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Keywords

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SAVE A HUNTER, SHOOT A HMONG: A COMMUNITY HELD RESPONSIBLE—THE ASSIGNMENT OF BLAME BY THE MEDIA

By Aimee J. Baldillo, Esq., Jeanette Mendy, and Vincent Eng, Esq.*

It was the weekend before Thanksgiving, the second day of the hunting season, and like many Americans, Chai Soua Vang, a 36 year old Hmong American and U.S. citizen who had served in the U.S. Army, spent his weekend hunting in the woods in Meteor, Wisconsin. By the end of the day, instead of returning to his home with his game, Chai Soua Vang was in police custody for the alleged shooting of eight hunters. Chai Soua Vang's involvement in the tragedy that occurred at 12:30 p.m. on November 21, 2004 would not be limited to assignation of his own guilt or innocence. Rather, the case would have repercussions for all Hmong Americans by putting an entire community on national trial for the actions of one man.

Rice Lake is a small town in the northwest corner of Wisconsin. Hunting is a way of life in the state, and by the start of the 2004 season the Department of Natural Resources had granted 640,000 hunting licenses.¹ The season officially kicks off the Saturday before Thanksgiving and lasts nine days.² It is a special time in the community, as families come together and take part in celebration. Family deer hunts are a deeply rooted part of the culture in the area, and it is not uncommon for schools to close during this time and for families to travel to be together at the start of the season.³

Anyone who followed the news concerning Chai Soua Vang and the Wisconsin hunting tragedy is familiar with the story. According to news reports,⁴ Chai Soua Vang said the confrontation began when he was hunting on public land and got lost, ending up in a vacant tree stand. He did not realize he was on private property and remained in the tree stand until another hunter, Terry Willers, came along and informed him that he was on private property. Chai Soua Vang then climbed out of the tree stand at which point Willers made a call on his walkie-talkie. Other hunters arrived in all-terrain vehicles and surrounded him. Chai Soua Vang stated that some of the people in the group yelled racial slurs at him and that one individual pointed and fired a gun at him from about 30 feet away. He dropped to a crouch as the bullet hit the ground about 10 feet away. He then took the scope off his rifle and began shooting at them.

Of the eight victims, six were killed – Jessica Willers, Dennis Drew, Mark Roidt, Robert and Joseph Crotteau, and Allan Laski. The other two – Terry Willers and Lauren Hesebeck – went to the hospital with injuries. The news reported that there was only one gun found among the group of eight victims.⁵ According to Terry Willers and Lauren Hesebeck, no one in their hunting group pointed a gun at Chai Soua Vang or yelled racial slurs before he started shooting.⁶ They claimed that Chai Soua Vang fired the first shot after he was confronted on private property.⁷

Chai Soua Vang was charged with six counts of first-degree

intentional homicide by use of a dangerous weapon and two counts of attempted first-degree intentional homicide.⁸ This case has gained such national prominence that the Attorney General of Wisconsin directly prosecuted the case in her first courtroom appearance since being elected in 2002.⁹

This article neither makes judgments with respect to Chai Soua Vang's innocence or guilt, nor does it comment on the discrepancies in the different versions of the facts. Rather, it focuses on the aftermath and effects of this tragedy on the Hmong American community and the assignment of blame and responsibility the media and certain individuals have levied upon them.

BRIEF HISTORY OF HMONG AMERICANS

Americans know very little about the Hmong—even within the Asian Pacific American community. What we do know of the Hmong—their recruitment by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the Vietnam War and why they are in the United States—was only recently disclosed when government documents were declassified in the early 1990s.¹⁰ Our knowledge of the Hmong is also limited because they did not develop a written language until the 1950s and their history has been passed down orally through the generations. But in the 30 years that they have been in the United States, Hmong Americans (numbering 169,428 according to the Census 2000) have emerged as successful small business owners, professionals, and politicians.

The Hmong are an ancient ethnic group without a country who can trace their history back to China circa 1200 B.C.¹¹ Living in oppression, the Hmong, called *Miao* (savage) by the Chinese, were agriculturally based nomadic clans.¹² In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the Hmong fled the oppression they faced in China and settled into Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand.¹³

During the Vietnam War, the CIA recruited the Hmong to assist the United States against the North Vietnamese.¹⁴ In exchange for their assistance, the Hmong were promised resettlement in the United States if the war was lost.¹⁵ By 1969, 40,000 Hmong soldiers were fighting with the United States against the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese government.¹⁶

After the withdraw of the United States in 1973 and the collapse of South Vietnam in 1975, the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao actively sought out the Hmong for execution or imprisonment in re-education camps.¹⁷ In 1975, the United States immediately resettled the high ranking Hmong military officers and their families.¹⁸ Many of those who were not resettled in the United States in the first group fled to Thailand to live in refugee camps.¹⁹ By 1978, these refugee centers held about 50,000 people.²⁰

Since 1975, the U.S. government has allowed groups of Hmong from these refugee centers to resettle in the United

States.²¹ Originally, Hmong refugees were dispersed in over 53 cities in 25 different states. Between 1981 and 1985, the Hmong began to re-form their traditional clan communities in the United States by undertaking a secondary migration, mostly to California and parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota in small family groups.

Due to cost of living and other economic reasons, a third migration occurred from the west coast to the Midwest in the 1990s, primarily to the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.²² This migration made St. Paul the city with the largest Hmong American population in the United States at 24,389.²³ That number is expected to grow larger as many of the remaining thousands of Hmong who are still in Thailand waiting to be resettled are expected to resettle in the Twin Cities region.

NEW HOME, NEW PROBLEMS

Assimilation into American communities, including those in the Twin Cities region, has not been without difficulty for Hmong Americans. The Hmong brought old customs and traditions to their new homes. Many of these customs and traditions are difficult for the new American neighbors to understand. For example, a Hmong funeral can last up to four days and services typically include many cultural rituals foreign to traditional American funerals. Citizens in a Sheboygan, Wisconsin neighborhood complained that mourners attending Hmong funerals created parking problems on the city streets for the multiple day ceremonies.²⁴ Additionally, it is not uncommon for Hmong to rely upon a shaman to cure illnesses rather than a medical doctor.²⁵ Abiding by such traditions and customs has resulted in social and legal problems for members of the Hmong population living in the United States. Animal sacrifices performed by Hmong during traditional religious rituals on a farm caused one Minnesota city to sue the owner for violating a zoning ordinance.²⁶ Living in the United States while trying to preserve certain customs and traditions of their home country has proved to be difficult for the Hmong Americans as well as for their neighbors whose frustration with these cultural traditions have made tensions apparent.

Other issues that face the Hmong and the communities in which they live are problems with barriers to employment due to difficulties with written and spoken language,²⁷ and increased Hmong gang activity.²⁸ These problems may have aided the development of an environment ripe for assigning blame to the Hmong as a whole in the latest incident involving a member of the Hmong community.

THE MEDIA'S ROLE IN ATTRIBUTING THE KILLINGS TO CULTURE

In early September of 1998, Khoua Her strangled her six children to death and then tried unsuccessfully to kill herself.²⁹ Media reports on Her's case focused on the Hmong culture and

recounted her hardships being a Hmong in the United States as an explanation for her actions.³⁰ Contrastly, when Andrea Yates, a stay at home mother of five living in Houston, Texas, killed all of her children, the media focused on her mental state as an excuse for her actions.³¹ Both women killed their own children by their own hands but the media assigned blame to the Hmong culture and population as a group in Her's case and blame was removed from Yates and assigned to a mental illness.

In Chai Vang's case the focus is again on the Hmong culture as an explanation. Almost immediately after the killings of the hunters, the media began examining the Hmong American community in an attempt to make causal connections between the Hmong culture and the incident. Reporting on details of the case soon gave way to commentary and complaints about Hmong Americans as a whole. For example, several news articles made mention of how the Hmong have difficulty understanding and abiding by laws such as fishing limits and hunting permit requirements because such laws do not exist in their countries of origin.³² Although there was acknowledgment of the fact that there was a lack of outreach to Hmong American residents to educate them about hunting regulations by the Department of Natural Resources, the image painted of Hmong American hunters was one of a people who held hunting laws and regulations in total contempt and violated such rules at higher rate than other hunters.³³ Prominent members of the Hmong American community noted the media's reporting of a so-called "Hmong hunting culture" and voiced concern to members of the press about their stunted portrayal. As Minnesota state Senator Mee Moua, a Hmong American, told members of the Asian American Journalists Association, "I keep reading about the 'Hmong hunting culture' or that Hmong don't understand public and private land use. There is no Hmong hunting culture. Of course the terrain is different so hunters may hunt differently in Laos than they do in America. But hunting is hunting. And within that culture, all hunters are deeply territorial about where they hunt. And by the way, we are Hmong Americans. We are law-abiding citizens who respect the rights of others."³⁴

Members of the Hmong American community recognized that people looked to them, collectively, to answer for Chai Soua Vang's actions. "It's difficult to be Hmong American right now," said state Senator Mee Moua.³⁵ "There's an expectation that the Hmong American community ought to be answerable, or ought to be responsible for this one man's actions."³⁶ The leaders in the Hmong American community were barraged with questions from the local and national press exploring the fact that Chai Soua Vang was Hmong and whether his Hmong heritage had any effect on why he would have committed this act.³⁷

With the advent of the internet to deliver news instantaneously, this country has seen its share of local stories rushed to the national headlines: the OJ Simpson case, the Columbine

"I keep reading about the 'Hmong hunting culture' or that Hmong don't understand public and private land use. There is no Hmong hunting culture"

shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing, and the events of 9/11. What differentiates the Chai Soua Vang case from these others is that the media focused on the responsibility of the community for the alleged actions of this single man.

“SAVE A HUNTER, SHOOT A MUNG”

A week after the killings, there were reports of hate bumper stickers appearing on vehicles in Wisconsin that read “Save a Deer. Shoot a Hmong.”³⁸ The next month, Custom Now, a store in Mankato, Wisconsin, carried bumper stickers that read “Save a Hunter. Shoot a Mung.”³⁹ The store manager for Custom Now insisted that the sticker was not racist, as Mung was an acronym for “Minuscule Unseen Naughty Gnat.”⁴⁰ In Menomonie, Wisconsin, a 39-year-old Caucasian man was charged with spray painting “Killers” on the homes of Hmong Americans.⁴¹ In January 2005, the National Socialist Movement, an organization dedicated to the “preservation of our Proud Aryan Heritage” and fights for “Race and Nation”⁴² in the St. Paul/Minneapolis area, distributed hundreds of flyers with pictures of the six slain Wisconsin hunters that read, “Is diversity worth even *ONE* American life? These six Americans were killed protecting their private property / hunting rights...Are you next?”⁴³ The National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, a prominent civil rights legal advocacy organization in Washington, D.C. that monitors and responds to hate crimes against Asian Pacific Americans, have received further reports of Hmong Americans being sent death threat letters, assaulted and having guns pointed at them, and victimized by hate property crimes. The Hmong National Development, Inc. and the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center, both national advocacy organizations, have received similar reports. In most instances, the hate crime victims are reluctant to even report the crime or incident for fear of further reprisal.

CRAFTING A COLLECTIVE BLAME

*I would like to ask that anyone who is trying to make this a racial issue either white or minority would please stop this and know that is a dishonor to all of our loved ones to continue these acts of prejudice. If you are not of Native American blood, we are all immigrants.*⁴⁴

Theresa Hesebeck

Sister of victim Lauren Hesebeck, December 13, 2004

Immediately after the shooting, the local news broadcast Chai Soua Vang’s home address on the news. Chai Soua Vang’s family quickly moved to an undisclosed area for their safety. The news media also quickly began reporting on Chai Soua Vang’s military enlistment history and involvement in a domestic disturbance incident in 2001.⁴⁵ What was not reported was the vigil that Chai Soua Vang’s neighbors, his white neighbors, held to ensure the safety of his family and his house. Likewise, not a single major media outlet covered Theresa Hesebeck’s statement of tolerance or the website she established to memori-

alize the victims. In its coverage of the Chai Soua Vang case and related events, the media chose a distinct path by holding the Hmong American community suspect. This characterization has resulted in members of the Hmong American community taking a defensive stance on the case or constantly make a public distinction between the Hmong American people as a whole and the defendant as an individual.

*It does not in any way represent who we are as a people*⁴⁶

Shwaw Vang

Madison School Board Member

Why did Shwaw Vang feel the need to say this? What compelled him to take a defensive stance on behalf of an entire population of people that had no involvement whatsoever with the shootings? The examples of graffiti and bumper stickers exemplify the backlash that the Hmong American community faced, and that many held their Hmong neighbors responsible for Chai Soua Vang’s actions. Why were there no such vigilante reprisals in the wake of the Columbine shootings or the Oklahoma City bombings? Why was there no questioning of “White America” on whether the actions of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were related to their race? Did America hold German Americans responsible for the actions of Jeffrey Dahmer’s brutality? Should we hold all whites accountable for the actions of those individuals?⁴⁷

The absurdity of the thought begs the question of why Hmong Americans are being held accountable. These very observations were made in editorial opinions published in Minnesota and Wisconsin newspapers.⁴⁸ When a crime is perpetrated by a white person, the press does not call out to a specifically white population for answers. The media does not seek out “white community leaders” to speak about the criminal actions of an individual. As Susan Lampert Smith notes in her editorial, “[B]eing white means you hardly ever have to feel sorry for the bad things done by members of your race. And no one asks you whether you should feel responsible or explain the crimes of others.”⁴⁹

*There are two communities hurting*⁵⁰

Melissa Paulette

Resident, Rice Lake, Wisconsin

Paulette’s statement in response to the “Save a Deer. Shoot a Hmong” bumper sticker is extremely poignant in light of the racial tensions that have enveloped the area. The Rice Lake community in Meteor, Wisconsin will never be the same. Thanksgiving and the festive start of the hunting season will forever be a painful reminder of what happened in 2004. Likewise, the Hmong American community will never be the same. Hmong American hunters will be viewed as a hostile threat and

perhaps worry about becoming a target themselves when they enter the woods to enjoy the sport of hunting.⁵¹ As noted by Norman Rademaker, a member of the Exeland Area Rod and Gun Club, at a forum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, “For the safety of all concerned hunters, the only way to avoid future possible trouble is for Hmong to not return to hunt anywhere near the area where the greatest tragedy in hunting memories occurred.”⁵²

After the shootings, the Hmong American community found itself in a strange position; they had no involvement with the case whatsoever and yet, were expected to have an opinion on the case nonetheless. Members of the Hmong American community had to consciously ask the public and the media to keep the actions of Chai Soua Vang separate from a Hmong Ameri-

can community group identity. However, they have experienced what happens when individuals cannot not do just that; a shared ethnicity with a defendant became the basis of senseless, racist acts committed by people who could not distinguish between Chai Vang and a greater group of people who are uninvolved with the case. The future of the criminal case against Chai Soua Vang will be a concern for the Hmong American community because they will need to be vigilant of a continued backlash. An arguably unwelcome and unfair connection has been formed between the defendant and the Hmong American community because the public has already seen the individual facts and merits of the case attached to an aspect of group identity. Now the Hmong American community must bear the burden of the media’s decision to craft a collective blame.

ENDNOTES

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Jeanette Mendy is a second year part-time student at the American University, Washington College of Law and is a full time Program Analyst for a federal agency in Washington, D.C.; Ms. Mendy has spent Spring 2005 semester researching the Chai Soua Vang case. She plans to practice in the field of elder law.

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¹ P.J. Huffstutter and Stephanie Simon, *Shock, Anger Pierce a Hunter’s Paradise*, L.A. TIMES, Nov. 23, 2004, at A1.

² Rene Sanchez and Bob von Sternberg, *Wisconsin Shootings - Tracing Two Paths to Tragedy*, STAR TRIBUNE, Nov. 28, 2004, at 1A.

³ Stephen Kinzer, *Motive in Hunting Deaths is a Riddle*, N.Y. TIMES, Nov. 23, 2004, at 16 [hereinafter Kinzer].

⁴ See generally Lisa Schuetz, *The Slaughter in the Woods*, WIS. STATE J., Nov. 23, 2004, at A1 (article discussing reported facts of the case); Lee Bergquist, *Accused Shooter Says He Was Fired at First; He Claims Hunters Surrounded Him, Used Racial Slurs*, MILWAUKEE J. SENTINEL, Nov. 24, 2004, at 1.

⁵ *In Rampage, Hunters Became the Hunted*, ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, Nov. 23, 2004, at 1A.

⁶ Jill Burcum, *In Brief Court Appearance, Chai Vang Pleads Not Guilty*, STAR TRIBUNE, December 30, 2004, at 13A.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Compl. at ¶ 2-4, *Wisconsin v. Vang* (No. 04-CF-141) (2004) available at http://www.doj.state.wi.us/news/vang_information_122804.pdf.

⁹ Steven Walters, *Lautenschlager Aims to Seek Re-election*, MILWAUKEE J. SENTINEL, Dec. 28, 2004, at 1.

¹⁰ See generally, JANE HAMILTON-MERRITT, *TRAGIC MOUNTAINS* [hereinafter HAMILTON-MERRITT] (1993).

¹¹ KEITH QUINCY, *HONG HISTORY OF A PEOPLE* 30 (2d ed. 1995) [hereinafter QUINCY].

¹² *Id.*

¹³ ASIAN AMERICAN ALMANAC 21 (Irene Natividad & Susan B. Gall eds., 1996) [hereinafter ALMANAC].

¹⁴ See HAMILTON-MERRITT, *supra* note 10, at 130.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 92.

¹⁶ See ALMANAC, *supra* note 13.

¹⁷ See QUINCY, *supra* note 11, at 21.

¹⁸ Yvonne Y. Lee, *Guilt By Ethnic Association*, SINGTAO U.S. MAGAZINE, page numbers unavailable (Dec. 11, 2004).

¹⁹ See QUINCY, *supra* note 11, at 21.

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.* See also Wayne Carroll, Tua Lor, Elina Camane, *Hmong Population Research Project*, available at <http://www.uwec.edu/Econ/research/Hmong/256,6> (last visited Mar. 4, 2005).

²² David Peterson, *More Hmong Find Home in Midwest*, STAR TRIBUNE, Aug. 15, 2001, at 1A.

²³ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000.

²⁴ Bob Petrie, *Funeral Home Tries to Ease Parking Concerns During Long Services*, THE SHEBOYGAN PRESS, Nov. 14, 2003, at 1A.

²⁵ Laura Ueber, *Cultural Barriers to Health Care for Southeast Asian Refugees*, Public Health Rep 107: 544-548, September-October 1992 (explaining that Hmong believe minor illnesses have organic origins and serious illnesses are caused by supernatural causes that can be cured by services of a shaman.).

²⁶ Kimberly Hayes Taylor, *Slaughterhouse Dispute*, STAR TRIBUNE, Mar. 19, 2000, at 1B.

²⁷ Thomas Moore, Ph.D. and Vicky Selkove, *The Impact of Welfare Reform on Wisconsin’s Hmong Recipients*, THE INSTITUTE FOR WISCONSIN’S FUTURE, Dec. 1999.

²⁸ Jessica McBride, *Gang Crime Spreading, Study Says*, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL, May 31, 2001, at 1A. See also Richard Straka, *The Violence of Hmong Gangs and the Crime of Rape*, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Vol. 72, No. 2, Feb. 2003, 12-16.

²⁹ Curt Brown and Lourdes Medrano Leslie, *Mother: Killing Kids Saved Them From Suffering*, STAR TRIBUNE, Jan. 9, 1999, at 1A (discussing interview conducted with Khoua Her before her sentencing).

³⁰ *Id.* See also Curt Brown and Lourdes Medrano Leslie, *A Young Mother Accused of Murder*, STAR TRIBUNE, Nov. 15, 1998, at 1A; Kimberly Hayes Taylor, *Hmong Leaders Meet to Ponder Impact, Reasons for St. Paul Children’s Death*, STAR TRIBUNE, Sept. 14, 1998, at 6B; Jon Jeter, *In Disintegration of a Marriage, Six Children are Strangled*, WASH. POST, Sept. 6, 1998, at A2.

³¹ Miriam Garcia and Alan Bernstein, *A Life Unraveled*, THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE, June 24, 2001, at 1A (discussing Andrea Yates reported problems with depression).

³² See generally Dirk Johnson, *Slaughter in the Woods*, NEWSWEEK, Dec. 6, 2004, at 28 (“It’s not a secret some whites grouse that Hmong hunters are poachers, and some of the Hmong consider the whites bigots.”); *In Rampage, Hunters Became the Hunted*, ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, Nov. 23, 2004, at 1A (“Locals in the Birchwood area, about 120 miles northeast of the Twin Cities, have complained that the Hmong (pronounced mung), refugees from Laos do not understand the concept of private property and hunt wherever they see fit.”).

³³ See generally, Stephanie Hemphill, *Hunting Deaths Spur Concern about Backlash*, MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO, Nov. 23, 2004 (“Bartz says 20 years ago some Hmong people sometimes got into trouble because they were used to unregulated hunting and fishing. But 11 years ago, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) hired a liaison to teach them about Wisconsin’s regulations. Bartz says now, Hmong hunters are just as responsible as most hunters.”); *Forum Shows Tensions After Killing of Hunters*, THE CAPITAL TIMES, Dec. 18, 2004 (“Eau Claire City Council member Thomas Vue told the forum that Rademaker’s statement (that Hmong hunters repeatedly have trespassed on private hunting land in recent years, severely straining relations with other hunters and

ENDNOTES CONTINUED

landowners) assumes Hmong hunt irresponsibly and are prone to violence. 'That's simply not the case. Many Hmong people hunt the right way,' he said, acknowledging more education of Hmong hunters is needed. A statement from a Hmong resident at the forum in reaction to Rademaker's statement reveals his frustration with the depiction of Hmong - 'I'm hearing a lot about how dumb and stupid the Hmong are.'"); Todd Richmond, *DNR, Hmong Debate How to Spread Respect in Wake of Shootings*, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS STATE AND LOCAL WIRE, Dec. 7, 2004 [hereinafter Richmond] ("Kou Xiong, the state's DNR Hmong liason is the only one in the agency that deals directly with the Hmong and can't educate the approximately 14,000 Hmong hunters that take to Wisconsin's woods.").

³⁴ Esther Wu, *Hmong Americans Feel Fallout From Hunters' Deaths*, THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, Dec. 9, 2004, at 7B.

³⁵ See Kinzer, *supra* note 3.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ See Richmond, *supra* note 33. (Task force chairwoman Kaying Xiong said, "It's sad the media keeps referring to Chai Soua Vang as a Hmong immigrant. That casts an entire group in a bad light. It's difficult to respond to questions, respond to reading the newspaper, and not feel it's our fault".

³⁸ *600 Gather for Healing Prayer Service*, MILWAUKEE J. SENTINEL, Dec. 1, 2004, at 16.

³⁹ Alex Friedrich, *Anti-Hmong Bumper Sticker Creates a Stir*, ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS, Dec. 14, 2004, at 38.

⁴⁰ *Sticker Advocated Violence Against Hmong*, ASSOCIATED PRESS ONLINE, Dec. 13, 2004, available at <http://www.philly.com/mld/state/10410448.htm>.

[hereinafter *Sticker Advocated Violence*] (last visited Mar. 8, 2005).

⁴¹ *Hmong Homes Targeted*, WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL, Dec. 4, 2004, at B3.

⁴² National Socialist Movement, available at <http://www.nsm88.com/> (last visited Mar. 8, 2005).

⁴³ *Nazi Organization Distributes Anti-Hmong Flyers Throughout Twin Cities*, HMONG TODAY, Jan. 13, 2005, available at <http://www.hmongtoday.com/displaynews.asp?ID=1822> (last visited Mar. 7, 2005).

⁴⁴ Rice Lake Hunters Memorial, available at [\[memorial.com/letter.html\]\(http://memorial.com/letter.html\) \(last visited Mar. 8, 2005\).](http://www.rice-lake-hunters-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

⁴⁵ Ted Gregory, Glenn Jeffers, and John McCormick, *Cops Try to Unravel Hunting Massacre*, CHI. TRIB., Nov. 23, 2004, at 1C.

⁴⁶ Sandy Cullen, *Hmong Leaders Worry There Will Be Backlash*, WISCONSIN STATE J., Nov. 23, 2004, at A5.

⁴⁷ *Our View*, WISCONSIN RAPIDS DAILY TRIBUNE, Dec. 11, 2004, at 6A ("The Hmong community is no more responsible for the crime than German-Americans are accountable for Jeffrey Dahmer's brutality.").

⁴⁸ See generally, Ashwin Vinod Raman, *Race Isn't the Issue in Recent Shootings*, ST. CLOUD TIMES, Dec. 20, 2004, at 5B. ("I can understand there are people who are furious about Vang's actions, but why should the rest of the Hmong community have to suffer these racial abuses? [Referring to the bumper stickers] Don't say the larger issue here is that some Hmong and other immigrants have poor command of the English language, or that they have no respect for the law. The majority of crimes in Minnesota are committed by white people, and I have encountered some whites who can't even put a sentence together."); Susan Lampert Smith, *The Perils of Group Coverage*, WISCONSIN STATE J., Dec. 15, 2004, at B1 ("All kinds of media, our newspaper included, thought it was an important part of the story to get the 'Hmong reaction' and explore the Hmong angle. One Associated Press story quoted a 'Hmong community leader' as saying, 'What happened in Wisconsin is in no way representative of the Hmong people and what they stand for. We stand before you as representatives of the greater law-abiding Hmong community to unconditionally condemn these atrocities.' If you substitute the word 'white' for 'Hmong,' you get an idea of how really strange this gets.").

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ See *Sticker Advocated Violence*, *supra* note 40.

⁵¹ *Forum Shows Tensions After Killing of Hunters*, THE CAPITAL TIMES, Dec. 18, 2004, at 6A.

⁵² *Forum Shows Depths of Racial Tensions*, WISCONSIN STATE J., Dec. 18, 2004, at B3.