ABSTRACT

TITLE:	The Functional Landscape of Rafting in Durango
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ABSTRACT: Rafting in Durango serves a different function for people in the community, depending on how much they participate in the activity. The functionalism of rafting in Durango describes the value that the activity has to different people. There are two main groups that are involved in rafting: raft guides (ones who use the river daily) and community members whose involvement with the river is less than that of raft guides. Due to the distinction between the two groups, raft guides fall into a category of being their own cultural institution with a set of beliefs and practices that define them as so. In the landscape of Durango, rafting is then a valuable part in maintaining not only the personal identities of individuals in the community but also how rafting in general is a cohesive part of Durango society. In this paper I will discuss how rafting is a function of cultural expression and identity within the Durango community. This is important because there has not been very much research done regarding rafting and its social implications. I hope to understand further how rafting is a functional part of creating and maintaining social structure within a community, specifically Durango, because it is important to understand how individuals of Durango "pursue their own ends within the constraints of their culture"(M&W:161).