive because they are overtly labeled as opinion and thus are not necessarily held to the same standards as other sections. While these sections do have their own standards, they are different from those that are applied to other sections. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, newspaper articles and the media in general are seen by the public as factual, unbiased, and purely observant. LE and other opinion pieces are free to stray away from this standard. These pieces are "not bound by such claims to objectivity and balance, that is, they are overtly biased viewpoints that are not intended to be objective, fair, or balanced."[128] Even though there is relatively more freedom for LE writers to express themselves, their submissions are reviewed by editors who choose whether or not to print the letter and also can make changes if needed. Susana M. Sotillo and Dana Starace-Nastasi suggest that "even though a certain degree of editorial pruning is done to ensure that published letters are not defamatory or grossly offensive, the LEs do provide an insight into the socio-cultural dimensions of a community as experienced by reader-writers."[129] LE can be beneficial to better understanding a community, however, LE do not represent the entire community's beliefs or ideologies.

The Ranger includes a small information box printed in the opinion section of each publication explaining the rules and standards by which they publish submitted LE. It is not

[127] Gabrina Pounds, "Democratic participation and Letters to the Editor in Britain and Italy," *Discourse & Society* 17:1 (2006): 32.
[128] Joshua Greenberg, "Opinion Discourse and Canadian Newspapers: The Case of the Chinese 'Boat People'," *Canadian Journal Of Communication* 25:4 (2000): 521.
[129] Susana M. Sotillo and Dana Starace-Nastasi, "Political discourse of a working-class town," *Discourse & Society* 10:3 (1999): 413.

known, however, how LE are chosen or if all letters are published in *The Ranger* that meet these qualifications:



Letters to the editor

The Ranger welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general reader interest.

- We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters according to newspaper standards.
- Letters of 300 words or shorter are recommended.
- We prefer not to publish letters singling out commercial businesses for either criticism or praise.
- Letters must be signed, and the writer's name will appear in print.
- Send letters to:

Editor
The Ranger
P.O. Box 993
Riverton, WY 82501
or fremontnews@wyoming.com

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As this shows, *The Ranger* and its editors can edit and approve LE before publication, including rejecting LE that they deem not in line with the newspaper standards.

As I previously described, LE are edited and approved by editors, meaning they must go through a vetting process before being approved for publication. This places LE in between the public and private spaces since members of the public write LE and they still must be reviewed by editors and are subject to changes.[131] According to Stuart Hall, we should not read LE as representations of an entire community. He writes, "they are in no

[130] From *The Ranger*, January 15, 2014, 4.
[131] Hall, et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, 120-121.

sense an accurate representation of 'public opinion', and that is because they are not an unstructured exchange but a *highly structured* one [emphasis in the original]."[132] Even though they are not a representation of public opinion, Hall explains that they can shape it since "their principal function is to help the press organize and orchestrate the debate about public questions."[133] This means that LE, in addition to "hard" news which I analyzed in chapter 2, play an important role in the way in which media interacts with and shapes public opinion. Applying CDA to the LE from *The Ranger* can show how these LE were constructed and the underlying messages and ideologies that can influence public opinion.

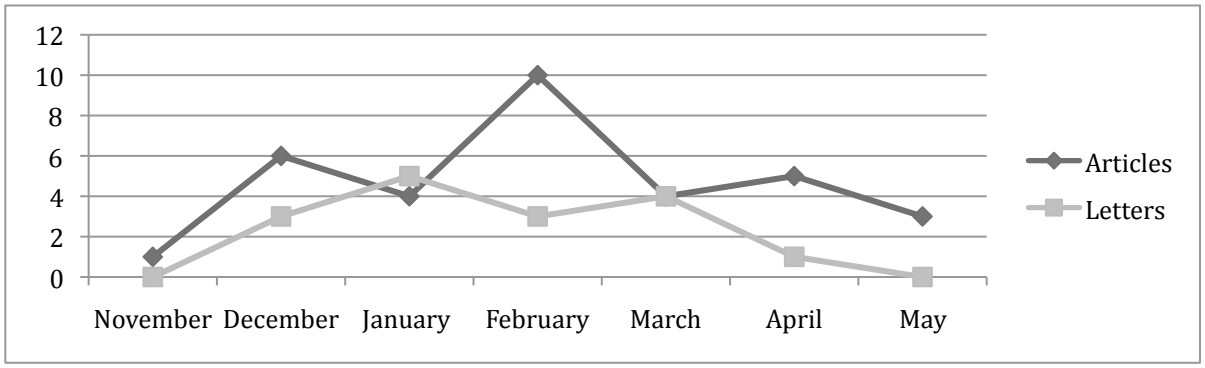
Methodology

Similar to chapter 2, I will use CDA as my approach to analyzing the LE from December 2013 through January 2014. I will first apply some of the same methods I used in the previous chapter. Because all of the methods do not apply to these types of discourse (LE), I have chosen some others to apply to the LE. For this analysis, I will still examine generalizations and specifications and modal verbs but also figurative language and overarching themes found in the letters. This analysis will provide a holistic understanding of the LE that comment on the EPA's decision. Since the LE are relatively short, I will present my analysis along with my application of CDA and provide quotes and excerpts of the LE.

Applying CDA

[132] Ibid., 121.
[133] Ibid., 121.

For this chapter I will be examining eight of the sixteen LE published in *The Ranger* that commented on the EPA's decision that were published from December 2013 to May 2014. This LE sampling overlaps with the articles I examined in the second chapter of this thesis.



Six of the LE were written by individuals living in Riverton or other local communities such as Pavillion. The two remaining LE were written by Governor Mead, who resides in Cheyenne, Wyoming's capital. Two of the LE were published and then republished some time later. No reason was printed for the republishing. I have treated the republications as separate from the originals.

LE Sampling[134]

#	Published	Title	Author
1	15 Dec 2013	Take EPS's ruling on reservation to court immediately and 'fight it out'	Donald K. Breight
2*	22 Dec 2013	EPA ruling on reservation 'is unlawful' and 'cannot be honored by the state'	Governor Matthew Mead
3	29 Dec 2013	Tribes' push on air quality has nothing to do with air quality	Pam Noriega
4	7 Jan 2014	EPA ruling a 'power grab,' pure and simple	Bill Bzedalyk
5*	8 Jan 2014	EPA action on rez 'is unlawful'	Governor Matthew Mead
6*	15 Jan 2014	EPA ruling throws legal landowners 'under the bus'	Janet Conover
7	17 Jan 2014	EPA ruling changes nothing for time being in Riverton	Mayor Ronald Warpness

[134] Asterisks represent LE that were published and then republished.

8*	26 Jan 2014	Legal landowners in Kinnear and Pavillion areas 'thrown under the bus' by EPA ruling	Janet Conover

These articles represent a sampling of the overall LE that were published in *The Ranger* during the moral panic in Riverton. Only LE were considered for this analysis. Other opinion pieces such as those written by newspaper editors were excluded from this collection. Some of the data will be presented in tables as a collection, while others will be presented through direct quotes from the LE followed by my analysis. I will unpack the method that I am applying and present the data I collected from the LE sampling and then analyze my findings.

The first method that I applied to the LE was looking for generalizations of social actors.[135] Generalizations are words used by writers to describe something, however, the word that is chosen only loosely represents the actual subject. As the name indicates, the words are generic and take away detail and agency from the actor it is describing. Often this can distance social actors and background them in the overall structure of the LE. Similar to how I applied this to the news articles, I chose generalized keyword variations for each of the social actor groups. In the case of these LE, I was interested in how the writers viewed and described the people and groups they were referencing in their letters.

Generalizations

KW	Tribe	City	Agency	State
1	3	0	0	0
2	1	0	1	2
3	3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0
5	1	0	1	2
6	0	0	0	0
7	3	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0

[135] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis,* 80-81.

Total	**11**	**0**	**2**	**4**

The table above shows the data collected from examining specific keywords in the LE. Keywords that referred to place names and physical locations such as the actual state of Wyoming were excluded, while their use as placeholders for the respective governments were included. Variations of the keywords were selected to see how many times each were used in the letter. For example, variations such as "tribe", "tribes", and "tribes'" were searched for in the LE. Of the four keyword variations, "tribe" was used the most at eleven times followed by "state" which was used four times. Although "city" as a term used to reference the city government was not found in any if the LE, this is still important to include in this table because it shows how the writers did not generalize the city government. It also still adds to our understanding and comparison of how each of these social actor groups were represented. The table shows how the tribes were referred to in more general terms than any other social actor group. It also shows that the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe were frequently lumped together and anonymized. By doing this, the tribes have their agency eliminated by the writer.

I also looked for specifications in the LE.[136] These are words used to described social actor groups that are accurate and very detailed. Unlike generalizations, specifications leave little room for ambiguity and uncertainty. Specifications can highlight certain groups and frame them in specific ways, such as that they are important enough to reference by their more formal name than by a generalization. This can offer the subject authority and agency since the formalness of the description implies certain background information about the subject referenced.

[136] Ibid., 80-81.

Specifications

KW	NAT	EST	Riverton	EPA	Wyoming
1	0	0	0	4	0
2	2	2	0	7	1
3	0	0	0	1	0
4	0	0	0	2	1
5	2	2	0	7	1
6	0	0	0	3	0
7	0	0	0	4	0
8	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**4**	**4**	**0**	**28**	**3**

The table above shows the results of searching for specific keywords in the LE. For this analysis, the opposite specific keyword to the generalization keyword was used. For example, specific keywords "Northern Arapaho" and "Eastern Shoshone" were used in relation to their generalized keyword "tribe". Similar to my examination above, variations of the keywords were included, however, "Riverton" and "Wyoming" used as place names and locations were excluded, while their placement as placeholders for the respective governments were included in my searches. Although "Riverton" as a reference to the city government was not found in any if the LE, this is still important to include in this table because it shows that the writers did not specifically reference the city government. It also still adds to our understanding and comparison of how each of these social actor groups were represented. The keyword used by an overwhelming amount was "EPA" at twenty-eight times. The writers' emphasis on referencing the EPA so much more than the other specific social actor groups is intriguing since most of the LE do not address the agency, but rather the tribes. This shows, however, that the writers saw the EPA as something descriptive and necessary for their overall argument but not the focus of critiques. The EPA acts as a secondary subject that, like in the articles, is represented only by its formal name and is hardly engaged.

Modal verbs also play an important role in my analysis of the LE. These verbs are used with other verbs to convey things such as ability, obligation, and possibility. By using CDA, they can "tell us something about the author's identity and crucially, therefore, how much power they have over others and over knowledge."[137] Modals can include verbs such as "would", "could", "can", "may", "might", "must", and "will". For this analysis, I recorded all of the modal verbs in the LE and then sorted them into categories based on Douglas Biber's categorization of modal verbs.[138] For my analysis, Biber's categories work well to sort and identify the types modal verbs used across the different LE.

Modal Verbs by Classification

Type	Volition/Prediction	Permission/Possibility/Ability	Necessity/Obligation	Total
	Will – 12 Would – 5 Shall – 0	Can – 2 Could – 1 May – 1 Might – 2	Must – 0 Should – 2	
Total	17	6	2	25

This table reflects the number and categorization of modal verbs used in the LE. The highest number of modal verbs were from the volition/prediction category. This category represents modal verbs with the strongest logical probability that something is going to happen.[139] Six modal verbs were from the permission/possibility/ability category, and only two modal verbs were from necessity/obligation. This table demonstrates how most of the LE focused on willingness and strong predictions. This is relevant because it shows how many of the writers focused on using language that expressed strong predictions in the form of the modal verb "will" and to a lesser degree "would", which indicates that what

[137] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 190.
[138] Biber, et al., *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, 485.
[139] "Modals," The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, accessed April 19th, 2016.

they were discussing was highly probable. The overall feeling from these LE is that something is going to happen, and thus it requires immediate attention.

In my examination of the LE, I also found many uses of figurative language, specifically idiomatic phrases. According to John Ayto in the *Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms*, idioms and idiomatic phrases are, simply put, "a phrase that behaves like a word."[140] This means that all of the words of the phrase are understood together as something specific. A reader cannot necessarily understand or figure out an idiomatic phrase just by defining or understanding each of the words separately or by reading the phrase in a literal sense. Idiomatic phrases represent a particular message as a whole that is unrelated to whatever is being referenced.

For my analysis, metaphors and idioms can offer valuable insight into how the writers of these LE viewed their audience. Writers are likely to use idiomatic phrases when they believe that their readers will be more than likely to understand their choice of phrase. Because the goal of writing an LE is to express and articulate, sometimes argue for or against, an opinion that will be widely read by the readership, idioms suggest that the writer and readers are from the same speaking community and so share in background assumptions and understandings. It would not make much sense for a writer to use language that would not be understood by his or her reader. Idioms, along with other figures of speech, make up a part of a language community. As Sam Glucksberg notes in *Understanding Figurative Language*, "every community, from the country as a whole to

[140] John Ayto, Ox*ford Dictionary of English Idioms*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), vii.

individual families, shares a unique world of expressions."[141] While the idioms used in the LE are not necessarily localized but understood on a much larger scale, they do reflect how the writers understand and view their community and audience. Below is a list of the idiomatic phrases found in the LE. At least one idiomatic phrase was found in seven of the eight LE in the sampling.

1. "Take this to court immediately and fight it out." (Breight, 12/15)

2. "As for making this apply to bigger things like taxes and the police, or water supply, that is 'putting the cart before the horse,' as my father used to day [sic]." (Breight, 12/15)

3. "The EPA ruling letting the tribes monitor air quality has nothing to do with air quality, and everything to do with getting their foot in the door." (Noriega, 12/29)

4. "The tribes have already tipped their hand by saying our police forces could be combined and taxes for businesses are so much better." (Noriega, 12/29)

5. "Air quality, my foot." (Bzedalyk, 1/7)

6. "The legal and lawful land owners in Pavillion, Kinnear and Mortion were just thrown under the law-enforcement jurisdictional bus." (Conover, 1/15, 1/26)

7. I would encourage all of our citizens to keep a cool head and work and work for the successful resolution of this new bump in the road. (Warpness, 1/17)

Some metaphors, however, are not necessarily idiomatic phrases. The sentences below from the LE use metaphors, but they are not idiomatic. For my understanding of how the writers viewed their audience, I will treat them in the same way as idioms. It is unlikely that a writer would use such a metaphor unless he or she was confident that his or her readers would understand them.

8. It is this unknown quantity, mixed to a large degree with personal racism and a past interaction among Indians as well as non-Indians that is causing the pot to simmer. (Warpness, 1/17)

[141] Sam Glucksberg, *Understanding Figurative Language*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 87-88.

9. I wrote that it would take away the voice of citizens in Riverton, Pavillion and Kinnear. (Mead, 12/22)

At least one idiom or metaphor was used in each of the LE in the sampling. This is significant since their frequent use indicates that the writers of these LE saw themselves as part of a community of insiders that understand those figures of speech. Most importantly, they believed their audience would see how those figures of speech reflected a shared feeling about the EPA's decision. The writer and reader are both in the same boat. This high number of figures of speech reflects a feeling of a common community, and frames the LE as insiders talking amongst one another about something that affects them all in a similar way. This also shows how the writers are reinforcing this conceptualized community to which they belong. The idioms and metaphors act as reminders and markers that they all understand one another. For each idiom and metaphor, the writers must have felt comfortable and confident enough that their readers were going to understand what they were stating in their LE. It is important to note that my analysis is not necessarily commenting on who understands or does not understand the idiom or metaphor. I am only concerned with why the writers felt comfortable enough to use them, and what that might indicate. I think it is fair to say that the writers did not use idioms and metaphors as a way to code their language from outsiders, since many of the figures of speech are well understood. Instead they felt comfortable enough that the assumed audience would share their opinions and be a member of their community.

In many of the LE there is a specific positioning of the social actors with regards to the EPA's decision. This can be further explored through the lexical choices that are made by the writers in their LE. According to Machin and Mayr, "ideological squaring" is the

"opposing of classes of concepts . . . built up around participants."[142] Writers do not necessarily have to tell their readers outright who is bad or good but "rather that this is implied through structuring of concepts."[143] For my examination of the LE, I am most concerned with how the writers conceive of their own communities and that which is threatening them. Several of the LE frame the EPA's decision in general terms of hostility.

1. This ignorant EPA decision is a power grab, pure and simple. (Bzedalyk, 1/7)
2. Take this to court immediately and fight it out. (Breight, 12/15)
3. The legal and lawful land owners in Pavillion, Kinnear and Mortion were just thrown under the law-enforcement jurisdictional bus. (Conover, 1/15, 1/26)

Sentences 1 and 2 above show the kind of lexical choices made by the writers that reflect harm and danger. A "power grab" and a "fight" as well as the idiom "thrown under the bus" insinuate some kind of attack, harm, or negative change. Other LE describe these hostilities in more defined and specific terms. The excerpt below shows how an unspecified group puts women in this community in danger.

4. I respectfully request an increased number of patrols and wellness checks in the west Pavillion area, due to a concern of in [sic] increase of vandalism and burglary after the EPA decision (expanding the borders of the Wind River Indian Reservation).[144]

   While the jurisdictional issues from the EPA decision, backed by DOI and DOJ, will be in court for three to five years, there is a cohort that will see the jurisdictional ambiguity as an invitation to take what they long perceived as their own.

   Older, single women inhabit a surprising number of the properties in west Pavillion. Those with whom I spoke have taken their firearms out of the closet and placed ammunition nearby.

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[142] Machin and Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 40.
[143] Ibid., 40.
[144] This appeared differently in its republication: "I respectfully request an increased number of patrols and wellness checks in the west Pavillion area, due to a concern of in increase of vandalism and burglary after the EPA decision declaring west Pavillion to be part of the Wind River Indian Reservation."

> A physical presence of the sheriff 's personnel in the areas bordering the reservation would help tone down the citizens' concern.
>
> As that law enforcement jurisdiction within the reservation areas is by race, are we supposed to determine the heritage of the person who is invading our homes in order to determine which law enforcement agency to call? Seriously? (Conover, 1/15)

The writer uses specific descriptive language to illustrate events or items of hostility, harm, and danger:

Patrols and wellness checks
Vandalism and burglary
Jurisdictional ambiguity
A cohort
Firearms
Ammunition
Sheriff's personnel
Invading our homes
Law enforcement jurisdiction
Law enforcement agency

The lexical choices above present a very specific framing of the EPA's decision and its effects. The words used in their letter carry with them specific meanings and contexts of their own. Based on the list above, we can see how law and order as well as the community are perceived to be under threat by a group. According to this logic, people and law enforcement must be ready to respond and protect the community.

The LE also squares the participants and areas in the following way:

Positive	**Negative**
Groups Older, single women Sheriff's personnel Law enforcement We Places Our homes Properties in west Pavillion	Groups Cohort The person invading They Places Areas bordering the reservation Borders of the Wind River Indian Reservation

West Pavillion area	

As the table shows, groups and places that are positioned as positive (or vulnerable) belong to the community which the writer is coming from, which is west Pavillion. Law enforcement is seen as the protectorate against that which is deemed negative. The group that is threatening is only referred to as a "cohort," yet the locations that are described as being negative all reference the reservation. A thorough contextual reading to further understand this cohort uncovers several indications of who is seen as making up this group. Phrases such as "to take what they long perceived as their own" refer to the tribes gaining more recognition under the EPA's new reading of the external boundaries of the Wind River Reservation, and "are we supposed to determine the heritage of the person" is a reference to jurisdictional procedures as they relate to citizenship in Indian Country. In addition to the geographic locations mentioning the reservation in the excerpt, these phrases indicate that the "cohort" are the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho living on the reservation. The writer's community and the tribes are further squared by writer's use of pronouns such as "they" and "we" which clearly sets up distinction between "us" and "them":

Ideological squaring can be found in several other LE. The excerpts from several LE below describe even further the demarcation of an "us" versus "them".

5. The EPA ruling letting the tribes monitor air quality has nothing to do with air quality, and everything to do with getting their foot in the door.
   I can just hear it now. "We have control of the air, so we have control of the land." (Noriega, 12/29)

The tribes are clearly referenced in the first sentence, indicating that the imagined quote is by an imagined tribal speaker. The dialogue presents this imagined person as wanting to

take the land away from the community. The use of "we" in this case inverts the "us" versus "them" squaring as imagined by the writer but still shows how they are squaring their community against the tribes.

Anxiety about one's own community, as seen in the previous excerpts, was common in the LE. The quote shows Mayor Warpness's concern about the negative effects of the EPA's decision on the City of Riverton. His use of the pronoun "we" indicates his belief that his audience will come from the communities in which he is a part of:

6. We have a beautiful county and community that I am worried is going to be set back years economically, as well as socially, by this Environmental Protection Agency action. (Warpness, 1/17)

The effects are simply described as economic and social setbacks, leaving the reader to imagine what they could be. Nonetheless, the "beautiful county and community" is destined for misfortune if the EPA's decision is upheld. All of the writers of the LE present a community in which they all belong and which they share and want to protect. Their community is positioned opposite of the threat, which is the consequential changes resulting from the EPA's decision embodied by the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho on the Wind River Reservation.

Beyond squaring the tribes and positioning them as a threat, all of the LE except for two (which were written by Mead) offer insight into how the tribes have been constructed within the imaginary of these communities. By communities, I am talking about the writers and their audiences from my analysis above – the "we" and "our", so to speak. It is clear that these communities are geographically off the reservation and places with few non-Natives. The writers have constructed the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho according to their own views of seeing the tribes, which rests on racism and stereotyping.

Several themes have arisen while examining how the LE frame the tribes. The first is that they are dishonest and devious. Several of the writers appear to believe that the tribes have an ulterior motive to gaining TAS status. In the four excerpts below, taken from three of the LE, we can see how the tribes are described in terms that frame them as being deceitful and trying to use the EPA and its decision to further their own agenda:

1. I can just hear it now. "We have control of the air, so we have control of the land." The tribes already have tipped their hand by saying our police forces could be combined and taxes for businesses are so much better. (Noriega, 12/29)

2. I do not believe the Washington lawyer called the "spokesman" for the Wind River reservation tribes, and nobody else should believe him either. Air quality, my foot. (Bzedalyk, 1/7)

3. People ask me "what does this really mean to the non-Indians in Riverton?" I have to respond "I don't know." People ask me "what is the intent of the tribes?" I have to respond "I don't know." (Warpness, 1/17)

4. This ruling purportedly applies only to "air quality," however, the letter I received from the tribes the day after the ruling was made public talked about taxing and jurisdictional issues, and so the unintended consequences of this ruling for Fremont County and the tribes are unknown at this time. (Warpness, 1/17)

Sentences 1 and 4 offer alternative suggestions for the tribes' applying for TAS status. Sentence 1 suggests that it is to eventually control the land, while sentence 4 suggests that it may be about taxation and jurisdiction. Sentences 2 and 3 frame the tribes' motives as something other than what they would receive under the TAS status. By presenting the tribes' actions in this way, the writers are suggesting that the tribes' motives are suspect and dishonest. These excerpts show how some of the LE writers have presented the tribes as corrupt and untrustworthy.

The tribes are not only cast as conniving. In at least one of the LE, they are also described in terms that frame them as violent and dangerous. Although the LE does not outright name or even use the word "tribe" in it, it is clearly talking about the Eastern

Shoshone and Northern Arapaho. This letter was published and then republished in *The Ranger* a few weeks after its initial publication. I have shown that in a previous section in which I dissected the writer's use of the word "cohort" and how a contextual reading of the whole LE demonstrates that it is about people living on the Wind River Reservation. Below are two excerpts from that LE that demonstrate how the tribes are framed as violent and dangerous:

1. I respectfully request an increased number of patrols and wellness checks in the west Pavillion area, due to a concern of in increase of vandalism and burglary after the EPA decision (expanding the borders of the Wind River Indian Reservation).
   While the jurisdictional issues from the EPA decision, backed by DOI and DOJ, will be in court for three to five years, there is a cohort that will see the jurisdictional ambiguity as an invitation to take what they long perceived as their own. (Conover, 1/15)

2. As that law enforcement jurisdiction within the reservation areas is by race, are we supposed to determine the heritage of the person who is invading our homes in order to determine which law enforcement agency to call? Seriously? (Conover, 1/15)

Sentences 1 and 2 both cast the vandals and criminals as American Indians living on the reservation who will go to their communities to bring harm. The threat is no longer about taking land or deceitfulness as mentioned in one of the excerpts examined above, but it is instead about physical harm against people and property. In this LE, the tribes are viewed as dangerous criminals who will cause physical harm.

One of the final ways in which the tribes were framed in this series of LE was that along with being homogenized as one, they were depicted as uncivilized and unable to govern. One of the LE demonstrated this by questioning the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho's way of governing in the past. The excerpts below show how the writer questioned the tribes' governing ability. It is important to note that the Eastern Shoshone

and Northern Arapaho have separate tribal governments, as they are independent tribes and nations. Until late 2014, the tribes utilized a joint tribal business council to mediate their shared interests on the Wind River Reservation.[145] In just a few sentences, the writer of this particular LE feels they have accurately described the tribes' governing history.

1. For this to be based on "air quality" is nonsense. Where is the air quality problem, and what qualifications do the tribes have to monitor environmental quality?
   I'm sorry, but look at their record on solid waste. With the county stepping back, solid waste on the reservation is now a joke. The history of the tribes on governing much of anything is very suspect. (Breight, 12/15)

2. If the tribes had any success in government, I might feel different. But no. (Breight, 12/15)

The two excerpts above show how the writer of this LE believes that the tribes do not know how to govern themselves properly. The writer offers no credentials or background information as to why this is the case or how they would know what good government looks like. Regardless, however, the tribes are depicted as unable to govern themselves properly and therefore uncivilized as compared to the writers' standards, which we can assume is entrenched in a Western ideal of civilization.

Themes of stereotyping American Indians as manipulative, violent, and uncivilized have been used and are perpetuated by non-Natives in cultural productions such as literature, film, and art, but also relied on at times to inform government policy and action. While these beliefs are not new, they are neither acceptable nor accurate by any standards. They are colonial beliefs and attitudes recycled and reused by certain people, only to bring unnecessary harm to others. Robert A. Williams, Jr. summarizes this concept of the "savage"

[145] Melodie Edwards, "Northern Arapaho Dissolve Joint Business Council," *Wyoming Public Radio*, September 10, 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, http://wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/northern-arapaho-dissolve-joint-business-council.

by the West (non-Natives) the best in *Savage Anxieties* before showing how the West used it to construct itself. He writes:

> The savage is a distant, alien, uncivilized being, unaware of either the benefits or burdens of modernity. Lacking in sophisticated institutions of government and religion, ignorant of property and laws, without complex social bonds or familial ties, living in a state of untamed nature, fierce and ennobled at the same time, the savage has always represented an anxious, negating presence in the world, standing perpetually opposed to Western civilization. [146]

William's summation underlines how the writers of the LE framed American Indians as savage and an "other", far removed from they themselves. For Williams this othering of indigenous peoples as "savage" enabled the West to construct itself; "alien and exotic, threatening and subversive, the savage has long been imagined as a familiar, diametrically opposed figure throughout the history of the West, helping to define by counterexample and antithesis a distinctive form of Western civilization."[147] By framing the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho as the "other" and savage, a group far removed from the writers' own communities, they in essence have reinforced their own identities and communities. They have attempted to reinforce their own power and security against anything that might be different and question their own core beliefs.

Collective Analysis

My application of CDA to the LE in *The Ranger* uncovered two important conclusions. The first is that a distinct audience and community was referenced and reinforced by the LE. This community represents non-reservation citizens that are predominantly non-Native. This is shown through the high number of idioms, which shows

[146] Robert A. Williams, *Savage Anxieties*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2012), 1.
[147] Ibid., 9.

the writers felt comfortable and casual in expressing their opinions, since they saw their audience as already understanding much of what they were claiming. The writers' use of the pronouns "we" and "they" also showed how they conceptualized of an insider and outsider group. The ideological squaring of these non-Native communities against the tribes shows how the writers framed the social actors in their LE. For them, the EPA's decision was about protecting their communities against outsiders. This can be seen in my analysis of the LE.

My analysis also shows how the tribes are described and positioned as a physical threat towards the community and its law and order. They are portrayed as the ultimate danger. Little or no specific details about the tribes, even the tribes' names, are included in almost any of the LE. Many of the writers use generalizations to describe the tribes and rely on stereotypical and racist tropes of American Indians in their descriptions. The tribes are portrayed as manipulative, violent, and uncivilized, while the other "community" and the people in it are described as vulnerable and innocent. These portrayals reinforce the communal framework relied on by the writers and emphasizes the threat of the tribes against that community. These LE square this community against the tribes. No longer is the EPA decision about the State of Wyoming versus the EPA or even the tribes for that matter. The writers of the LE center their community against the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho – a relationship that remains contemptuous. In the months that followed the EPA's decision, the tribes were active in their response to this kind of rhetoric analyzed in this chapter.

Shoshone and Arapaho Response and Reaction

The Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe responded to the misinformation and racist rhetoric found in some of the letters examined above. In the beginning of February 2014, several months after the EPA's decision, the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe sent letters to the EPA's regional office asking for a partial stay of their decision. Both letters directly address the harmful rhetoric and discourse surrounding the EPA's decision. Darrell O'Neal Sr., chairman of the Northern Arapaho Business Council, wrote in a letter to EPA Administrators Gina McCarthy and Shawn McGrath:

> . . . unfounded predictions in the petition have created fear and distrust in the non-Indian community. For example, the Tribe and tribal members are accused of "setting criminals free" or "evicting" non-Indians from their homes. Although nonsense, these are having a real impact on our communities. Tribal members are encountering increased hostility toward them and their children, sometimes in public, sometimes on the schoolyard. For the safety and harmony of everyone, we want to minimize these effects.[148]

The Eastern Shoshone Business Council wrote:

> Since the EPA decision there has been a deluge of misinformation from multiple sources, which has resulted in unfortunate and extreme animus toward Tribal members in the local community . . . . Because primarily Tribal members are negatively affected by Wyoming's activities, the Eastern Shoshone Tribe respectfully requests that EPA issue a partial stay in enforcing its decision.[149]

Both letters describe the atmosphere following the EPA's decision as hostile for American Indians and that the misinformation surrounding the decision has led to gross inaccuracies and unnecessary concern. These excerpts show how some of the responses were more than just letters in a newspaper, and that they were affecting tribal communities negatively to the point that they had to include these statements in their letters to the EPA.

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[148] Northern Arapaho Business Council Chairman O'Neal, Sr. to EPA Administrators McCarthy and McGrath, February 6, 2014.
[149] Eastern Shoshone Business Council Chairman St. Clair, Jr. to EPA Administrator McGrath, February 12, 2014.

During that same month, the Eastern Shoshone Business Council published an open letter in *The Ranger* addressed to the community. The council stated that it wanted "to provide citizens of the Wind River Reservation, both tribal members and non-members, with accurate information about living, working, and doing business on an Indian reservation."[150] They expressed that their community had been "bombarded with too many outlandish statements by both Indians and non-Indians" and wanted to move forward and have discussions about the EPA's decision. They also included information on why they applied for TAS status under the Clean Air Act and that it would allow them to take part in local ands state discussions on air quality. The council also included a "Questions And Concerns Flowing from the EPA Decision" section, which addressed concerns about private property, criminal jurisdiction, and taxes.[151] Many of those concerns can be found in the articles and letters to the editor examined in this chapter and the previous one. The Eastern Shoshone Business Council's open letter shows that they were aware of the misinformation and rhetoric that was being used in several of the local communities and that they wanted to address it and have a discussion.

In March 2014, a meeting was held between leaders of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, the Northern Arapaho Tribe, and the cities of Riverton and Lander, to discuss and talk about the racial tensions between the communities. Over seventy people attended the event, which was sponsored by the Wind River Citizens Equality Commission. Fremont County representatives and local police chiefs also attended the meeting. Members of all of the communities spoke and discussed issues that they saw arising between and within

[150] Eastern Shoshone Business Council, "Open Letter To Community From The Shoshone Business Council," *The Ranger*, February 16, 2014, A-12.
[151] Ibid.

their communities. Jermaine Bell, who was one of founders of the commission, and was quoted in an article on *WyoFile* by Ron Feemster, said, "We are here to find more cooperation within Fremont County."[152]

Also in 2014, the Wind River Native Advocacy Center (WRNAC) was formed with the mission to "empower Native Americans in Wyoming for a stronger voice through community organizing, education, research, legal advocacy and leadership development."[153] The organization has held many events since its founding and hosts the Native American Health Equity Conference in Riverton.[154] The organization lays out six goals on their website, which include "racial equality and cultural understanding throughout Wyoming."[155]

In 2015, the WRNAC partnered with the Equality State Policy Center (ESPC), which is "a non-partisan 'think-and-do tank' that utilizes research, public education and advocacy to hold government government [sic] accountable and to substantially increase public participation in and influence over public-policy decision-making."[156] In a press release by the ESPC, Clarisse Harris, on behalf of WRNAC, said: "We joined the ESPC so that we could have a stronger voice to educate the State of Wyoming about our unique roles as being both Wyoming and sovereign tribal nation citizens as it affects our health, economy and

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[152] Ron Feemster, "Natives meet Riverton and Lander leaders in bid for understanding," *WyoFile*, March 25, 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.wyofile.com/blog/natives-meet-riverton-and-lander-leaders-bid-understanding/.
[153] "Wind River Native Advocacy Center," Wind River Native Advocacy Center, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.wrnativeadvocacy.org/.
[154] "Events," Wind River Native Advocacy Center, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.wrnativeadvocacy.org/events/.
[155] Wind River Native Advocacy Center, accessed April 19, 2016.
[156] "About Us," Equality State Policy Center, accessed April 19, 2016, http://equalitystate.org/about-us/.

schools."[157] In June 2014, six months after the EPA's decision, the ESPC released a report examining the EPA's decision and its potential effects on local communities. The report, "The Wind River Reservation Boundary Dispute – Some Facts," includes a list of questions with answers regarding the EPA decision. They include questions such as "What does living on the reservation mean for individual non-Indians?" and "What does it mean if my house is in Indian Country; will I still be able to sell it?"[158] In total it answers thirty-three questions from categories that include private property issues, tax issues, and law enforcement issues, to name just a few.[159] The report answers many of the concerns and hypothetical scenarios posed in the newspaper articles and letters that I examined.

In the months that followed the EPA's decision, citizens from the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and the Northern Arapaho Tribe addressed and reacted to the incredibly problematic rhetoric surrounding the EPA decision as shown by the articles and letters I examined. The tribes addressed the hostile atmosphere that was being created mainly through misinformation and hypothetical scenarios casting the tribes and their intentions as dangerous and threatening. These events and tribal organizations show how the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, as well as the ESPC, attempted to open a dialogue with the local communities about the EPA decision and address the contemptuous discourse surrounding it. It also shows, at least partly, how local non-tribal leaders and community

[157] Bri Jones, "Wind River Native Advocacy Group Joins Equality State Policy Center," Equality State Policy Center, May 6, 2015, accessed April 19, 2016, http://equalitystate.org/2015/05/06/wind-river-native-advocacy-group-joins-equality-state-policy-center/.
[158] "The Wind River Reservation Boundary Dispute – Some Facts," Equality State Policy Center, June 12, 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, http://equalitystate.org/assets/media/ESPC_FAQ_WRR_BoundaryDispute.pdf
[159] Ibid.

members attended some of those events and participated in the dialogue between the communities.

In this chapter, I showed how LE writers engaged a distinct audience and community in which they saw themselves apart of and who shared their fears and anxiety in their letters, and how the tribes were described and positioned as a physical threat towards the community and its law and order. I then placed the LE in a broader context of how non-Natives have and continue to stereotype and perpetuate certain tropes and myths about American Indians. I ended this chapter by describing how the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe as well as an organization called Equality State Policy Center, have commented on and responded to the reactions of the state and local governments and the public in Riverton and other communities to the EPA's decision.

CONCLUSION

This thesis set out to examine the complex relationship between power, language, and society. In particular, it focused on a moral panic in Riverton, WY and how the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe were described and represented in newspaper articles and letters to the editor in the town's *The Ranger*. My research focused on closely examining language in these types of documents to further understand how different social actor groups were framed and what kind of assumptions and ideologies were fueling those linguistic constructions.

Moral panics center on an imagined threat to a community, and what happened in Riverton was such. What sparked this panic was the EPA's decision to acknowledge a larger boundary of the Wind River Reservation than previously held by both state and local governments. The agency did this when they approved the tribes' application for "treatment as a state" (TAS) status under the Clean Air Act. The EPA's action dealt with air regulation and grant opportunities for the tribes, but all of this quickly became second to jurisdictional claims and communal protection against outsiders.

As my analysis in my second chapter shows, this dispute was framed between the State of Wyoming and the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe, even though it was the EPA who decided on the merits of the application. Not only were social actors positioned in very specific ways, they were also represented disproportionately. In the survey of newspaper articles that I examined, the tribes were more often than not generalized in a way that homogenized and anonymized their individuality. Even though a number of specific individual authorities connected to the tribes were quoted in the articles, they were represented far less than state authorities. My analysis showed how the

articles reflected that the writers felt far more comfortable presenting the dialogue by state actors than the tribes, and how the EPA was presented as an agency devoid of any humans. As a whole, this collection of articles showed how the events surrounding the EPA's decision were presented as a problem between the state and tribes and included strong possibilities that the effects of the EPA's decision would negatively affect those living in communities ruled on the reservation by the EPA, even though it is questionable as to the likelihood of those ramifications.

The letters to the editor that were examined in the final chapter of this thesis presented a similar view of the events surrounding the EPA's decision and a similar framing of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes. Like the articles, the tribes were most often generalized, and the tribes' names were rarely mentioned. They were different, however, in how much further some the writers went in their framing of the tribes. The problem was cast not as the EPA's fault or decision but presented the tribes as a threat to the communities. In some cases they were framed as mistrustful and sneaky, and as dangerous criminals. The letters to the editor showed how the writers viewed themselves and their communities as victims and very different from the tribes. Unlike the articles, the letters reflected an "us versus them" ideology. The writers' communities and lives were presented as being in danger because of this imagined threat of hostility and harm from people living on the reservation. The focus was no longer the EPA's decision but the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho.

What the articles and letters show is a systemic bias and racism against American Indians, specifically the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho. This is a problem that extends well beyond these communities in Wyoming and far beyond just American Indians

in the United States. It is important to note that this thesis is neither commenting on the merits of the EPA's decision nor the history of the reservation's boundaries, nor is it attempting to present a collective view of the entire communities involved in this dispute. My focus was on how non-Natives were representing this story in the local media and more specifically how the tribes were being presented in the overall narrative. CDA is a powerful approach with many tools that work to uncover underlying ideologies and structures found in language beyond what is on the surface level. It takes what is often normalized speech, such as in newspapers, which many see as unbiased and strictly observational, and breaks it down to show how this kind of language is a construction that can serve specific meanings and messages.

Overall my analysis shows how during a moral panic in Riverton, the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe were cast as generalized and homogenous, as well as subject to ever-persistent stereotypes and myths that have been used against American Indians for centuries. A focus on the EPA's decision and its merits quickly devolved into casting the tribes as threats against communities of non-Natives near the reservation. As with any moral panic, an imagined threat was created and perpetuated, as shown in the newspaper documents examined in this thesis. As I have shown, this kind of rhetoric was at the expense and harm of the tribes and their peoples, not those who were propagating this kind of discriminatory discourse.

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