DRUGS, RACE, AND COMMUNITY IDEOLOGY: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS OF

THE RESPONSES TO THE TULIA DRUG BUST

THESIS

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DEDICATION

To DC, who believes that I can literally do anything!

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enjoyable! They are truly amazing people and I am blessed to have gotten to work with and learn from them all.

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CHAPTER I

DRUGS, RACE, AND COMMUNITY IDEOLOGY

In the summer of 1999, ten percent or forty-one of the black residents of Tulia,

Texas, were arrested and charged with a number of felony drug dealing offenses

(Blakeslee, 2000). The only undercover officer on the case did not work with a partner,

collected no fingerprint evidence, video surveillance, or voice recordings on the case, and

no drug evidence was recovered from any of the accused. The first defendant went to

trial, was found guilty, and sentenced to 99 years. The twelve accused who denied the

charges and elected to have their day in court were found guilty and received heavy

sentences, all on the testimony of this lone officer. Looking critically at this event may

shed light on how this situation could occur in the twenty-first century. This thesis seeks

to answer the question, "What are the dominant ideologies of the local, regional, and

national communities concerning the Tulia drug bust?" Chapter 1 will provide

background on this drug bust incident and detail a rationale for the critical study of the

rhetoric that emerged about the incident, Chapter 2 describes the methods used to guide

the analysis, the analysis of the three communities is recorded in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, and

finally, Chapter 6 details relevant conclusions and implications resulting from the

analysis.

Tulia, Texas is a small farming community located forty miles north of Lubbock in the Texas panhandle. The town boasts 5,000 residents; of this number only 350 residents are African-American. On July 23, 1999, this small African-American community was forever changed as forty-one people were rounded up at dawn and arrested on felony drug charges stemming from a drug sting operation. Thirty-eight of the forty-one people arrested were black, essentially ten percent of the African-American population of Tulia (MSNBC.com, 2004). Additionally, the remaining three were all whites who were closely tied to the black community. The Panhandle Task Force in cooperation with the Swisher County Sheriff's Department funded the eighteen-month operation. The operation was executed and handled by one undercover officer, Tom Coleman, who was hired by the Swisher County Sheriff's Department. The drug sting allegedly netted over 100 controlled buys of illegal narcotics, mostly powder cocaine. Of these 100 buys, only one was larger than 3.5 grams or an "eight-ball" of cocaine worth about $200 (Blakeslee, 2000). The operation seemed to be a huge success; one local paper wrote, "Tulia Streets Cleared of Garbage" less than a week later in celebration (Mangold, 2003) and Tom Coleman was named "Lawman of the Year" by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The trials of the accused happened quickly with the first beginning in November 1999. Many of the charges were bumped from misdemeanors to felonies because the buys allegedly took place within a thousand feet of a school or park. Many of the accused were first-time offenders and elected to stand trial as they professed innocence. However, after the first defendant went to trial, was found guilty, and sentenced to 99 years, others elected to plead out of the process because they saw "assembly-line trials in

which guilty verdicts were a foregone conclusion" (Price, 2002). The twelve accused who denied the charges and elected to have their day in court were found guilty by mostly white juries and received heavy sentences, the most severe being 99 years.

The Tulia drug sting and subsequent trials seemed to be a huge success for the town, law enforcement, and Tom Coleman, except for some gaping holes. The first hint that something was not right was the revelation that while making the arrests, no money, drugs, or weapons were found at the homes of the accused drug dealers. In fact many of the accused lived in public housing and were unable to raise enough money to post bond to get out of jail (Blakeslee, 2000). These revelations seemed inconsistent with the idea that the accused were high traffic drug dealers.

Another unsettling revelation came to light during the trials: there was no evidence to corroborate the accusations and subsequent guilty verdicts. Undercover agent Tom Coleman did not wear a wiretap during the alleged transactions, no video surveillance was done, and there was no second agent to corroborate Coleman's allegations. The only notes that Coleman took on the drug deals were recorded by writing them on his leg. While Coleman was on the stand he could not remember exactly when he was sold the drugs or who exactly sold them to him; in addition, he named one suspect who moved away from Tulia many years earlier. One example of these inconsistencies happened in the case of Billy Wafer. Coleman alleged that he bought an "eight-ball" of cocaine from Wafer at 9:00 am on January 18, 1999. However, Wafer was at work during this alleged deal and had the time cards and the testimony of his boss to prove it (Blakeslee, 2000). In another case Coleman named Yul Bryant as the man who allegedly sold him an "eight-ball" of cocaine in May of 1999. Coleman described

Bryant as a tall man with bushy hair. In reality Bryant is 5-feet-6 inches tall and bald.

When district attorney investigators asked Coleman to pick Bryant out of some pictures,

Coleman could not do it. Bryant was cleared of the charge but had already spent seven

months in jail awaiting trial (Zewe, 2000). These revelations did nothing to hurt

Coleman's credibility in the other cases and, as was stated earlier, many suspects

received heavy sentences based solely on Coleman's testimony.

Coleman's own criminal history also did nothing to contribute to the illusion of

evenhandedness in the court cases against the accused drug dealers. It was later revealed

that Coleman left his last two law enforcement positions abruptly with no notice to his

employers, leaving his patrol car parked at his house and owing the county thousands of

dollars in delinquent bills. Co-workers of Coleman described him as "paranoid," "a nut,"

and a "compulsive liar" (Blakeslee, 2000). In addition, Coleman's former boss even

wrote a letter to the Texas state agency that licenses peace officers saying, "It is my

opinion that an officer should uphold the law. Mr. Coleman should not be in law

enforcement if he is going to do people the way he did this town" (Blakeslee, 2000).

These records are available to law enforcement agencies when hiring new officers;

however, Swisher County Sheriff Larry Stewart did not check Coleman's records before

hiring him. Coleman's own criminal history was not allowed in the court proceedings.

The juries had only a vague idea of what type of man was accusing the defendants.

The ACLU became involved with the drug bust controversy in early 2000 and

filed a suit that accused Sheriff Larry Stewart and District Attorney Terry McEachern of

compiling a list of county residents, most of them black, who were deemed undesirable to

the community. This suit alleged that the undercover operation was launched to target

those on the list (Zewe, 2000). The lawsuit was won in 2004 when the remaining twelve

accused were released from jail and all thirty-eight of the accused were jointly awarded a

five million dollar settlement (MSNBC.com, 2004).

Not only did the Tulia drug bust incident attract the media's attention, it also

attracted the attention of Texas Governor Rick Perry and the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Tulia incident and subsequent allegations of racial profiling led to the investigations

of the credibility of the main witness, Tom Coleman. A judge ruled that Tom Coleman

was not a credible witness in the spring of 2003 and recommended that the Texas Court

of Criminal Appeals overturn the 38 Tulia convictions (Cowan, 2003). The

investigations also led to the disbanding of the Panhandle Narcotics Task Force, the

entity that hired Coleman and funded the operation.

An examination of the reaction to the drug bust and subsequent events by the

national community, the Texas community, and the local residents of Tulia may reveal

the dominant ideology alive within these three communities. A critical look at this event

is important because the bust and subsequent trials drew a high level of attention; because

the event was symbolically framed as a race issue which points out that race is an area of

continuing relevance; and because a critical look at the event fulfills an important

responsibility held by rhetorical critics to be invested in their communities.

The drug bust event drew local, Texas, and national media attention. The small

town of Tulia, Texas, was now in the national spotlight. Beginning in July of 1999

multiple letters to the editor and editorials were written in response to the event and

subsequent trials in Tulia. Some of the larger national newspapers running editorials and

letters to the editor included *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Sun-Times*, and *The L.A. Times*.

The event set off a flurry of newspaper, television, and radio coverage between the years 1999 and 2005. A search of the Lexis-Nexis Academic database found over 150 news and opinion stories on or related to the Tulia incident in the last five years in major U.S. newspapers. The event has been featured on major news outlets including CBS, ABC, FOX, and NBC. The incident and subsequent events were spotlighted in such programs as CBS's "60 Minutes" and FOX's "O'Reilly Factor." The incident was even the subject of a BBC documentary called "Tulia Undercover" by Tom Mangold and was broadcast on *BBC-TV's Correspondent*.

The Tulia incident and subsequent media attention demonstrates that race issues are still key areas of debate and controversy in America. The fact that the incident was overwhelmingly symbolically framed as an issue of race in the media serves to demonstrate many do not see racism as an open and shut case. As described, the event Also the fact that the Tulia incident took over 5 years to be resolved demonstrates that more dialogue is needed on this important topic. Looking critically at the Tulia drug bust incident and trials through the local, regional, and national letters to the editor and editorials will contribute to this dialogue and may bring attention to the continuing issue of race in America.

Additionally, Nothestine, Blair, and Copeland (1994) argue that rhetorical critics have a responsibility to their communities, meaning that analysis of a particular set of artifacts will be advantageous to their communities and therefore should be analyzed for this purpose. Investigating the Tulia drug bust artifacts fulfills this responsibility. It is

advantageous for me, a critic and member of the Texas community, to bring this situation to light through analysis. In that it may help the citizens of Tulia as well as the Texas community make sense of these events by uncovering how each community symbolically reacted to event. Illuminating each communities' rhetoric may help to uncover their ideology concerning the event.

By looking critically at how the national, Texas, and local communities reacted to the drug bust and subsequent trials, the public may get a sense of each community's ideology concerning the situation. This illumination could help these communities become more aware of taken for granted worldviews and re-confirm the power of symbols in the construction of reality. Better understanding these worldviews may serve as an impetus for reflection in these communities. To achieve this goal and answer the research question, "What are the dominant ideologies of the local, regional, and national communities concerning the Tulia drug bust?" Chapter 2 will describe the proposed methods that will be used to guide the analysis, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 will analyze the three communities reactions to the incident and finally, Chapter 6 will detail relevant conclusions and implications resulting from the analysis.

CHAPTER II

LOGOLOGY AND CLUSTER ANALYSIS AS RHETORICAL METHODS FOR
ANALYSIS

The motivation out of which he [sic] writes is synonymous with the

structural way in which he puts events and values together when he

writes... (Burke, 1941, p. 18).

In *Philosophy of Literary Form* Kenneth Burke makes the argument that a

person's ideology can be uncovered by the thoughts and terms that he or she places on

paper. This thesis adheres to this theory and seeks to uncover the dominant ideology

within the local, Texas, and national communities as they responded to the Tulia drug

bust as communicated through letters to the editor and editorials. This chapter will detail

the methodology used to guide the analysis of the Tulia incident. A discussion of how the

artifacts were gathered, and a review of Kenneth Burke's theory of logology and cluster

analysis will help demonstrate that this method is well suited for an exploration of the

rhetoric surrounding the incident in Tulia.

Artifact Collection

This study examined a total of eighty-three letters to the editor and editorials from

national, Texas, and local newspapers dating from July 1999 through December 2002.

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This set of dates represents reaction starting from when the arrests took place through the announcement by the Attorney General of Texas that the state would begin an investigation of the incident. To find the national artifacts on the incident in Tulia a search was performed on the Lexis-Nexis Academic database using the search term "Tulia." The search was narrowed to "General News" and "Major Papers." The search rendered seventeen artifacts published in major U.S. newspapers. Two of the articles were duplicates due to syndication. The first was by Huffington (2000) entitled, "Is this a drug war or witch hunt?" published in the *San Diego Tribune* and the *L.A Times*, the second was by Herbert (2002) entitled, "Cops stole suspects dignity" published in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and the *New York Times*. Due to this duplication, the sample size was reduced to fifteen artifacts.

The Texas artifacts were also found by a Lexis-Nexis Academic database search using the search term "Tulia." This search was narrowed to "Texas News Sources" and rendered fourteen artifacts published in Texas newspapers. The database only represented four major newspapers in Texas, *The Houston Chronicle, The Austin American-Statesman, The Corpus Christi Caller-Times,* and *The San Antonio Express-News.* Because using only these papers would not fully represent the Texas population, a search was done for all Texas newspapers with a circulation of 50,000 or more. The search yielded five additional newspapers: *The Amarillo Globe-News, The Dallas Morning News, The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, The El Paso Times,* and *The Lubbock Avalanche-Journal.* These five newspapers rendered twenty-eight artifacts to bring the total number of Texas artifacts to forty-two.

The local artifacts were found by searching archives of the weekly Tulia newspaper, *The Tulia Herald*. The author searched the "Opinion Please…" and "Plains Talk" sections of all the newspapers published between July 1999 and December 2002. In this search the author looked for any letter to the editor or editorial written in response to the drug bust situation. This search rendered twenty-six total artifacts.

Because the ideas and symbols used come from the people within the community that the newspaper represents, letters to the editor and editorials published in newspapers are appropriate to use when seeking to uncover the ideology of a community. Many studies have used letters to the editor and editorials published in newspapers to reveal an ideology (Jarrard, 1980; Richardson & Franklin, 2003, Richardson & Franklin, 2004). Jarrard (1980) examined editorials from a range of southern daily newspapers between 1970 and 1979 to uncover patterns of resistance to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment in the American south. Richardson and Franklin (2003) examined letters to the editor in regional and local British newspapers to understand the way issues of race, racism, and ethnic minorities were discussed during a recent UK general election.

Despite the usefulness of these types of artifacts, there are some possible issues to take into consideration. For example, even though people within the community write letters to the editor and editorials voicing their opinions, the letters are selected and possibly edited by editors at the newspaper. Also, it is possible that only certain members of a community write letters to the editor. This could mean only certain types of people at certain times engage in this form of communication within the community. Moreover, this form of community involvement can realistically only be utilized by people who have the skills needed to read and write. Because of this reality letters to the editor and

editorials do not represent the full community voice. They do, however, offer some insight into the ideology of the community and are the most appropriate sources for this study. Kenneth Burke's theory of logology will serve as a suitable lens through which to view these artifacts.

Kenneth Burke and Logology

The majority of Kenneth Burke's writings center on understanding the nature and function of language and symbol systems; one of these endeavors uncovers motivational systems and ideologies through the examination of words or symbols. Burke dubbed his effort to discover how language works *logology* (Burke, 1970). Some important concepts derived from Burke's logological perspective are his notion of hierarchy, perfection, mystery, and the pollution-purification-redemption cycle.

The concept of a hierarchy is built on the innately human motivation to build society around ambition and order (Burke, 1950). Hierarchies can be seen as a ladder or ranking around any factor including race, educational background, or possession of different properties. Burke feels it is inevitable that hierarchies will exist based on our innate human motivations to order. He also believes, however, that hierarchies are not pre-ordered but emerge through discourse. This hierarchical sense of order inevitably leads to certain motivations of individuals in the hierarchy seeking to attain higher levels at the same time fearing slipping to a lower level or being overcome by a lower rank. Burke (1950) says, "each rank is overlord to its' underlings and underling to its overlords" (p. 138). Hierarchies can be revealed through language and they help to uncover a person or group's ideology. This striving towards an idealized place on the hierarchy leads to Burke's concept of perfection.

Perfection can be seen as the level that someone aspires to reach on the hierarchy. This means that what constitutes perfection can be different for everyone (Burke, 1950). However, Burke (1950) feels that everything is striving towards "perfection (that is finishedness) of which that kind is capable" (p. 14). All on the hierarchy can be said to have the same motive as they are all trying to bring to an end or perfect themselves. Some may see the ultimate perfection as a middle or lower rank while others see the very top as perfection. No matter what is seen as perfection, all individuals on all hierarchies are motivated toward perfection and are in various stages of progress towards it. While the motive of perfection can be seen as an idea that unites individuals, the concept of mystery serves to divide individuals within hierarchies.

Mystery can be seen as the differences that create ambiguity or the unknown among members of hierarchies (Burke, 1950). Mystery serves to divide members and is created by terministic screens or the idea that the way a person sees reality is reflected, selected, and deflected by the terms or symbols they use to communicate (Burke, 1966). Each individual has different terministic screens and this leads to a type of blindness because one person's attention could be directed in different ways than others who do not have the same terministic screen. The result of this type of blindness is the concept of mystery or the unknown. Therefore, mystery has two functions in the hierarchy: 1) maintenance and preservation of the hierarchy through obedience and acceptance of authority, and 2) allowing members to connect and communicate with members unlike themselves by allowing them to transcend apparent differences (Burke, 1950). These three concepts, hierarchy, perfection, and mystery, can be uncovered by attending to the

symbols or terms used when communicating. Another important logological concept that

can also be uncovered by analyzing terms is the pollution-purification-redemption cycle.

In the pollution stage, guilt, which is seen as anxiety or some unresolved social

tension, is expressed. The identification of pollution or guilt is followed by purification

or the relief of the guilt. The purification stage is characterized by the rhetorical

identification of the source of the pollution. Purification or the relief from guilt is

achieved by either victimage or mortification. Victimage can be seen as symbolically or

rhetorically scapegoating or attributing the pollution to a victim in an effort to make the

real source of the pollution seem innocent (Burke, 1966). This is contrasted with

mortification where the guilty admits and accepts the blame for the pollution. The last

stage, redemption, is a rebirth and is characterized by communication about a move

forward towards a better life or a new perspective.

Burke's theory of logology demonstrates how language works, and reveals that

the analysis of symbols or words can uncover motivational systems and ideologies

(Burke, 1966). Three important concepts that help shape this theory are hierarchies,

perfection, and mystery. Burke's theories of rhetoric, including logology, have spurred

many analytic methods for critics to use when studying rhetoric. One of the most

prominent and relevant of these to this study is the cluster analysis.

Cluster Analysis

One important method derived from Burke's theory of logology is cluster

analysis. Cluster analysis enables the critic to uncover a group's worldview through the

investigation of the terms the group uses to talk about an event. Subsequently, cluster

analysis is the most appropriate method to use when analyzing the local, Texas, and

national letters to the editor and editorials. Burke (1941/1973) found that by examining "associated clusters" of terms, a critic could find "what goes with what in these clusters" (p. 20). He suggests that charting clusters in artifacts is like, "surveying the hills and valleys of the mind" of the rhetor (Burke, 1937, p. 232-233). The resulting insights into the rhetor's mind may not be conscious to the rhetor, thus helping to make the insights a true reflection of the rhetor's ideology. A critic begins a cluster analysis by charting key terms that appear with high frequency and intensity in the artifacts. A term that occurs with high frequency is a term that is seen multiple times in the discourse. A term with high intensity is an extreme or significantly placed term in the artifact.

Once the key terms have been identified the critic charts, or creates a visual map of, the terms that cluster around these key terms. This charting will enable the critic to see potential cause and effect relationships between terms and the context in which the terms are commonly used. By charting the key terms and the terms that cluster around them, the critic can get a sense of what the rhetor sees as good or ideal and what is seen as bad or evil.

Cluster analysis allows the critic to better understand and uncover a person's ideology or in Burke's view, their "terministic screen". Burke (1966) explains "even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality" (p. 45). In other words, the terms or symbols people use have the ability to reflect, select, and deflect what they see as reality thus revealing their ideology. In essence, terministic screens have the ability to direct our attention. Burke (1966) likens an ideology to a, "spirit taking up its abode in a body" (p. 6). He continues, "it makes

that body hop around in certain ways; and that same body would have hopped around in

different ways had a different ideology happened to inhabit it" (p. 6). In Burke's view,

ideologies can be uncovered by studying the terms or symbols that are used in

communication. It seems clear that cluster analysis is an appropriate tool for uncovering

the ideologies espoused in the letters to the editor and editorials found in the national,

Texas, and local newspapers because of the method's ability to take into account the

whole picture through identification, across artifacts, of prominent key terms and clusters.

As the concept of terministic screens demonstrates, language has the ability to direct our

attention, and identifying key terms will reveal where the rhetors may unconsciously

want the readers' attention to center.

Many studies have used cluster analysis as a tool to uncover a group's dominant

ideology (Corcoran, 1983; Foss, 1984; Lee & Campbell, 1994; Pullman, 1992; Snyder,

2000). Foss (1984) examined the Episcopal Church's rhetoric on female ordination. In

her analysis, Foss found that the church's rhetoric was being used to support the

traditional church hierarchy even through the church publicly supported eventual female

ordination. By conducting a cluster analysis of the church's establishment rhetoric, Foss

was able to uncover the key terms "Church," "Priest," "Male," and "Female." The

qualities that defined a "Male" were seen as very close to those that defined the "Priest"

and the qualities that defined a "Female" were opposite of those that defined a "Male."

From this analysis it was clear that the "Female" was the opposite of what the church saw

as "Priest" and helped to explain the controversy over female ordination in the Church.

By utilizing cluster analysis the author was able to expose the Church's ideology on

female ordination.

Corcoran (1983) conducted a cluster analysis of thirty years of Cold War rhetoric found in three major U.S. news magazines: *Time, Newsweek,* and *U.S. News and World Report.* Corcoran used the cluster method to analyze printed text and pictorial content including photographs, cartoons, and charts and found that a Russophobic worldview was being espoused through a few dominant clusters of myths. The worldview Corcoran uncovered by using cluster analysis was shown to be a victimage ritual whereby peace-loving people imagine an enemy so perfectly evil that they are relieved of the guilt they might otherwise feel when participating in a war against them.

Pullman (1992) used cluster analysis to examine the rhetoric of televangelist Jan Bresky and uncover the worldview he was advocating for his audience. Pullman discovered what view of the world Bresky was asking his audience to accept and how he went about persuading his audience to accept it. Pullman uncovered four key terms: "Religion," "God," "Prayer," and "Ethics." Pullman was able to determine that the reason Bresky was so successful at persuading his audience was due to the problem-solution approach to his discourse. Pullman uncovered Bresky's ideology by piecing together how the key terms fit with each other and found that Bresky was advocating "Religion" and "God" as the solution to the problems people experience; that "Prayer" was the way to implement the problem-solving abilities of "God" and that "Ethics" were the benefits of implementing this solution. By identifying the key terms and the terms that clustered around them, Pullman uncovered and described the spiritual worldview Bresky was advocating for his followers.

In keeping with this research trend, this thesis will analyze the local, national, and Texas reaction to the Tulia drug bust event in an effort to uncover the dominant

worldview in each community. Conducting a cluster analysis of the letters to the editor

and editorials published in each community's newspapers is one way to accomplish this

objective. The resulting analysis of the reactions to the Tulia drug bust incident and

subsequent trials may aid in the understanding of how rhetorical communities emerge and

how language works to shape a community.

CHAPTER III

LOYALTY TO THE COMMUNITY: ANALYSIS OF THE LOCAL RESPONSE TO
THE DRUG BUST SITUATION

The hierarchic principle is not complete in the social realm…it is complete

only when each rank accepts the *principle of gradation itself*, and thus

'universalizing' the principle, makes a spiritual reversal of the ranks as

meaningful as their actual arrangement. (Burke, 1950, p. 138)

This passage by Burke alludes to the idea that one can spiritually or symbolically

move up or down a hierarchy by accepting the fact that hierarchies are inevitable for

humankind. Because hierarchies establish the reality we work from in our lives, they

may be as powerful as material reality. In addition, symbols can expose hierarchies

which in turn can expose a community's ideology (Burke, 1966). This principle is

evident in the hierarchy set up in the rhetoric created by the local community of Tulia.

Analysis revealed a community attempting to keep the dominant hierarchy in power by

unequivocally supporting law enforcement and scapegoating "misinformed outsiders"

(Martin, 2000). The local ideology was revealed as one of loyalty to community. A

cluster analysis of the *Tulia Herald* artifacts revealed four dominant clusters: *insiders*,

outsiders, *law enforcement*, and the *law*. This hierarchy placed *law* and *law enforcement*

at the top, *insiders* or people who lived in the town in the middle, and *outsiders* at the

bottom. By keeping the hierarchy in power the *insiders* would remain above the

outsiders and above African-Americans within the community. This chapter will detail

these key terms and the ideas or subjects that clustered around them.

Insiders

The key term *insiders* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a town that

defended itself as good people who knew the truth about the drug bust and were doing

their job as good citizens by bringing the offenders to justice. The insiders are placed in

the middle to upper levels of the town's hierarchy because they are informed and have

firsthand knowledge of the situation and people involved. The insiders voices are

privileged throughout the artifacts. In fact, Tulia's residents wrote 23 of the 26 artifacts

and often spoke for the community as a whole by using terms like "we," "our," and "us."

The key term *insiders* is seen throughout all 26 artifacts and occurs with

frequency and intensity. This term takes on different forms including *we, insiders, Tulia,*

jurors, and *residents.* The term *insider* is used as a positive term throughout the artifacts.

Insiders is also surrounded by mostly positive terms including *great, positive, safe, pray,*

faith, love, give, honor, kind, patriots, humanitarians, care, and *generosity.* The major

groups of terms that formed around the idea of insiders can be separated into three

prominent clusters, the insiders are good, the insiders are informed, and the insiders did

their job as citizens.

Insiders were good. The idea that the insiders are good people was a prominent

cluster throughout the artifacts. (Brewer, 2001; Dawson, 2002; Dick, 2002; Ferguson,

2001; Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman, 2000; Gaylor, 2000; Guenther, 2000; Martin, 2000;

Reynolds, 2003; Reynolds, 2002; Travis, 2002). Tulia is portrayed as a "great place to grow up and raise a family" (Martin, 2000), and as a place that boasts a "sparkle from the emerald fields" (Brewer, 2001). The people are "average and hard-working" (Scott, 2002), "kind, caring, and supportive" (Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman, 2000), and "a dignified people who were brought up with manners and grace" (Gaylor, 2000). They are "true humanitarians" (Dick, 2002) who "help their neighbors" (Martin, 2000), and "show kindness at every turn" (Brewer, 2001).

Insiders were informed. The concept of the insiders being informed about the community proved to be another prominent cluster in the artifacts. The insiders are presented as informed about the drug bust situation and what really happened because they "grew up in Tulia " (Martin, 2000), "were born and raised" (Haught, 2000) in Tulia, and were personally familiar with the people involved (Brewer, 2001; Dawson, 2002; Dick, 2002; Ferriter, Mote & Chapman, 2000; Gaylor, 2000; George, 2000; Haught, 2002; Jordan, 2000; King, 2000; Martin, 2002; Reynolds, 2000; Martin, 2000; Reynolds, 2002; Reynolds, 2003; Scott, 2002). Because the insiders are informed, they saw the people of the community as taking a "tough stand," (Guenther, 2000) wanting to save lives (Reynolds, 2000; Reynolds, 2003), and wanting to feel safe (Ferguson, 2001; Gaylor, 2000; King, 2000). The insiders felt this should be "commended not criticized" (Guenther, 2000).

Insiders did their job as citizens. Another prominent cluster portrays the insiders defending their actions as simply doing their "job" as citizens within the community. The insiders saw themselves as "victims" (King, 2000), "martyred for their courage under fire"(Willard, 2002), and "only hearing what they were permitted to hear" during the

trials of the accused. The insiders "will not tolerate crime" (Guenther, 2000) and will work to "protect their children and their community" (Ferguson, 2001). Due to these factors, the insiders were free from blame and saw nothing wrong with their actions.

Summary. The insiders saw themselves as a very good community that was dedicated to making a safe and crime free life for its residents. In their minds, as evidenced by the above analysis, this perfection is achieved by supporting law enforcement's efforts regardless of the consequences. The community felt the insiders had done nothing wrong by publicly supporting the drug busts, law enforcement, and the severe verdicts they handed down while serving on the drug bust juries. A later cluster will demonstrate that the insiders also felt law enforcement officials, who planned and carried out the drug bust, did nothing wrong either. The insiders were cast as good, hardworking people who are "defenseless"(Dawson, 2002) and "victims" (King, 2000) of the prejudiced "attacking" (Dawson, 2002) outsiders.

Outsiders

The key term *outsiders* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a town defending itself against "misinforming," "judgmental" "attackers." The outsiders were placed at the bottom of the dominant hierarchy and had no voice in the artifacts. The insiders portrayed the outsiders as the cause of the racist allegations being leveled against them and felt the outsiders portrayed them as being unwilling to take the blame or place the blame on law enforcement. The outsiders were publicly scapegoated through the artifacts as the cause of the racist allegations against the town.

The key term *outsiders* appeared in all 26 artifacts and was used in contrast to the term *insiders*. The term *outsiders* took on different forms within the artifacts including,

outsider, *national press*, *the media*, and *the nation*. These terms were used

interchangeably with *outsider*. The term *outsiders* is used as a negative term in the

artifacts. *Outsiders* was also surrounded by mostly negative terms including *biased*,

hurtful, *reckless*, *negative*, *mean-spirited*, *adversaries*, *attack*, *trouble*, *racist*, and

ridicule. The major groups of terms that formed around the idea of outsiders can be

separated into three clusters, the outsiders were misinforming the public, the outsiders

were judgmental, and the outsiders were attacking Tulia.

Outsiders were misinforming the public. The idea that outsiders were spreading

misinformation was a prominent idea in the artifacts. This cluster showed the outsiders

to be the opposite of the insiders who were seen as informed. To the insiders, the

outsiders were placing a "biased spotlight on the town" (Brewer, 2001) and "encouraging

the charade that Tulia is racist" (Willard, 2002). The outsiders were shown to "never

know the whole story" (Travis, 2002), are "non-trusting folks" who are "mislead" (Doan,

2000) and "incorrectly portrayed Tulia as a racist and bigoted community" (Ferriter,

Mote, & Chapman, 2000). This is because a person has "to be present to *know* about any

happening" (Haught, 2000). The outsiders were shown to be misinformed because they

did "not examine the actual evidence," they did "not review the testimony" (Dawson,

2002) and they "presented allegations as facts" rather than "investigating and presenting

balanced news"(Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman, 2000).

Outsiders were judgmental. The idea that outsiders are passing judgment on the

town with this misinformation is also a prominent cluster. The outsiders "judged the

town on misinformation." and "formed opinions about Tulia on the omission of

information" (Martin, 2000). The outsiders were seen as having "tunnel vision" (Martin,

2000) and used "stereotyping" (Dawson, 2002) to make judgments. The outsiders were

shown as not having "wisdom to judge" (Reynolds, 2000), and were unable to "recognize

the mandatory constraints" (Anonymous, 2002) of the justice system. They misconstrued

the event as an act of "racial discrimination" (Haught, 2000).

Outsiders were attacking Tulia. Also closely associated with the term outsiders

was the idea of attacking. The outsiders were portrayed as "adversaries" (Reynolds,

2002) who were "recklessly hurting a community" (Willard, 2002), "attacking Tulia"

(Dawson, 2002) and "tarnishing the reputation of a great community" (Dick, 2002). The

outsiders were forming "accusations" and "indictments" (Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman,

2000), and were described as "picking on little Tulia" (Dawson, 2002).

Summary. The outsiders were placed at the bottom of the community's hierarchy.

They had no voice in the artifacts and their words were only heard through the second-

hand language of the insiders. The insiders labeled the outsiders as "misinforming",

"judgmental", and as "attackers". These labels lead the insiders to defend themselves

against the outsiders by scapegoating the outsiders and exposing them as the cause of the

racist allegations against the town. This rhetorical strategy is a classic example of the

pollution-purification-redemption cycle or the rhetoric of rebirth. Burke (1966) sees

pollution as guilt, purification as ridding the community of the guilt, and redemption as

rebirth or a change. In the artifacts, the outsiders were exposed as the guilty party, in an

attempt to purify the town, the outsiders were publicly scapegoated, and the town was

redeemed. By attempting to complete the cycle this way, the town does not have to

accept blame for the hefty sentences given to the accused, nor is there a need to indict law

enforcement or the law. The contamination in the town has been identified and publicly dealt with so the town and its citizens can now resume their normal lives.

Law Enforcement

The key term *law enforcement* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a community that fiercely supported and defended law enforcement officials throughout the drug bust and subsequent events. Law enforcement officials were placed at the top of the dominant hierarchy in Tulia. They were also continuously referred to in positive terms and were made to seem almost superhuman in their positive attributes. An analysis of this term revealed an attempt by insiders to keep law enforcement at the top of the hierarchy by overt public support and by scapegoating the outsiders as the cause of the racial discrimination allegations.

The key term *law enforcement* was found in 15 of the 26 artifacts. This term is found in different forms including *officers* and *police*, that are used interchangeably with *law enforcement*. The term *law enforcement* is seen as a positive term throughout the artifacts and is also surrounded by positive terms including *save, thank you, obey, support, appreciation, good, fair, genuine, blamed, encourage, kind,* and *praise*. Two major groups of terms that formed around the key term *law enforcement* consisted of terms of support and defense and terms that demonstrated law enforcement personnel as good people.

Supporting and defending law enforcement. The idea of supporting and defending law enforcement was a prominent cluster within the artifacts. This key term was continuously surrounded by the terms "thank you" (Gayler, 2000; King, 2000; Martin, 2000) and "support" (Culwell, 2000; Doan, 2000; Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman, 2000;

Gaylor, 2000; George, 2000; Haught, 2000; Jordan, 2000; Martin, 2001). The local

community valued law enforcement's work in this situation and were seen as taking a

stand (Gayler, 2000; King, 2000), "attempting to save lives" (Reynolds, 2000), "cleaning

up a bad situation" (Jordan, 2000), and as doing nothing wrong (Culwell, 2000). The

town was seen as rallying behind law enforcement and "carrying them on our shoulders"

(Haught, 2000), wearing a ribbon of support, (Gayler, 2000) and "turning out 490 people

to show support for law enforcement" (Jordan, 2000).

Law enforcement are good people. Law enforcement officials as good people also

proved to be a prominent cluster. Law enforcement personnel were seen as "doing their

jobs with integrity" (Ferriter, Mote, & Chapman, 2000) and going "above and beyond"

(Martin, 2002). They were characterized as "unprejudiced," (Anonymous, 2002)

"honest" (Dawson, 2002; Jordan, 2000), "proud" (Dick, 2002), and "good-to-the-core"

(Anonymous, 2002).

Summary. The almost unanimous support of law enforcement by the insiders

demonstrated a strong attempt to keep officials in their position within the dominant

hierarchy. Keeping law enforcement in the dominant position in the hierarchy meant that

the insiders would also retain their place within the hierarchy. If the current law

enforcement officials, who could be seen as partly responsible for the racist acts, could

keep their top spot in the hierarchy, the dominant white population of the town would not

be threatened by the prospect of other races becoming their equals within the community.

This may help explain the amount of tolerance the insiders have toward law enforcement

and their actions concerning the drug bust. Even when outside courts and state officials

were confirming the outsiders allegations of racism, the insiders did not budge in their

support. Law enforcement was also seen as being constrained by the law. Being in service to the law did not allow them to do the things the outsiders were accusing them of doing. This notion would lend further support to the insiders claim that law enforcement did nothing wrong.

Law

The last key term, *law,* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a town with ideal notions of the law and the people who administer the law. Both were seen as thoroughly impartial. The insiders portray the law itself as favoring no one and treating everyone equally. They saw the people who administer the law as doing their jobs without any personal prejudice and handing down sentences in a very neutral manner.

The key term *law* was used throughout 9 of the 26 artifacts. The term was seen in different forms including, *law, judges*, and *the legal system. Law* was seen as a positive term and is also surrounded by mostly positive terms including, *obey, believe, rules, guidelines, limits, sophisticated*, and *same.* The major groups of terms that formed around the key term *law* were the law as fixed and permanent, and the law as correct and unbiased.

Law as fixed and permanent. The key term *law* was closely associated with the ideas of being fixed and permanent. The law was seen as "complex but clear," mere "amateurs cannot effectively interpret it" (Russett, 2000) and people had to "face the consequences of breaking the law" (Anonymous, 2002) no matter what their situation happened to be. The law was also portrayed as having "mandatory constraints" (Anonymous, 2002), "limits" (Guenther, 2000), and was equated to a "government"

(Russett, 2000). People "obey" (King, 2000) the law, it does not give much "leeway" (Guenther, 2000), and the "legal-way" was seen as the only way (Travis, 2002).

Law as correct and unbiased. The key term *law* was also closely associated with the ideas of being unbiased and correct. The judges, jurors, law enforcement, and citizens were all seen as being constrained by the law (King, 2000; Reynolds, 2000; Russett, 2000 & Willard, 2000). The writers suggested the judges "apply the same rules to every case" and they have "applied the law as they were sworn to do" (Russett, 2000). The jurors were seen as giving "good verdicts" (King, 2000) and "only hearing what they were permitted to hear" (Willard, 2002). Law enforcement "didn't choose the color, the color chose" them (Reynolds, 2000). And people who break the law, no matter what their color, will receive "stiff sentences" (King, 2000).

Summary. The clusters revealed the town's view of the law as an immovable, unbiased ideal system. Every person is seen as constrained by the law and because of this, racial discrimination and racial profiling do not come into the picture and are not an issue. These types of things cannot happen within the community because of the type of people administering and reinforcing the law and law enforcement. The key term "law" demonstrates the very dramatic view the town held of the drug busts. The idea that law enforcement and the law favored certain members of the community over others is not seen as legitimate.

Local Ideology and Hierarchy

The cluster analysis of *The Tulia Herald* artifacts revealed a community defending itself and attempting to keep the dominant hierarchy in power by unequivocally supporting the law and law enforcement while at the same time

scapegoating "misinforming outsiders." The hierarchy advocated by the community exposed the local ideology as one of returning to normalcy and loyalty to the community hierarchy. Burke's (1966) theory of logology reminds us that the analysis of symbols or words can uncover ideologies and an important concept that helps shape this theory is the idea of hierarchies. Hierarchies can be revealed through language and they help to uncover ideology.

Law and law enforcement were placed at the top of the hierarchy and seen as unbiased and positive. The people who administer the law and law enforcement officials were cast as impartial people who had committed no wrongs before, during, and after the drug bust. The insiders were placed in the middle of the dominant hierarchy. The insiders were placed slightly lower than law and law enforcement because they were subject to the law and constrained by it. Due to this, they do not have the most power within the community but they still have substantial power because they were informed and have first-hand knowledge of the drug bust situation and the people involved. The outsiders were placed on the bottom rung of the hierarchy within the community. The clusters revealed the outsiders had no power or voice within the community. The outsiders' voices were only heard through the language of the insiders and were cast in a bad light. The outsiders were seen as misinformed on the facts of the drug busts and were judging and attacking the community and it's actions based on misinformation.

The outsiders were blamed for the racial discrimination allegations being leveled against the town. They were publicly scapegoated as the ones who introduced the idea of racial discrimination and the ones who were promoting the charge. The insiders felt that if the outsiders would "leave it be" (Dawson, 20002), the idea would have no support and

would go away. This demonstrated that silencing the outsiders would keep the hierarchy in place by removing the contamination.

The hierarchy excluded the interests of the African-Americans who were arrested and jailed in the drug bust and the outsiders. By not addressing the idea that innocent people could be put into jail and the impact this would have on their lives, the hierarchy was shown to not be serving the interests of the convicted. In this sense, racism could be the manifestation of the local ideology of normalcy as represented by the exposed hierarchy. By excluding the interests of the accused African-Americans, the law, law enforcement, and the insiders are never cast in a bad light. The insiders never had to face the reality of the drug bust situation as the rest of the world saw it.

This analysis may have also uncovered a contradiction in the Tulia artifacts. This contradiction was simply that the insiders saw themselves as not being racist but at the same time they convicted and gave heavy sentences to ten percent of the black population of the town, many of whom were first offenders, based on less than credible evidence and witnesses. Giddens (1979) identifies this phenomenon as a transmutation of contradictions, one of the three principal functions of an ideology that serves to maintain that ideology. Mumby (1987) further defines a transmutation of contradictions as reformulating contradictions within an ideology to look like trivial social conflict. This analysis demonstrates that the contamination in Tulia was never seen by the local community to be on the inside with the law, law enforcement, or insiders; it was shown to be coming from outside forces. The insiders transmuted the incident from what could potentially be perceived as a racist act to an act that was saving lives, making their community safe, and returning them to their normal lives. The attention surrounding the

event was portrayed as being caused by the outsider's misinformation and reformulated into a simple misunderstanding.

This chapter exposed the ideology of the local community regarding the Tulia drug bust situation. This ideology can best be described as an ideology of loyalty to the community. Using the cluster method to analyze the letters to the editor and editorials published in the *Tulia Herald* an active hierarchy was revealed in the community. This hierarchy exposed the local ideology concerning the controversial drug bust. Four key terms were identified; *insiders*, *outsiders*, *law enforcement*, and *law*. The community hierarchy was found to be serving the needs of the insiders, law, and law enforcement and excluding the needs of the outsiders and African-Americans living in the community. This ideology of loyalty to community and the resulting hierarchy was seen to have potential racist repercussions.

CHAPTER IV

DISASSOCIATION: ANALYSIS OF THE TEXAS RESPONSE TO THE DRUG

BUST SITUATION

To the extent that a social structure becomes differentiated, with the

privileges to some that are denied to others, there are the conditions for a

kind of "built in" pride. King and peasant are "mysteries" to each other.

Those "Up" are guilty of not being "Down," those "Down" are certainly

guilty of not being "Up." (Burke, 1966, p.15)

As Burke so eloquently describes, with hierarchies come guilt or pollution. This

guilt sets in motion an inevitable cycle where the guilty try to redeem themselves by

purging themselves of the guilt. This theory is demonstrated in Burke's (1966) writings

and is commonly referred to as the pollution-purification-redemption cycle. This analysis

exposed a pollution-purification-redemption cycle in the process of being worked out in

the Texas community, which helped to expose the Texas ideology of disassociation

concerning the Tulia situation. Analysis of the Texas letters to the editors and editorials

revealed a state community who was reacting to the local (Tulia) community hierarchy,

which they viewed as pollution. This pollution brought on a sense of guilt in the Texas community that needed to be purged in order for the community to feel redeemed.

A cluster analysis of the Texas newspaper artifacts revealed four dominant clusters: *law enforcement*, *residents*, *defendants*, and *politicians*. The Texas community portrayed *law enforcement* as the perpetrators of the *defendant's* injustice and felt law enforcement, along with the *residents*, were unfairly treating the defendants while the *politicians* watched without acting until their hands were forced. The discourse of the larger Texas community reflects that they felt guilty concerning the events in Tulia and sought to mitigate that guilt through their symbol use. This chapter will detail the key terms *law enforcement, residents, defendants,* and *politicians* then end with a discussion on the Texas ideology and how the pollution-purification-redemption cycle is revealed through the analysis.

Law Enforcement

The key term *law enforcement* and the terms that clustered around it revealed that the Texas community was more skeptical of law enforcement than was the local community and saw local actions as questionable and generally negative. The Texas community portrayed law enforcement as corrupt, controversial, and racially motivated. The term *law enforcement* was seen in 34 of the 42 artifacts and occurs with both frequency and intensity. The term took on different forms throughout the artifact including *Panhandle Narcotics Task Force, Tom Coleman, law officers, the cops,* and *undercover officer*. These terms were used interchangeably with *law enforcement* in the artifacts. *Law enforcement* is seen as a negative term throughout most of the artifacts and is also surrounded by negative terms including *corruption, controversial, allegations,*

abuses, questions, embarrassed, botched, no credibility, poorly, unfair, damage, and *wrong.* The three major groups of terms that clustered around the key term *law enforcement* consisted of terms of suspicion and distrust, the idea that law enforcement was racist, and the idea that law enforcement's actions had negative effects.

Suspicion and distrust of law enforcement. The idea of law enforcement as suspicious, untrustworthy, and not doing their job proved to be a prominent cluster in the Texas artifacts. The key term "law enforcement" was continuously surrounded by terms of investigation and questioning ("Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002; Kotin, 2002; Lacy, 2001; Marshall, 2002a; Marshall, 2002c), accusations/allegations ("Editorial: Tulia community," 2000 & Lacy, 2001) and abuses (Marshall, 2002b; & Marshall, 2002d; Navarrette, 2002; Phillips, 2002). The terms that surrounded law enforcement showed them as having to be "reined in" (Marshall, 2002c), "tracked down," (Schorr, 2000), "investigated for corruption" (Lacy, 2001), and "straightened out and put under control"(Marshall, 2002f) by outsiders.

Law enforcement as racist. Another major cluster included the idea of law enforcement as racist (Cloud, 2000; "Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002; "Editorial: State inclusion," 2002; Marshall; 2002c; Navarrette; 2002; Phillips, 2002; Sagan, 2002; & "Tulia Controversy," 2002). Law enforcement was also the subject of "charges of racism" ("Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002; & "Tulia controversy," 2002) and "claims of racial bias" ("Editorial: State inclusion," 2002). They were portrayed as having "racial motives" (Cloud, 2000), engaging in "unfair racial profiling" (Phillips, 2002), and "abusing civil rights" (Marshall, 2002d).

Law enforcement's actions had negative effects. The idea that law enforcement's actions had negative effects also proved to be a prominent cluster in the Texas artifacts. Law enforcement's actions were described as "stealing freedoms" (Givens, 2001), "putting people in prison for life" (Givens, 2001), "conspiring to arrest and prosecute black people" ("Editorial: Tulia community," 2000), and "going wrong and damaging a town" (Marshall, 2002a). Their actions were seen as "controversial" ("Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002; & Marshall, 2002a) and the "damage was still being felt" (Rea, 2002).

Summary. The *law enforcement* cluster demonstrates that the regional Texas community saw the actions of law enforcement in the Tulia case as questionable at best. The artifacts showed the Texas community as distrustful and suspicious of law enforcement, their actions in the case, and their motives and integrity. The analysis made it evident that the regional community was working from a different hierarchy than the local community. The Texas community put law enforcement at a much lower level on the hierarchy than did the local community. Law enforcement personnel in the case were not seen as special or without fault; they were viewed very negatively, and were called "lying drug crusaders" (Givens, 2001). Law enforcement were publicly scapegoated in the artifacts as being one of the causes of the Tulia situation. They were portrayed as having ulterior motives that did not match up with the law when putting the defendants in jail. To the Texas community, law enforcement was no better than the criminals that they typically put in jail and was seen as one of the main factors that contributed to the injustice in Tulia.

Five out of the forty-two artifacts spoke positively of law enforcement and their actions. This number is small, but worth noting. These artifacts demonstrated that a

small minority of the Texas population thought that law enforcement "worked diligently" ("Editorial: Local law," 1999), "worked to do their jobs in very difficult conditions" (Brown, 2000), and that their hands should not be tied (Edwards, 2002). In these artifacts, law enforcement was seen as "genuine" (Reynolds, 2002), "wise" ("Editorial: Local law," 1999), and as not "compromising principles" (McClurg, 2000). This is noteworthy because it revealed a possible tension within the Texas community concerning law enforcement and their actions in the Tulia situation.

Residents

The Texas community portrayed the *residents* of Tulia as racist people who went on a crusade to rid their town of a disadvantaged minority. The artifacts positioned the residents racism as the other main cause of the injustice in Tulia. The residents were seen as caring more about themselves and law enforcement than about the victims who got caught up in the bust. This disposition served to divide the town of Tulia along racial lines. In contrast to the local analysis, the Texas community did not see the voices of the residents as privileged. They portrayed the voices of residents as tainted by racism and felt they couldn't be trusted to correctly interpret the Tulia situation. The residents racism is portrayed as so ingrained that they didn't even know why they were being "painted as racists" (Cloud, 2000) by outside sources.

The key term *residents* was seen throughout 22 of the 42 artifacts and occurred with frequency and intensity. The key term appeared in different forms including *jurors* and *Tulia folks*. These terms were used interchangeably with *residents*. *Residents* was seen as a negative term throughout the artifacts and was also surrounded by negative terms including *racist, damaging, divide, gloating, negative,* and *crusade*. The major

groups of terms that formed around the key term *residents* can be separated into two

prominent clusters, residents as racist and residents as divided along racial lines.

Residents were racist. A prominent cluster of terms found around the key term,

residents was the idea of the residents as racist. The Texas community saw the residents

as "racist" (Graham, 2002; Hensley, 2002; & Sagan, 2002). They were portrayed as

having a "reputation for racial cleansing" (Givens, 2001); and going on a "crusade"

(Bean, 2002), and their primary concern was for the "reputation of the sheriff, not

evidence." (Gardner, 2002). The residents "applied a completely different standard"

(Bean, 2002) in the drug bust trials and were therefore "embroiled in a race controversy"

(Gardner, 2002). The Texas community also felt that "outsiders see what residents can't

see themselves" (Sagan, 2002) and they "care only about their reputation, not the plight

of the people involved" (Bean, 2002).

Residents were divided along racial lines. Another prominent cluster found

around the key term *residents* was the idea that the residents were divided along racial

lines due to the drug bust. The Texas community saw the bust as "threatening to divide

the small community along racial lines" ("Editorial: Tulia community," 2000, &

"Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002). The residents' emotions are portrayed as "running

high" ("Editorial: Tulia reaches," 2002) and they were "tiring of the drug bust"

("Editorial: Judge's decision," 2002). The "flames of division" ("Editorial: Tulia

reaches," 2002) were being ignited in Tulia because the residents "bought into the myth"

that their town was being over run by drug dealers (Bean, 2002).

The Texas community portrayed the residents of Tulia as self-centered and racist.

They saw the town as being concerned only about themselves and their reputation and not

what they did to the African-American population of the town. The Texas community also portrayed the town as alarmist and as exaggerating reality due to their racial motives and the drug war. These tendencies helped to divide the town along racial lines and served as the ignition for the harsh sentencing of the defendants. The Texas community seemed to have little pity for the residents of Tulia and saw the town as "anything but a nice town" (Bean, 2002).

Defendants

The key term *defendants* and the terms that clustered around it revealed that the Texas community saw the people accused in the Tulia drug bust as victims who were caught up in an unjust situation. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, the local community did not focus on the defendants because they did not seem to see them as part of their community. However, the general Texas community, looking from the outside into the Tulia situation, did see the plight of the defendants as a prominent topic of discussion. In the artifacts, they were overwhelmingly referred to as *people, African-Americans*, and *residents* rather than *drug-dealers* or *cocaine dealers*. The defendants' situations are seen as negative and are concentrated on heavily in the artifacts. The Texas community did not know if the defendants were innocent or guilty, but did feel that the drug raid and subsequent trials were unfair. As a result, they felt the defendants should be freed and given new trials.

The key term *defendants* was seen throughout 26 of the 42 artifacts and occurred with both frequency and intensity. This key term also took on different forms throughout the artifacts including *defendants, people, suspects, African-Americans, victims*, and *residents*. These terms were used interchangeably with *defendants* in the artifacts. The

term, *defendants*, is seen as a positive term throughout the artifacts and is also surrounded by positive terms including *justice, free, opportunity, protect,* and *freedom.* The major groups of terms that formed around the key term *defendants* can be separated into three prominent clusters, the defendants' situation as unjust, the idea that the defendants needed to be set free, and the defendants as victims.

Defendants' situation was unjust. The key term, *defendants* is surrounded by negative terms describing their situation as unjust. Some examples include, *unjustly, unfair,* and *wrongly accused.* The defendants were seen as being "locked up unjustly" (Marshall, 2002b), "in prison for life" (Givens, 2001), and their justice was seen as being "ignored" and "buried under a big pile of politics" (Marshall, 2002c). The defendants situation was unjust because they "could have been eligible for parole" (Marshall 2001), were serving "very long prison terms" (Lake, 2000), and because "something has gone dreadfully wrong" (Bean, 2002a).

Defendants' need to be set free. The idea that the defendants needed to be set free was also found throughout the artifacts. The Texas community felt that "freeing the victims" (Marshall, 2001) was essential. They felt the defendants "freedom was stolen" and needed to be restored (Givens, 2001) and that their "justice" needed to come quickly (Marshall, 2002c). The Texas community talked about many people "working to free" (Marshall, 2002f) the defendants and that the "people in power should have gotten them out" by now (Marshall, 2002c).

Defendants were victims. Another prominent cluster seen around the key term *defendants* was the idea of defendants as victims. The Texas community described the defendants as "victims" (Marshall, 2001) and "pawns in prison" who were "locked up

unjustly" (Marshall, 2002b). The defendants were victims because they received

"brutally long sentences" (Marshall, 2002b) even though they were "innocent blacks"

(Givens, 2001). They were seen as being "rounded up" (Barnstone, 2002) in the drug

sting and as "sitting in prison" (Marshall, 2002c) and "serving hard time" (Marshall,

2001).

Summary. The accused African-Americans were a prominent subject of

discussion in the Texas artifacts. This analysis found that the Texas community felt the

defendants involved in the drug bust situation were treated unfairly and unjustly.

Although the key term *defendants* was a positive term in the artifacts, it was surrounded

by negative terms that described the defendants situation. One of the artifacts used the

word "innocent" when describing the defendants; however, the remaining forty-one did

not. It is evident the Texas community did not see the defendants as innocent per se, but

saw the defendants situation as one that was questionable and needed further review and

explanation. The Texas community seemed to be calling for and waiting for the outcome

of the various investigations of the event before proclaiming the defendants innocent or

guilty. In the mean time, they seemed to advocate the release of the defendants while the

matter was resolved. One letter writer put it this way, "What might work for the

politicians is releasing the Tulia 13 on personal recognizance bonds, pending the

outcomes of the investigations" (Marshall, 2002e).

Politicians

The Texas community portrayed the state officials responsible for doing

something about the drug bust as ineffective and cowardly. The Texas community felt

that the politicians did not act in the situation until they absolutely had to and that they

were only motivated by political concerns. The politicians were cast in a very negative

light by the Texas community and were highly criticized in the artifacts.

The key term *politicians* is seen throughout 20 of the 42 artifacts and occurs with

frequency and intensity. The key term took on different forms including *officials, U.S.*

Justice Department, lawmakers, Governor Rick Perry, and *Texas Attorney General John*

Cornyn. These terms were used interchangeably with *politicians* in the artifacts.

Politicians is seen as a negative term, and is also surrounded by negative terms including

flawed, powerless, lie, delay, ignored, mess, losing, and *embarrassed.* The major groups

of terms that clustered around the key term *politicians* were separated into two prominent

clusters, criticism of the politician's actions in the case and politicians as ineffective.

Criticism of politicians actions. The Texas community was very critical of the

politicians actions in the Tulia drug bust case. They saw the politicians as having no

"credibility" (Prickett, 2002), being "powerless" (Marshall, 2002c) and as being

"motivated by votes" ("Editorial: State inclusion," 2002). They felt the politicians were

"tardy" ("Editorial: State inclusion," 2002), had "embarrassed" themselves (Marshall,

2002f), and showed a "lack of conscience" (Barnstone, 2002). The politicians were

portrayed as being surrounded by "criticism" ("Editorial: State inclusion," 2002) and

investigating the bust only to "mute the growing criticism" (Marshall, 2002f). The

politicians are "better at making the law than enforcing it," only investigating the Tulia

case "after the fact" (Navarrette, 2002), and "ignoring pleas for justice" (Marshall,

2002c).

Politicians were ineffective. The *politicians* were portrayed as ineffective

concerning the Tulia drug bust situation. The term was often surrounded by questions

that alluded to the ineffective job the politicians had done in the case. Some examples included, "Where have you been?" (Kotin, 2002) and "What took you so long?" ("Tulia controversy," 2002). The politicians claimed that they "don't have the authority" (Marshall, 2002b) and "can't do anything" (Marshall, 2002e) about the situation when in reality the Texas community knows that they "could help but don't intend to" (Marshall, 2002c). The politicians were portrayed as "missing the opportunity" (Bean, 2002) to help the defendants and as needing "outsiders to come in to straighten out" (Marshall, 2002f) the situation.

Summary. The Texas community saw the politicians as ineffective in the Tulia situation. They felt that the politicians could have done more to help the defendants and that it was in their power to do so; however, because of this the Texas community saw them as embarrassing and only motivated by votes. Eventually, when the politicians did act and the Governor announced an investigation into the bust, the Texas community viewed this as too little, too late and even felt that "the investigation was not likely to do them [the defendants] any good" (Marshall, 2002d). The Texas community seemed to expose some of the mystery created by the politicians status on the traditional American governmental hierarchy. Burke (1950) saw mystery as differences that create ambiguity between members on different levels of a hierarchy. These differences function to maintain and preserve the hierarchy. Because the citizens of the Texas community were on a lower level than the politicians in the traditional American governmental hierarchy, there is some mystery surrounding how much power each individual politician had and what they could have done in the case. The community exposed the politicians as using this mystery as an excuse for not acting in the Tulia situation. It is obvious from the

artifacts that acting in the Tulia situation could serve as a threat to the politicians position on this governmental hierarchy as some citizens would inevitably disagree with their actions.

Texas Ideology and the Pollution-Purification-Redemption Cycle

This analysis revealed that the Texas community's ideology was very different from the local ideology. The Texas community ideology can best be described as an attempt to distance or disassociate from the event and local hierarchy while still trying to remedy the situation. Burke's theory of logology reveals that the analysis of symbols or words can uncover motivational systems and ideologies (Burke, 1966). One important concept that helps shape this theory is the pollution-purification-redemption cycle. This analysis exposed a pollution-purification-redemption cycle in the process of being worked out in the Texas community, which helped to expose the Texas ideology concerning the Tulia situation.

The pollution in the cycle was seen as the actions and words of law enforcement and the residents of Tulia during the drug bust and trials that have lead the defendants to be put in jail unjustly. This pollution was more specifically detailed by the Texas community as law enforcement and the residents going on a "crusade" (Bean, 2002), "applying a completely different standard" (Bean, 2002), conducting "unfair racial profiling" (Phillips, 2002), "stealing freedoms" (Givens, 2001), and "conspiring to arrest and prosecute black people" (Editorial: Tulia community," 2000). The pollution was a product of the local community hierarchy, which placed the residents and law enforcement at the top as privileged. In the Texas community's eyes, the pollution originated with law enforcement and the residents. In effect, the Texas community

scapegoated law enforcement involved in the case and the residents of Tulia for the drug bust situation.

Potentially, this pollution could have been purified and expelled through the work and actions of the politicians. However, up to this point, the politicians had not acted to purify the situation. They were portrayed as having the means to help but not helping (Marshall, 2002c) and as "missing the opportunity" (Bean, 2002) to purify the situation and the chance at redeeming the Texas community as a whole. The Texas community hints at what will happen if the politicians wait too long to act "outsiders are coming in to straighten out" (Marshall, 2002f) the situation, thus exposing the idea that the situation will be purified one way or another. When the politicians did finally act on the situation by launching an investigation, the community saw the attempt as ineffective in truly dealing with the pollution. This attempt was seen as too little and too late to help deal with the pollution. Because of this, rebirth, or the end goal of the pollution-purification-redemption cycle, has not happened within the Texas community.

This chapter exposed the ideology of the Texas community regarding the Tulia drug bust situation. A cluster analysis of the letters to the editor and editorials written to large Texas newspapers revealed four key terms; *law enforcement, defendants, residents,* and *politicians*. The analysis uncovered a state community attempting to purge itself of guilt brought on by the local (Tulia) community hierarchy which they saw as racist and unjust. The Texas community saw *law enforcement* as the perpetrators of the *defendant's* injustice and felt law enforcement, along with the *residents*, were mistreating the defendants while the *politicians* watched without intervening. The discourse of the larger Texas community demonstrated that they felt guilty concerning the events in Tulia and

sought to mitigate that guilt through their symbol use and redeem the community as a whole.

CHAPTER V

ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITY: ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL RESPONSE TO

THE DRUG BUST SITUATION

Hence, the turn from courtship to ill will, with ironic intermediate grades.

As the stage of blunt antithesis, each class would deny, suppress, exorcise

the elements it shares with the other classes. This attempt leads to the

scapegoat. (Burke, 1950, p.142)

This analysis finds the national community looking for the cause or causes of the

Tulia incident in order to assign responsibility for the event. A national community

ideology of responsibility and accountability was uncovered through this analysis. As

seen with other tragedies of national significance, the national community's rhetoric

centered on how and why the Tulia incident happened and who or what was responsible.

A cluster analysis of letters to the editor and editorials revealed four dominant key terms

and clusters: *victims, Tulia, Tom Coleman,* and *drug war*. The investigation revealed a

hierarchy of perceived responsibility for the Tulia situation. The national community

placed the *drug war* at the top of this hierarchy, the town of *Tulia* and *Tom Coleman* in

the middle, and the *victims* at the bottom assigning them no responsibility for the

situation. The national community advocated eliminating the *drug war* because it was

likely to cause other injustices to occur. They felt that doing away with the *drug war*

would take care of the threat towns like *Tulia* and people like *Tom Coleman* represent to

possible *victims*. This chapter will detail these key terms and the ideas or subjects that

clustered around them.

Victims

The idea of the accused African-Americans as *victims* was a prominent cluster in

the national artifacts. The national community portrayed the African-Americans in this

case as being caught up in a racially motivated sweep where an allegation of selling drugs

was the most convenient avenue to destroy the African-American population of the town.

The defendants were characterized as poor, disadvantaged, innocent, and easy prey for

the racist community. The victims were positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy and

were portrayed as not responsible for the alleged crimes or for the incident in Tulia. The

national voice proclaimed the situation should be made right by freeing the innocent

victims from jail.

The key term *victims* was found throughout 12 of the 15 artifacts and occurred

with frequency and intensity. The term took on different forms including *defendants*,

accused, *black residents*, and the use of the defendant's actual names. These terms and

names were used interchangeably with the key term *victims*. The term *victims* is used as

a positive term throughout the artifacts and is surrounded by mostly positive terms

including *innocent*, *pardon*, and *free*. However, negative terms are used to describe the

victim's situation. Some examples of these terms included *snared, caught up, ruined,*

devastated, and *unfortunate*. Three major groups of terms formed around the key term

victims were the idea of the victims as disadvantaged, descriptions of the incident and trials as prejudiced, and the idea of the victims as innocent and needing to be set free.

Victims were disadvantaged. A prominent cluster around the key term *victims* was the idea that the victims were being disadvantaged. The victims were portrayed as disadvantaged because they were "hog farmers" (Johnson, 2001), "small-time drug users" (Lakin, 2000), not "big-time drug dealers (Huffington, 2000), not "major gangsters" (Herbert, 2002d), or not drug "kingpins" (Johnson, 2001), nor making money by selling illegal drugs. The victims were described as not rich (Burks, 2001); they lived in "public housing and trailer parks" (Johnson, 2001) and only a few could "make bail or hire a lawyer" (Huffington, 2000). They were therefore described as the "oddest (major drug dealers) in the U.S." because "none had any money to speak of" (Herbert, 2002a).

The drug bust and trials were prejudiced. Another cluster of terms that surrounded the key term *victims* were descriptions of the bust and trials as prejudiced. The victims were seen as being "swept up" (Herbert, 2002d) and "caught up" (Herbert, 2002e) in the drug sting. The victims were "roused from their beds and refused permission to dress" (Herbert, 2002c) or were dressed "either in pajamas or merely their boxers" (Johnson, 2001). They were not taken "through the covered garage, as is customary" (Johnson, 2001), but "paraded in front of television crews" (Herbert, 2002c). They were seen as "strip mined" (Huffington, 2002), "wrongfully accused" (Herbert, 2002e), and "sent to prison for decades on flimsy and unsubstantiated identifications and recollections" (Herbert, 2002c). Officials in the case were seen as "unwilling to aid the victims" and as "keeping remarkably low profiles" (Herbert, 2002e).

Victims were innocent and needing to be set free. The final cluster of terms that surrounded the key term *victims* centered on the idea of the victims being innocent and needing to be set free. The victims were referred to as "innocent" multiple times throughout the artifacts (Herbert, 2002a; 2002b; 2002c; 2002g; & Huffington, 2002). The victims were portrayed as being "proved innocent" (Herbert, 2002g), and it was argued that their convictions should be "overturned" (Huffington, 2002). The national community felt that the victims need to be "pardoned" and "innocent people" need to be "free" (Herbert, 2002a; Huffington, 2002; Johnson 2001).

Summary. The national community saw the accused African-Americans in the Tulia case as victims who were innocent and needed to be freed. This is quite different from the other two communities who either did not concentrate on the victims or saw the victims situation as suspect and needing attention. The national community portrayed the African-Americans involved in the case as victims who were innocently caught up in a drug war that did not look kindly on anyone of color. They were innocent in the eyes of the national community; however, their accusers were not. The accusers were portrayed as having no credibility and as serving ulterior motives.

Tulia

The key term *Tulia* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a national voice proclaiming a negative view of the city where the now-infamous drug bust took place. The town and its residents are placed in the middle of the hierarchy with moderate responsibility for the situation. They are not seen as the ultimate cause but one of the main factors contributing to the situation. As a result, the national community had a very negative view of the people and officials of Tulia. They portrayed Tulia as a town with

bad character and paranoid people, as well as a site of racist and shoddy police work. The key term *Tulia* was seen throughout 12 of the 15 artifacts and occurred with frequency and intensity.

In the artifacts, *Tulia,* as a key term, was used to do much more than simply mention the town as the site of the drug bust. The term referred to the residents and officials of the town as well as the actual physical location. *Tulia* was used as a negative term throughout the artifacts and was surrounded by mostly negative terms including *hysteria, paranoid, frightening, bigoted, crazy, fear, bad, terrible, bizarre, outrage, shabby, farce,* and *racist.* The three major groups of terms that clustered around the key term *Tulia* included the idea of the town as not fit to live in, the town as racist, and the town as the site of unjust law enforcement activities.

Tulia not fit to live in. The idea of the town of Tulia as desert-like and not fit for normal people proved to be a prominent cluster throughout the artifacts. The actual physical setting and location of the town was described as almost foreign and uninhabitable. The national community portrayed Tulia as "hot," "dusty" (Herbert, 2002a), "frightening," and "bizarre" (Herbert, 2002a; 2002d). It was also seen as a place of "fear, paranoia, and bad laws" (Huffington, 2000; 2002). It was a town filled with "shenanigans" (Herbert, 2002e) where "terrible doings" (Herbert, 2002g) came to light. The town was plagued with "witch hunt hysteria," had gone "drug war crazy," and was the site of a "horrific and shameful miscarriage of justice" (Huffington, 2000; 2002). This was quite a different perception of the town than was seen in the local analysis detailed in Chapter 3. The *insiders* cluster in the local analysis revealed that the local community viewed the town as beautiful and happy, and as a safe place to live and raise

children. Obviously the national community did not share this perception. The national view is clearly influenced by the drug bust incident.

Tulians were racist. Tulia as a racist town was another prominent cluster in the national artifacts. The national community portrayed Tulia as the issue to talk about when it came to "race in this country" (Johnson, 2001) and described the residents of Tulia as "racist" (Herbert, 2002d). Tulia residents were portrayed as "bigots" because they "applauded the arrests" and were "giddy with editorial approval" (Herbert, 2002a). The residents were compared to snakes that had a "special measure of venom" (Herbert, 2002d) for the defendants. Black residents in Tulia were seen as being "targeted" (Herbert, 2002b). The sentences the Tulia residents handed down were "something out of the Gulag-era Soviet Union" (Huffington, 2000). Due to this, the national community wanted to see "justice roll down like the waters through parched grassland" (Bean, 2001).

This vivid language found in the clusters describing Tulia and what happened in the town demonstrated the national community's intensity of feeling concerning the citizens of Tulia and the Tulia incident. The sentences the African-Americans received in Tulia are compared to the gruesome holocaust of the Russian people under Stalin. This reference conjures up incredible imagery of work camps and mass graves and links this with the situation in Tulia. The town is seen as needing "justice like parched grassland" needs water to survive. These images demonstrate the depth of feeling and outrage the national community had over the town's actions and the drug bust in general.

Tulia the site of unjust law enforcement activities. The last prominent cluster of terms that surrounded the key term *Tulia* centered on Tulia being the site of unjust law enforcement activities. The town took a "hard-line approach" (Givens, 2000) and

exhibited "shoddy police work" (Huffington, 2002). This police work included a "shady narc, iffy suspect IDs, and a lack of corroborating evidence" (Huffington, 2002). The Tulia community was the site of an "incredibly shabby" and "farcical" (Herbert, 2002b) investigation where there was "plenty evidence of official wrongdoing" (Herbert, 2002f). The national voice is outraged that Tom Coleman, the main perpetrator of the Tulia bust, was being honored (Johnson, 2000) by the Tulia community and hailed as a "hero" (Herbert, 2002g). Due to the activities of law enforcement and the Tulia residents, the national community saw the Tulia drug bust issue as a "cause celebre" (Huffington, 2000) or a celebrated cause that invites attention.

Summary. The national community saw the people, town, and officials of Tulia as backward, dishonest, and strange. *Tulia* was a decidedly negative term in the national artifacts and the national community saw the residents and officials of Tulia as vindictive and snake-like. They did not approve of the actions in Tulia and portrayed the whole town as going "haywire" (Herbert, 2002a) and unjustly targeting African-American residents. The national community portrayed the town of Tulia as being partly responsible for the Tulia incident because they were racist and used unjust practices to convict innocent people. Tulia and its residents were placed in the middle region of the hierarchy with Tom Coleman because together, they are the ones that actually perpetrated the incident.

Tom Coleman

The term *Tom Coleman* was a major cluster throughout the national artifacts. The national community zeroed in on Tom Coleman as one of the main causes behind the Tulia drug bust. *Tom Coleman* was positioned in the middle of the hierarchy along with

Tulia. Together, they were seen as being responsible for perpetrating the allegedly unjust incident. The national voice proclaimed Tom Coleman as a ridiculous, incompetent, racist undercover officer who was left to his own devices and not stopped by officials in the Texas Panhandle. To the national community, Tom Coleman, with the help of the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Task Force and drug war politics, was able to clumsily take down ten percent of the African-American population of Tulia in a ridiculous drug raid that was supported by the local Tulia community.

The key term, *Tom Coleman*, was found in 10 of the 15 artifacts and occurred with frequency and intensity. *Tom Coleman* was seen throughout the artifacts as a negative term and was surrounded by mostly negative terms including *fired, theft, lies, trouble, insane, merciless, unreliable, nightmarish, absurd,* and *impeach.* The three major groups of terms that clustered around the key term *Tom Coleman* included terms relating to his character, terms relating to how he handled the drug bust and subsequent trials, and the idea that the drug task force enabled him to do what he did in Tulia.

Tom Coleman's character. It was not uncommon for national writers to focus on Tom Coleman's character. He was described as "ridiculous" (Herbert, 2002a), "clownish" (Herbert, 2002b), a "compulsive liar," "narc," and "unfit for law enforcement" (Huffington, 2002). He was also described as "routinely referring to black people as 'niggers,'" and was "arrested for theft in the middle of the Tulia operation" due to "trouble" with the law (Huffington, 2002). Tom Coleman was seen as having "an atrocious employment history and penchant for making criminal allegations against innocent people" as well as having "no professional and ethical standards" (Herbert, 2002c).

Mishandling of drug bust. Another cluster of terms that surrounded the key term *Tom Coleman* centered on his actions during the drug bust and subsequent trials. Tom Coleman was accused of "making allegations against people who were subsequently shown to be innocent" and his "testimony was at best inconclusive, and at worst constituted perjury" (Herbert, 2002f). Tom Coleman's investigation was seen as "farcical," (Herbert, 2002b) "nightmarish," (Herbert, 2002f) an "absurd one-man" (Herbert, 2002a) job, and his testimony was described as "uncorroborated" and "unsubstantiated" (Herbert, 2002a; 2002g; Huffington, 2000; 2002).

Task force enabled Tom Coleman's actions. The last prominent cluster centered on the idea that the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Task Force, created by drug war legislation, enabled Tom Coleman to behave as he did. Coleman was seen as "working under the auspices of the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Task Force" which operated "without accountability" (Huffington, 2002). This drug task force was viewed as "allowing Coleman to continue his undercover work" even after being "arrested for theft" during the undercover operation (Herbert, 2002b; Huffington, 2002). The people in charge of the task force were seen as ignoring Tom Coleman's legal troubles (Huffington, 2002; Herbert, 2002g; Johnson, 2000).

Summary. The national voice confidently pronounced Tom Coleman one of the main causes of the Tulia drug bust situation. They also felt that if people like Coleman were not given authority by institutions like the Panhandle Regional Narcotics Task Force, they would have no way of persecuting innocent victims like the victims in the Tulia situation. Institutions like the Panhandle Task Force are given their authority from the current drug war ethic in the United States.

Drug War

The last key term, *drug war* and the terms that clustered around it revealed a national community highly skeptical and worried about the *drug war* or *war on drugs* in the U.S. and how it contributed to the Tulia incident. They portrayed the drug war as the ultimate reason the Tulia drug bust occurred and placed it at the top of the hierarchy of responsibility. The national voice took a decidedly negative view of how the drug problem was being handled in this country. They portrayed the drug war as not working and as a large, pertinent issue that needed attention. The drug war was responsible for "ruining lives, corrupting law enforcement, and costing us billions annually" (Lakin, 2000).

The key term *drug war* was found in 4 of the 15 artifacts and occurred with frequency and intensity. The term was sometimes referred to as the *war on drugs* and was a negative term in the artifacts. *Drug war* was surrounded by mostly negative terms including *travesty*, *racial profiling*, *abuse*, *hysteria*, and *futile*. The major clusters of terms that surrounded the key term *drug war* included the idea that the drug war was not working and that the drug war was corrupt.

Current drug war inept. A major cluster of terms found around the key term *drug war* referred to the drug war as not working or inept. The national community portrayed the drug war as having "no effect on drug usage" (Lakin, 2000) as riddled with "problems" (Huffington, 2000), and "futile" (Lakin, 2000). The Tulia case was the "crucible for the drug war" or representation of what the contemporary drug war had become in this country. (Huffington, 2000). The "drug war" was a "travesty" (Lakin,

2000) and the "worst public policy failure of the 90's" that was being fought "without logic, common sense, morality, fairness, and justice" (Huffington, 2000).

Drug war as corrupt. The *drug war* as corrupt was also a major cluster in the national artifacts. The drug war was described as a "witch hunt" (Huffington, 2000), a "travesty" (Lakin, 2000), and as having "gone crazy" and engendered an "atmosphere of hysteria" (Huffington, 2000). The *drug war* had "shadowy corners" and turned drug task forces into "rampaging mad dogs of the drug war" and "avaricious cops into drug war entrepreneurs" (Huffington, 2002). The "drug war" was also responsible for "racial profiling" (Norberg, 2000).

Summary. The national community portrayed the drug war as the underlying cause of the Tulia incident. It is the larger concept or structure that allowed situations like Tulia to happen. The national community scapegoated this structure as the cause of Tulia and other drug-related racial injustices around the country. The drug war is positioned by the national community as the representative of all the unwanted evils associated with corrupt drug busts in America. The national voice placed the drug war at the top of the hierarchy of responsibility and proclaimed the drug war as the ultimate cause of the Tulia situation, and as the entity that enabled people like Tom Coleman and towns like Tulia to enact racial injustice. The drug war was portrayed as severely flawed and lacking logic and fairness. It was out of hand and needed to be dealt with to prevent other incidents similar to the one in Tulia from occurring.

Burke (1950) says that the scapegoat "combines in one figure contrary principles of identification and alienation" (p. 140). In this case the audience is identified with the drug war through "Just say no" campaigns and drug war legislation. At the same time the

drug war is alienated from this community because it enables people to abuse their power and possibly suppress the disadvantaged. The national community seemed to advocate dismantling the current drug war and replacing it with something different, "Isn't it time that our legislators found their backbone and put an end to this travesty that is ruining lives, corrupting law enforcement, financing criminals and costing us billions annually" (Lakin, 2000).

National Ideology & Hierarchy

This chapter exposed the ideology of the national community regarding the Tulia drug bust situation. This ideology can best be described as an ideology of responsibility and accountability. The investigation revealed a community searching and ultimately determining who and what was responsible for the incident. This ideology was exposed through a hierarchy of responsibility revealed by cluster analysis. Cluster analysis uncovered four key terms *victims*, *Tulia*, *Tom Coleman*, and *drug war*. Burke's (1966) theory of logology reminds us that the analysis of symbols or words can uncover ideologies and an important concept that helps shape this theory is the idea of hierarchies. Essentially, hierarchies can be revealed through language and they help to uncover ideology. The national hierarchy placed the *drug war* in America as the ultimate cause of the Tulia situation with the town of *Tulia* and *Tom Coleman* in supporting roles. The national community publicly scapegoated the drug war by exposing its guilt and advocating its termination. The *victims* or African-Americans imprisoned in the drug bust were portrayed as innocent of the alleged crimes and were thus not responsible for the drug bust. Due to this they were placed on the lowest rung of the hierarchy. The discourse of the national community demonstrated that they sought and assigned

responsibility for the drug bust situation in an effort to prevent similar situations from

occurring.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A symbol is much more than is disclosed by its "face value" as a label.

Words can contain attitudes much more complex and subtle than could

possibly be indicated in the efficient simplifications of a "practical"

dictionary. (Burke, 1937/1984, p.329)

Man, qua man, is a symbol user. In this respect, every aspect of his

"reality" is likely to be seen through a fog of symbols. (Burke, 1950, p.

136)

Symbols are powerful. As these quotations by Burke describe, humans see and

construct their realities with and through symbols. The preceding chapters have brought

this reality into focus and demonstrate that community ideology can be revealed through

analysis of symbol use. While this analysis did bring to light some interesting insights

about the issue of race in this country, it also uncovered some interesting thoughts on

ideology and cluster analysis. This chapter will further sharpen the ideologies uncovered

in the analysis chapters. First, this chapter will summarize the findings from the analysis

chapters; then it will juxtapose the three communities to reveal differences in their

ideologies; next it will detail some conclusions about the utility of cluster analysis; and finally, implications and future directions will be discussed.

Synopsis of Ideology

Analysis of the local, Texas, and national letters to the editor and editorials revealed the ideology of each community concerning the incident in Tulia. As Burke (1966) theorized almost forty years ago, terms have the ability to reflect, select, and deflect what a person sees as reality. By charting clusters of terms, a community's ideology or worldview can be revealed. The local ideology was found to be one of loyalty to the community. The local community was advocating a town hierarchy that privileged the *law* and corrupt *law enforcement* while it scapegoated misinforming *outsiders*. The town motive for communicating was found to be one of defense; defense of their actions in the case, as well as, defense of law enforcement. Analysis suggests that the *insiders* would vicariously gain power through supporting this hierarchy that advocated corrupt law enforcement control.

The Texas community was found to be reacting to the guilt this local hierarchy produced. The Texas community's ideology can best be described as a disassociation or distancing from the local hierarchy. The Texas community was attempting to rid itself of the guilt this local hierarchy brought by identifying the pollution, which they saw as corrupt *law enforcement* and racist *residents*, then attempting to purge the pollution through state *politicians*. Realizing the politicians would not do their part to redeem the community, they speculated that outside forces would be needed.

And finally, the ideology of the national community was found to be one of assigning responsibility. A hierarchy of responsibility was exposed which placed

powerless *victims* at the bottom with no responsibly for the incident, the town of *Tulia*

and *Tom Coleman* in the middle because they physically perpetrated the racist acts, and

the current *drug war* at the top as the entity that enabled the perpetrators to enact the

injustice seen in Tulia. This thesis has demonstrated that each community, as represented

by the selected artifacts, had a very distinct and different ideology concerning the Tulia

drug bust situation. These ideologies will be further probed in the following pages by

juxtaposing some of the key terms that were found to reoccur throughout all three

communities.

Symbolic Mergers

By summarizing each community's worldview concerning the incident, as

revealed through the individual cluster analysis, it becomes apparent that many of the key

terms or symbols uncovered are found across all three communities but are portrayed in

very different ways. Burke (1937/1984) talks about this symbolic phenomenon when he

refers to "symbolic mergers." Burke (1937/1984) feels, "A symbol is a vessel of much

more content than is disclosed by its 'face value' as a label. Words can contain attitudes

much more complex and subtle than could possibly be indicated in the efficient

simplifications of a 'practical' dictionary" (p.329). This means that simple dictionary

meanings of symbols do not represent the full meaning of these symbols. Symbol users

attach their own meanings to the symbols they use and these meanings can be very

different, even though the same symbol is being employed. As was alluded to in various

areas within the analysis chapters, the three communities see some of the key terms very

differently even though the exact same or very similar terminology is used. This section

will detail and juxtapose the differences in meanings of these reoccurring terms including, *law enforcement,* the accused *African-Americans*, and the *Tulians*.

Law Enforcement. Each community portrayed law enforcement officials involved in the Tulia case differently. All three communities saw law enforcement as prominent subjects of interest and they were talked about with frequency and intensity. The local community portrayed law enforcement in an extremely positive light and stood behind them throughout the trial and subsequent events. The Texas and national communities, however, held a negative view of law enforcement and their actions in the case. As was demonstrated above, juxtaposing the three communities' ideologies concerning law enforcement in the case revealed some stark differences in how each community viewed the term law enforcement, their actions in the case, and what level of responsibility law enforcement had concerning the injustice.

The local community portrayed law enforcement in the case as good people doing their jobs. Locals fiercely supported and defended law enforcement officials throughout the drug bust and subsequent events. In the local artifacts, this term is seen as a very positive term and law enforcement officials are seen as almost superhuman in their positive attributes. The Texas community demonstrates a drastically different portrayal of law enforcement in the case even though they use the same prominent term to label law enforcement.

The Texas community portrays law enforcement as untrustworthy, suspicious, and even refers to them as "lying drug crusaders" (Givens, 2001). However, a small minority of the Texas community agreed with the local community and portrayed law enforcement in the case in a positive light. In contrast, the national community viewed

law enforcement in a very negative light and chose Tom Coleman as the representation of

law enforcement in the Tulia case. Although both the Texas and the national

communities viewed law enforcement in a negative light there are subtle differences in

their ideology concerning law enforcement. The national community, unlike the Texas

community, zeroed in on Tom Coleman as the representation of law enforcement in the

situation. They portray Tom Coleman as a clownish racist who was able to act out his

racist tendencies due to the current drug war policy. Even though Tom Coleman and

others in law enforcement actually perpetrated the injustice they are only seen as a piece

of a larger problem. This view was quite different from the Texas community, which

ultimately identified law enforcement as the pollution that needed to be expelled.

Juxtaposing the terms that each community used to describe law enforcement in Table 1

below serves as a revealing visual representation of how differently the three

communities portrayed law enforcement.

Table 1: *Juxtaposition of the Term Law Enforcement*

Local	Texas	National
Good	Poor	Absurd
Fair	Unfair	Thief
Kind	Damage	Insane
Support	Wrong	Trouble
Appreciation	Allegations	Impeach

Each of the three communities also differed in how much responsibility they felt

law enforcement held concerning the incident. The local community did not see law

enforcement as having any responsibility in the incident. As was noted above, they see

the accused African-Americans as solely responsible for the drug bust. Terms taken from

the artifacts that were found to cluster around and describe law enforcement reveal that

the local community felt *appreciation* for law enforcement for doing their job and

protecting the community. This view is again quite different from the Texas and national

communities. The Texas community portrayed law enforcement as having significant

responsibility for the incident. As the above chart demonstrates, the Texas community

felt law enforcement was in the *wrong* and that they acted *unfairly* in the case. Because

of this law enforcement was scapegoated in the Texas artifacts. The national community

was similar in its appraisal of law enforcement's responsibility but stopped short of

proclaiming them the actual cause, instead they were merely by-products of the cause,

which the national community had determined was the *drug war*.

Accused African-Americans. As was seen with law enforcement, each community

portrayed the accused African-Americans in the Tulia situation very differently. In the

Texas and national artifacts they were prominent subjects of interest and were talked

about with frequency and intensity. However, the local community did not see them as a

subject that needed to be discussed in community dialogue. This silence and lack of

interest also serves to communicate the local ideology concerning the accused African-

Americans. Juxtaposing the three communities' views of the accused African-Americans

in the case allowed the differences between community ideologies to be exposed.

Specifically, there were differences between each community and how responsible they

felt the accused African-Americans were concerning the drug bust and how the accused African-Americans should be dealt with in the situation.

The local community did not see the accused African-Americans as a prominent subject of discussion in the artifacts, see Table 2. This silence from one of the major forces in the incident also serves to communicate about the ideology of the local community. Excluding the plight of the African-Americans from the local dialogue could suggest that the local community saw the African-Americans as responsible for the drug bust. Evidence for this idea can be seen in how the community viewed law enforcement and the law in regards to the incident. The community portrayed law enforcement as doing nothing wrong and totally supported their actions. Seeing law enforcement as doing nothing wrong in the incident could reveal that the local community saw the entity on the other side of the law, namely the accused African-Americans, as having responsibility and breaking the law (King, 2000; Russett, 2000).

The local community also portrayed the law as totally unbiased and fair. The locals believed that if the accused African-Americans were not guilty, the law would not have found them guilty. But the law did find them guilty so in the locals view, they were responsible for the incident and in jail where they needed to be. There is textual evidence to support this conclusion; King (2002) wrote, "I am saddened by the results of their being so many drug dealers and users in Tulia." And an anonymous author (2002) contended "the fact remains that these people broke the law, were convicted, and were separated from their families." Further, the local artifacts as a whole reveal that the community's motive for communicating was to defend themselves against false allegations of racism and wrongdoing. The local community believes it was in the right

concerning the drug bust or they would not feel the need to defend themselves concerning the "misinforming outsiders." This can also be seen as support for the idea that the local community saw the accused African-Americans in the case as in the wrong or responsible for the drug bust. This view is quite different from the those held by the Texas and national communities.

Table 2: *Juxtaposition of the Term Accused African-Americans*

Local	Texas	National
[Silent]	Justice	Pardon
	Protect	Innocent
	Free	Free
	Unfair	Ruined

Although the Texas and national communities both fell on the opposite side of the local community in their view of how responsible the accused African-Americans were in the drug bust, this is where the similarities end. The Texas community portrayed the accused African-Americans situation as unjust and unfair, see Table 2. Unlike the local community, the Texas community did not know if the accused African-Americans were innocent or guilty but did portray the bust and subsequent trials as unfair. This view is also made evident by the prominent labeling of the accused African-Americans as *defendants* over other possible terms. Because of this view, the Texas community advocated freeing the accused African-Americans pending the outcome of the investigations into the incident.

The national community went much further than the Texas community and portrayed the accused African-Americans as innocent. They did not feel the accused were responsible for the drug bust and portrayed them as being caught up in a corrupt drug war. This community predominately used the label *victims* to describe the accused African-Americans, as they saw them as being wrongly accused and degraded in front of the world because of their race. The national community called for the immediate release of the accused African-Americans and saw them as being wrongly imprisoned. Each community analyzed had a uniquely different view of the accused African-Americans in the Tulia incident and differed on how responsible they say the accused African-Americans were and how they should be dealt with.

Tulians. Each community examined portrayed the town of Tulia and its residents differently. All three communities saw the town and its residents as prominent subjects of interest and they were talked about with frequency and intensity. The local community had a very positive view of their residents and their actions in the case, whereas the Texas and national community took a more critical view of the Tulians. Juxtaposing the three communities' ideologies concerning the Tulians revealed some stark differences in how each community viewed the physical town of Tulia and the Tulians' actions in the case.

The analysis chapters revealed large differences in how the local and national communities portrayed the actual physical town of Tulia. The Texas community did not mention physical attributes in the Texas artifacts. The local community saw Tulia as a beautiful farm-based town with a "pioneer spirit" (Gaylor, 2000). They described Tulia as having emerald fields that sparkle (Brewer, 2001) and "snowfalls that take your breath

away" (Brewer, 2001). The local community saw the town as almost an ideal place to live. This portrayal of Tulia is quite different than the one painted by the national community. The national community saw the physical town of Tulia as hot, dusty, frightening and bizarre. They portray the town as being plagued with "witchhunt hysteria" (Huffington, 2000) and not fit to live in. It is safe to assume that these two very different views were influenced by how each community saw the actions of the town in the drug bust and subsequent trials.

All three communities viewed the Tulians' actions in the incident somewhat differently. The Tulians' view of themselves is revealed through the *insiders* cluster in the local community analysis. As would be expected, the people of Tulia felt they were a very good, God-fearing community that was dedicated to making a safe and crime free community for its residents. They viewed the town as helpful and a great place to raise children. As is demonstrated in Table 3 below, the Tulians saw themselves throughout the incident as *caring*, *giving*, and *kind*. This view is quite different from the view of the

Table 3: *Juxtaposition of the Term Tulians*

Local	Texas	National
Care	Damaging	Frightening
Give	Divide	Terrible
Kind	Racist	Racist
Positive	Negative	Bad
Generosity	Gloating	Paranoid

Texas and national communities. Instead of positive ideas, the Texas and national communities used overwhelmingly negative ideas to describe the Tulians. Terms taken from the artifacts that were found to cluster around the terms referring to the Tulians (*residents* and *Tulia*) revealed the Texas and national communities' view of the Tulians as *gloating, racist, frightening* and *paranoid.* This is quite different from the local community. It is interesting to note how similar the terms used by the Texas and national communities were when referring to the Tulians. This reveals similar ideologies concerning the residents' actions in the case.

By juxtaposing three of the key terms used in the local, Texas, and national artifacts it becomes clear how differently each community used the key terms and the stark differences in the meanings they assigned to them. Juxtaposing the meaning of the same terms, in this case *law enforcement, accused African-Americans*, and *Tulians*, helps to give a better view of each community's ideologies concerning the situation. This juxtaposition also reminds the critic how prevalent symbolic mergers (Burke, 1937/1984) can be in rhetoric and how saturated symbols are with ideology. Symbols are by nature ambiguous; we as symbol users and symbol creators assign different meanings to them. An implication of the power of the ambiguous nature of symbols is that the message sent might not always be the message that is received. This disconnection can lead to any number of repercussions. In the Tulia incident this idea may account for why it took so long for the situation to be resolved.

Conclusions about Logology

Logology, or the study of how language works (Burke, 1970) proved to be an effective lens to understand the ideologies of the three communities and answer the

research question, "What are the dominant ideologies of the local, regional, and national communities concerning the Tulia drug bust?" Burke's concepts of hierarchy, perfection, mystery, and the pollution-purification-redemption cycle were well-suited for understanding and interpreting the key terms and clusters revealed in this analysis and allowed for an understanding of how the three communities reacted and made sense of this incident. These concepts allowed power structures built through the individual communities symbols to be unmasked, their motives for communicating to be revealed, and provided for a more substantial view of where each community stood in regard to the drug bust incident and the dominant ideology guiding their communication.

Conclusions about Cluster Analysis

Many conclusions can be drawn about the utility of cluster analysis as demonstrated by this thesis. As was mentioned above, cluster analysis proved to be a effective tool for uncovering ideology. Identifying the key terms and the terms that clustered around them in each community's artifacts, then taking all of the terms together served to expose the ideologies of the three communities concerning the Tulia incident. Burke (1937/1984) says of this aspect of the cluster method, "By charting clusters, we get our cues as to the important ingredients subsumed in 'symbolic mergers.' We reveal, beneath an author's 'official front,' the level at which a lie is impossible" (p. 233). A clear example of this is seen between the Texas and national artifacts. A quick or surface read through of the community artifacts would lead one to believe that both communities viewed the Tulia situation the same way; however, the cluster method was able to bring out the subtle differences in the communities' symbol use which demonstrated a distinct

ideology concerning the incident. Perhaps the most unexpected conclusion uncovered

regarding the utility of the cluster method is its power to reveal motive.

This thesis demonstrates that cluster analysis can reveal the motives of the

communities being analyzed. Burke (1941/1973) sees language and motives as being

closely related, "The motivation out of which he writes is synonymous with the structural

way in which he puts events and values together when he writes" (p.20). Typically

rhetorical critics have used Burke's pentad (1945) as a primary rhetorical tool used to

uncover motives in rhetoric. Many critics have used this tool and it has proven to be very

effective in uncovering motive (Brummett, 1979; Ling, 1970; Tonn, Endress, &

Diamond, 1993). However, the findings from this thesis give support to the idea that

cluster analysis should also be added to the selection of viable tools used to uncover

motive. This thesis demonstrated that motive, specifically motives belonging to a group,

can be uncovered by the use of cluster analysis.

The analysis chapters of this thesis demonstrated that each community had a

distinct motive in their rhetoric as revealed through the cluster analysis of the letters to

the editor and editorials published in each community. Cluster analysis exposed the local

community's motive for communicating as one of apologia or defense. The locals were

defending themselves and their community against the "misinforming outsiders." They

saw themselves as a good town with good laws and law enforcement but were being

picked on by the "attacking" outsiders. Because of this they were speaking up and out

for their town. Cluster analysis also exposed the Texas community's motive for

communicating as the need to purge themselves of the guilt associated with the local

Tulia hierarchy and all that went along with it. And finally the national community's

motive was exposed as blame. This community was attempting to uncover who or what was responsible for the incident in an effort to assign blame, deal with the guilty, and hopefully prevent other similar incidents from occurring. Because cluster analysis was able to reveal the motives of these communities, rhetorical critics should view cluster analysis as a viable tool in uncovering group motive.

Cluster analysis proved to be very effective in this investigation. There are, however, some limitations to using this method. In using the cluster method, the critic's analysis is always limited by the breadth and depth of artifacts examined. This thesis only examined community response artifacts published as letters to the editor and editorials in each community's newspapers. While this selection was appropriate for this investigation, using other community response sources, including community newsletters, could increase the depth and the scope of the cluster analysis findings. Also, cluster analysis does not address the classic Neo-Aristotelian concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos in an effort to determine if the rhetoric was effective. Although persuasiveness and effectiveness were not the focus of this investigation, considering the ethos of the letter writers, and determining if and how they used pathos and logos would add to the understanding of the Tulia drug bust situation.

Implications

Two important implications are made apparent through this investigation. The first implication concerns justice for the defendants in the case. As was hinted in the conclusions, the drastic differences in the three communities' ideologies could have contributed to delayed justice for the accused African-Americans sitting in jail because of the Tulia incident. One example of this can be seen with each communities' view of law

enforcement and their actions in the case. Each community has the ability to influence their respective government. If the local community had wanted the defendants out of jail because they thought law enforcement was corrupt, they could have exerted influence on the local government and the accused would undoubtedly been released sooner rather than later. However, as this thesis demonstrates, there was no support for this idea within the local community. Trying to get the accused released would have run contrary to the local ideology uncovered in this thesis and was unlikely to happen. In addition, it is also possible that any outliers who may have supported the accused and not supported the town hierarchy could have been fearful of speaking out on their behalf.

The national community, whose ideology revealed they did see law enforcement as corrupt and saw the accused as needing to be set free had less influence to get the accused out quickly. This is also true for the Texas community. Although they did not have the local influence that the Tulians did, they did have influence on the state and this influence is what ultimately lead to the release of the defendants albeit five years after the incident.

The second implication concerns ideologies that limit basic freedoms granted to all through the U.S. constitution. Bochner (1985) says that critical research should "focus attention on ethical standards, ideology, and social change" (p. 50). McLaren (1989) agrees and goes even further in saying that critics should "begin with the premise that men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege" (p.86). Consistent with these views, this thesis advocates vigorously confronting, in the academic and general public forum, ideologies that limit basic freedoms. The Tulia drug bust situation is just one of many events which

needs to be brought to light by a critical perspective. As Nothestine, Copeland, and Blair, (1994) would say, this is just part of our responsibility as critics and productive citizens.

Future Directions

This thesis points to many directions for future research. Conducting a follow up investigation on the remaining letters to the editor (2003-2005) from each community would give the critic a sense of the stability of each community's ideology as the case wore on. For example, in 2003 a judge ruled that Tom Coleman was not a credible witness and recommended that the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals overturn the 38 Tulia convictions (Cowan, 2003). Also, the ACLU discrimination lawsuit was won in 2004 when the remaining twelve accused were released from jail and all thirty-eight of the accused were jointly awarded a five million dollar settlement (MSNBC.com, 2004). What effect, if any, do these events have on the each community's ideology? Does the ideology shift or change due to these new revelations? What would the results of this analysis tell us about ideologies in general? Also, what effect did this case have on judicial practices? How has this country's law changed as a result of this incident? Are these changes moving us in the right direction? These are important questions that could be answered by follow-up analysis.

Also, examining the official communication between the state government, Panhandle Narcotics Task Force, Swisher County Sheriff Department and the Tulia city government could shed light on how these organizations dealt with the Tulia drug bust situation internally. What were their priorities? This type of investigation could reveal in more detail why the situation took so long to be resolved and what changes have occurred as a result of the many investigations into the incident.

Additionally, a qualitative effort could be undertaken with the goal of understanding the accused African-Americans and their families perceptions of the event. How did they make sense of the event? How did this shift or change their worldview of Texas or America? No matter what type of investigation follows this thesis, the academic community should remain focused on uncovering and challenging ideologies that limit freedoms granted to all. Chisun Lee, writer for the Village Voice, (2004) reiterated the importance of this struggle when she commented, "This on-going struggle can make the American dream of equality and dignity come true for everyone."

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