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Public Journalism, the Second Level of Agenda-Setting and Public Policy: The Role of the *Daily Press* Newspaper in Creating, Framing and Fostering the Issues of Regionalism and Consolidation on the Virginia Peninsula, 1944-1996

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**PUBLIC JOURNALISM, THE SECOND LEVEL OF AGENDA-SETTING AND PUBLIC
POLICY: THE ROLE OF THE DAILY PRESS NEWSPAPER IN CREATING,
FRAMING AND FOSTERING THE ISSUES OF REGIONALISM AND CONSOLIDATION
ON THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA, 1944-1996.**

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A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Old Dominion
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ABSTRACT

PUBLIC JOURNALISM, THE SECOND LEVEL OF AGENDA-SETTING AND PUBLIC POLICY: THE ROLE OF THE *DAILY PRESS* NEWSPAPER IN CREATING, FRAMING AND FOSTERING THE ISSUES OF REGIONALISM AND CONSOLIDATION ON THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA, FROM 1944-1996.

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This study uses quantitative content analysis, with qualitative elite interviewing as a supplemental tool, to investigate the role of the *Daily Press* newspaper in creating, framing and fostering the locally controversial issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Virginia Peninsula from 1944-1996.

The investigation supports earlier findings regarding the second-level of Agenda-setting in terms of the newspaper's ability to cumulatively create "the pictures in our heads" of events or issues. The dissertation suggests that by selecting thematically related attributes over time, the newspaper acts to transmit issue salience, but that the potential impact of the "picture in our heads" is ameliorated by the effectiveness of the frame chosen by the paper and how well that frame connects with the community.

Another important finding is that public journalism has been practiced by the *Daily Press* through family and corporate ownership without being labeled, for more than half a century. The study suggests that civic activism on the part of the paper can be very effective in creating spaces for public deliberation of public policy issues. But, when

the newspaper acts apart from the community, this study suggests that civically active journalism can reduce the special nature of the newspaper to act as an advocate for the community and to enhance civic capacity and actually creates a "disconnect" between the newspaper and its community regarding specific public policy issues.

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my father, Charles
J. O'Bier, who I know would be proud.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is twofold: one, to investigate the relationship between civic activism on the part of the *Daily Press* newspaper regarding the urban issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Virginia Peninsula from 1944-1996. Two, to determine if news coverage on those issues during that time frame was biased with regard to tone and selection of sources. The dissertation uses a multimethod research approach in order to triangulate the findings: quantitatively, a content analysis of 52 years of news stories and editorials from the daily pages of the *Daily Press* will specifically address framing and bias issues. Qualitatively, indepth elite interviews will explicate those quantitative findings and give broader and more robust meaning to the results.

The dissertation is based on the theory of Agenda-setting, and uses the urban issues of regionalism and consolidation in order to provide a historical context for the study. This is not a study of regionalism, but a study of relationships, or potential relationships, between an activist press and the public agenda.

Research indicates that news media help determine what

we think about in terms of issue creation and retention (Hertzog, Finnegan, Kahn 1994); that civic behavior and knowledge of public affairs is correlated with news media habits (Knowles, 1977). Research also indicates that issues rise and fall depending on constraints like issue competition and the relative strength of issue advocates (Zhu, 1992). Schudson even suggests that the power of the media lies not primarily in its power to declare things to be true, but in its ability to focus on the way the information appears (Schudson, 1982). And, of course, the Agenda-setting theory of the media suggests that the media help the public decide what the public agenda will be (McCombs and Shaw, 1972).

In essence then, the news media--journalists--help to create, frame and foster issues on the public agenda by the choices they make regarding coverage of public issues. Therefore journalists are key in the civic process today. By choosing to cover or "pay attention " to an issue, journalists help to create public awareness and potential action about a community issue. By the way they frame and foster an issue, they may give or deny credence to that issue and therefore may ensure its survival or death on the public agenda. By the way journalists frame or portray an issue and the sources involved in that issue, they provide the framework within which the issue may rise or fall on the public agenda.

But what happens to the relationship between the news

media and public policy if the traditional values associated with the print news media (objectivity, independence and a lack of "boosterism" for example) are abandoned or changed? What happens if what we're told to think about and how we're told to think about it, is tied to a civically activist press? Not an **advocacy** press, that blatantly espouses a particular viewpoint in daily news coverage, but a civically active press; a press that now "involves citizens in framing problems" that increase " . . . their connection to their communities" (Civic Catalyst, p.3, 1997)-- citizen-journalists.

This change in reporting methods is a controversial issue in Journalism and Urban Policy Studies today called Public, Civic or Communitarian Journalism.

This Introduction will detail the significance of the study, need for the study, and the purpose of the study. The research questions are also included in this chapter as well as introductory background about the Agenda-setting theory, the Public Arenas model, regionalism/consolidation and public journalism. The introduction also includes delimitations of the dissertation. Each chapter in the study will conclude with a chapter summary to provide closure for the chapter and direction for the next chapter.

Significance: The advent of public journalism in relation to the Agenda-setting theory of the media is significant in terms of understanding how, if and why, the

way a newspaper frames a public policy issue over time affects the issue or consequences of the issue in the community. The relationship between public journalism and the Agenda-setting theory of the media is significant to Urban Studies in terms of suggesting the way the news media helps to create, frame and foster public issues on the public agenda.

The relevance and significance of public journalism and the Agenda-setting theory of the media to Urban Studies is somewhat dependent on one's stand on the practice. On one hand, public journalism supposedly helps to reinvigorate the civic tradition that democracy is founded upon, and since local government is at the heart of a working democracy, citizen interest and action can only help improve democracy and thereby help improve our urban environment.

Conversely, journalists practicing activist journalism as public journalists risk losing what has, since Jefferson, been one of the ties that binds the fourth estate and democracy : objectivity (Entman, 1989). Entman even says that Jefferson suggested that one of the hallmarks of a free society was an objective and fair press. (Entman, 1989). Therefore, is public journalism "a way to reinvigorate public life by reinvigorating journalism"? (Merritt,p.22, 1996) Or is the public journalism movement to be interpreted as a "radical departure from traditional journalistic practice that aims at impartial news coverage"? (Case,p.14, 1994)

The importance of regionalism in terms of the urban nature of this dissertation is clearly indicated by Kirlin's suggestion that regional economies are the new "global" economies of the future, the way to transform our politics and the way to revive our cities and our citizens. (Kirlin, 1993)

Need for the Study: Although there have been studies that have examined the relationship between public journalism and readership civic behavior (Charity, 1996) and public journalism and trends in voting (Pew Center, 1996), little research has been conducted that scientifically discusses how, if and why, a newspaper's civic activism in public issues may play a part in the creation, framing and fostering of a public issue in a community over time. Indeed, Everette Dennis of the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center at Columbia University said, "Much, if not all, of what has been written is more the of polemic calls to action and evangelical road shows than documentation or cogent assessment that comports with thoughtful histories of journalism" (Dennis,p.48,1995).

Purpose: In light of this apparent dearth of information about the relationship between Agenda-setting,public journalism and public policy,the current study was undertaken. This study is a content analysis with exploration of findings through elite interviewing to look at

how, if and why, the *Daily Press* newspaper helped to create, frame and foster the issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Virginia Peninsula from 1944-1996 and whether the newspaper's active civic involvement in the issues affected the manner in which the issues were framed during those five decades. The study employs content analysis as the primary method of inquiry and elite interviewing as the supplemental, qualitative methodology.

Research Questions: Following are the specific research questions asked in the study:

RQ1: Was the *Daily Press*, through both private and corporate ownership, civically active in the issues of regionalism/consolidation during the 52 years under study?

RQ2: Was the coverage of regionalism/consolidation during the 52 years under study was biased?

RQ3: Did the appearance of bias or lack of bias in daily news coverage affect the way the issues of regionalism/consolidation were created, framed and fostered during 1944-1996?.

Theory

As mentioned earlier, the Agenda-setting theory of the media, in its most simplistic form, suggests that the media tells us what to think about and what to ignore--in other words, the media helps set the public agenda. This notion is particularly important in terms of this study, because in this study the researcher is looking at the potential consequences of that agenda-setting function in conjunction with questions about the effects of a civically activist press. Again, as mentioned earlier--what if what we're told to think about, what if what the media provides as the agenda at any point in time, is colored by the participation of the newspaper staff, editors or publisher?

This idea of "consequentiality" rather than "definition of the theory" or "ideas of causation" fits well into what is being called the most recent paradigm shift in Agenda-setting. (McCombs, 1992). In what McCombs calls the fifth stage of research for this more than 25-year-old theory, attempts are being made to link the theory with ideas about social system functioning including consensus building about community issues. (McCombs, 1992). This fifth phase of research activity marks what McCombs calls "theoretical maturity"; that "current work, digging further into the assumptions and conclusion of the accumulated evidence" (McCombs, p.820, 1992).

One model which works particularly well in conjunction with work done in this "fifth phase," is the Public Arenas model which has its origins in the field of Sociology. The model suggests that unlike the Zhu's Zero-Sum model (Zhu,1992), which suggests a win-lose competition for issues on the public agenda, Agenda-setting is a really a "process through which social problems rise and fall. . ." (Hilgartner and Bosk,p.53, 1988). The model emphasizes competition and selection in the media regarding other areas of public discourse and the importance of "operatives" like the media in creating, framing and fostering the agenda.

Hilgartner and Bosk suggest that growth or sustainability of a social problem on the public agenda has various constraints including competition from other social problems (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988). This model of Agenda-setting is relevant to this study because the issues of regionalism/consolidation have apparently sustained themselves on the public agenda for a large portion of 52 years, although they have faced competition from other local and national social problems like school desegregation, the Vietnam War and Watergate.

Regionalism/Consolidation

Regionalism in Southeastern Virginia has both contemporary and historical significance. Regionalism has

been on the public agenda for more than 52 years. In 1944, the first "regional cooperation" meeting between public and private officials was held on the Peninsula (*Daily Press*, 1944) and the forerunner of the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council (VPEDC) was born, and on November 13, 1996, one of the area's largest law firms held a conference called "Regionalism 1997: The State of Business and Municipal Cooperation in Hampton Roads and Virginia" (advertisement, *Daily Press*, 1996). More than 52 years of discussion, debate, planning and lobbying for this urban issue has taken place with no visible, concrete public policy result. The controversy is as fresh today as it was in editorials written by prominent local citizens asked to discuss the future of their communities in 1944 and reprinted in the *Daily Press* in 1996 (*Daily Press*, 1996).

One businessman now active in local politics has gone so far as to suggest that regional cooperation may become the "litmus test" for political candidates running for office in what is loosely called Hampton Roads (*The Virginian-Pilot*, 1996), In 1995 the *Daily Press* sponsored a "retreat" to Alaska for private and public elites on the Virginia Peninsula to discuss and think about regionalism (*Daily Press*, 1995). Late in 1996, Charlotte Hornet's owner, George Shinn, made regional cooperation a buzz-word yet again, by stating that only true regional cooperation could lure an NHL hockey team to Hampton Roads (*Daily Press*, 1995).

The concept of regional cooperation is not unique to Hampton Roads nor to the Virginia Peninsula. Charlotte, North Carolina; Baltimore, Maryland; Portland, Oregon and Philadelphia Pennsylvania are but a few of the "citistates" which have emerged as economic superpowers (Kirlin, 1993). Neil Pierce and his co-authors suggest that "citistates", or local governments which have regional governance, are "critical components of global economic competition" (Pierce in Kirlin,p.371, 1993). Some suggest that the main arguments for regional cooperation include the fact that "regions compete in the global economy" and that a nation is best understood as an "assemblage of regions" (Pierce in Kirlin,p.371 1993). Pierce also says that "successful regions compete best by strategically combining policies regarding development of human resources, land use, social issues , university research and philanthropy"(Pierce in Kirlin, p.372, 1993).

John Kirlin says that effective regional governance is required to "achieve . . .transformation of our political structure" (Kirlin,p.372, 1993). He continues by suggesting basically what public journalists would suggest: "Only by offering opportunities for strengthened citizenship, participation in political choice for that matter, and responsibility for helping to address problems of one's neighborhood and region . . are we likely to attract the commitment and release the human energy to make our regions

economically competitive . . . and afford a rich civic life to . . .citizens" (Kirlin,p.378, 1993)

Public Journalism

Public journalism, Civic journalism or Communitarian journalism. The name associated with this phenomenon in journalism is as controversial and indefinable as the phenomenon itself. It is a practice which some in the news media today believe is the way to "reconnect citizens with their newspaper, their communities and the political process." (O'Brien,p.105, 1995). Other believe the term public journalism is pejorative at worst and much-to-do about nothing at best. (Fallows,p.43, 1996)

Those who would believe public journalism is a quick descent into the bowels of bias say that public journalists are not "content to tell it like it is. They want to tell it and fix it at once." (Frankel, 1996). Some suggest the trend forces journalists to "participate in dialogue with voters . . .Staging campaign events, deciding what good citizenship is and force feeding it to citizens and candidates, and encouraging citizens to vote. (Fouhy,p.15, 1995). Some even suggest that public journalism is merely a marketing ploy, a source for plentiful foundation dollars for an editor to play with; a scam, if you will. (Case,p.14, 1994)

Some, including noted pollster Daniel Yankelovich, whose

book Coming to Public Judgement, helped spark the current "intellectual" foundation for the public journalism movement, suggests that newspapers need to stop relying on "experts." He says that in order to reactivate the civic process in the United States and to reinvigorate the public's sense of civic duty, the media needs to incorporate reader and viewer's opinions and ideas in the formulation of news judgement (Yankelovich, 1991). In other words, journalists must listen to and be involved in their communities and disengage themselves of the traditional notion of being "disconnected" (Rosen, 1997).

Others, who believe the controversy is really much to-do about nothing say "basically, we're talking about something which good newspapers are already doing" (Fouhy, p.15, 1995). The controversy seems to become more clear and yet more divisive when newspapers extend their desire to inform their readership about public affairs, and their desire to help renew interest in civic issues, from the editorial pages to the daily pages and the actual operation of the newspaper and its reporters. The controversy surrounds the notion of creating "citizen-journalists" (Steele, 1997)--journalists who are part of their political communities and yet still report daily news about political issues in those communities.

At the heart of the controversy is whether journalists should remain outside the issues involving their communities

and act as objective, impartial observers and story-tellers, relying on traditional notions of news judgement and relying on experts. Or is the role of the media to become an active participant in the civic process thereby helping to achieve community identify and consensus building and revitalize the civic tradition in the United States?

Delimitations

This study, as McCombs suggests is fitting in the "mature" stage of investigation of the Agenda-setting theory (McCombs, 1991), attempts to shed new light on the consequentiality of the theory. It does so using an emerging and narrow definition of the theory called the "second level of Agenda-setting", that says the transmission of attribute salience, "framing", is "the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed" (McCombs, p.6, 1997).

The study does not purport to legitimize nor critique the practice of public journalism, but does attempt to show the relationship between the print media, newspaper activism and the public agenda. The study also extends the idea of public journalism to activism by the publishers, not just reporters, in order to investigate whether activism by any affiliate of the paper affects news coverage. This study

specifically does not address advocacy journalism, which is a practice whereby journalists are unabashedly biased for or against an issue in daily news coverage. It is a study of public journalism, which as defined in the literature review, encourages journalists to be civically active in their communities but still requires they maintain a level of objectivity regarding public policy issues.

This study is also not a rationale for, nor a dismissal of, regionalism/consolidation in general or on the Virginia Peninsula specifically. It is not meant to be a study of regionalism as a planning tool or area of academic study. Regionalism, for the purposes of this study, provides the historical context for studying whatever relationship may exist between an activist media and the public agenda.

The study is also not meant to be a referendum on the quality, ethics or practices employed by the *Daily Press* over more than a half-century through private and corporate ownership, nor does the study condemn or applaud the efforts of individuals or groups seeking regional cooperation.

One further important limitation of the study is the printed quality of the newspaper articles under investigation. Some of the articles, especially from the 1940s were of poor microfiche quality and therefore copied poorly. Those articles which could not be read at all were dismissed from the sample population but those that were clear enough to read and comprehend through the first few

paragraphs were retained, under the assumption that the news and the focus of the story would appear in the first few paragraphs.

Chapter Summary

This study again, is a qualitative and quantitative look at if, how and why, the *Daily Press*, a medium-sized daily on the Virginia Peninsula helped to create, frame and foster the issues of regionalism/consolidation during 52 years. As will be discussed more thoroughly in the Methodology section of the paper, the newspaper was chosen for study, partially, because through private and corporate ownership, the newspaper has never identified itself as a practitioner of public journalism. It has never then, beyond the scope of the editorial page, identified itself as civically active in public policy issues.

The remainder of the dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter II will provide a literature review of regionalism/consolidation, Agenda-setting theory of the media and public journalism. This categorical format was chosen, as opposed, for instance to a chronological review, to allow for clear and specific definition of terms and to simplify the massive amount of literature available on each topic.

Chapter III will provide information on the specific protocol followed in the content analysis and the elite

interviewing. A brief explanation of content analysis and elite interviewing will also be provided in the Methodology chapter in order to clearly define the rationale for choosing the methods of inquiry and the impact of triangulating the data provided by those methods.

Chapter IV will report the quantitative findings of the content analysis and the qualitative findings of the elite interviewing. The Findings Chapter will then provide the basis for the final chapter, Chapter V.

Chapter V will explicate the findings in terms of the literature and discuss areas for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature will be organized in three parts. First, a discussion of Agenda-setting theory will be presented with particular attention being paid towards not replicating the information provided in the Introduction to this study. Rather than attempting to identify and discuss every article written on this much-studied, and much-written about theory over its more than 25 year history, the researcher chose to limit the scope of the review to articles pertaining to what is being called the second level of Agenda-setting (McCombs, 1997), which is more applicable to the current investigation. The researcher acknowledges that some consider information on the Framing paradigm to be a completely different set of literature from agenda-setting literature, but since the formal Framing paradigm is so new and the definition of the theory and paradigm itself is still in the process of being agreed upon (Framing conference, USC, October, 1997), it seemed more axiologically precise to discuss the issue of framing within an established theoretical framework--the second level of Agenda-setting.

A brief discussion of the history of regionalism and consolidation in Virginia (particularly with regard to the

Peninsula which provides the geographic focus for this study) and a short review of contemporary regionalism will be provided. The review of regionalism was conducted using the guideline that the issue provides the historical context for the study. Finally, a discussion of public journalism, tracing its roots through its current status, will be provided. Particular attention has been paid in the review of regionalism and in the review of public journalism once again, to avoid reiterating what has already been provided in the Introduction.

Agenda Setting Theory

As was discussed in the Introduction, the Agenda-setting theory of the media suggests that the media helps determine what issues will present themselves, will flourish or struggle, will die on the public agenda. The theory grew out of early research into mass media effects which viewed the media as having a direct or hypodermic effect on the public's attitudes which then directly affected behavior. Eyal, Winter and McCombs suggest this "magic bullet" theory or "hypodermic needle" theory grew out of the "perceived effects of wartime propaganda." (Eyal, Winter and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p. 15, 1980) Some of the important "pre" Agenda-setting literature was compiled by Hovland et.al in their work examining content and format in the early 50s

(Hovland, Janis, Kelley, 1953)

However, further investigation of the Agenda-setting function of the media suggested that the effect of the media on the public was selective, leading to the second notion of media effects: the law of minimal consequences. This law said that "media influences are subordinated to other social influences" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p. 16, 1980). But both these theories --laws-- emphasized the relationship of attitude change to media effect; further research suggested that media effects were more important in terms of creating an awareness rather than an attitude change.

This approach to the mass media relationship between the public agenda and public awareness is what is called the Agenda-setting function or theory of the media. Eyal, Winter and McCombs suggest that the Agenda-setting theory is "an attempt to validate empirically Walter Lippmann's assertion more than half a century ago that the media are responsible for public perceptions of reality, the 'pictures in our heads'" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p.16, 1980) According to McCombs, the Agenda-setting theory "hypothesizes that issues prominently displayed and frequently emphasized in the mass media will be regarded as important by media consumers. In other words, the priorities that the media assign to issues are learned by the audiences. . .media priorities become, to a certain extent, public

priorities" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p.16, 1980).

Shaw and McCombs, as a result of their first empirical work testing the agenda setting theory in the 1972 presidential election, suggested that Agenda-setting involves a learning process that "typically stretches across a considerable span of time. In contrast to the hypodermic needle model which implied immediate influence, the agenda setting model implies long-term, cumulative mass media effects" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p.17, 1980).

What the effects were, how strong they were and what channel of communication created the most effect were the prominent issues investigated in 70s and even early 80s. For instance, additional research in the 70s indicated that "people were found to be more dependent on the media for information about distant national issues than about local issues . . . while at the local level the newspaper was by far the major agenda-setter " (Eyal, Winters and McCombs in Emery and Smythe, p.19, 1980)

The early work in Agenda-setting is summarized by McCombs, Eyal and Winters in a 1977 article entitled "The Agenda Setting Role of the Media." They state "...while the media may not be able to tell us what to think, they can be quite successful in telling us both what and whom to think about" (paraphrase of Bernard Cohen in Eyal, Winter,

McCombs, in Emery and Smythe, p.16 1980) And even after more than a quarter century of study--"several hundred (and many more if unpublished theses, dissertations and scholarly papers are counted)"--Shaw suggests that "we are still in the early stages of learning how the process works (Shaw, p.808, 1992).

Over time, the investigations into the theory have become more concerned with consequences rather than medium (McCombs, 1992), more with the diffusion of the message than the actual message and format (Whitney and Becker, 1982), more with learning the how and why than the "if". In fact, in a paper presented in Chicago in August, 1997, McCombs said that not only was the media influential in telling us what to think, it was "stunningly successful in telling us what to think about." (McCombs, p.3, 1997). Wimmer and Dominick say the more "recent articles signal a shift away from the political campaign approach . . .The biggest trend in agenda setting research is examining how the media agenda is set" (Wimmer and Dominick, p.354, 1994).

This evolution of the Agenda-setting theory follows with Lippman's early assumption about the news and its potential impact on the public agenda: that the news is not just a "mirror" of society, but a result of the media's influence on society. (Lippman, 1922)

Zero -Sum Model: Jian-Hua Zhu's look at the limited

capacity of the public agenda and the competition for space on that agenda is one of the studies McCombs refers to as exploratory and concerned with consequentiality in the investigation of this mature theory (McCombs, 1992). Zhu's "Zero-sum Theory" of Agenda-setting suggests that there is an inherent conflict between the issues competing for media and public attention and the public agenda itself. He suggests there are a "vast number of social issues that are being raised on the one hand and the limited carrying capacity that the public agenda possesses to handle these issues on the other hand" (Zhu, p.825, 1992). He suggests that the conflict resolves itself at the cost of adding new issues to the agenda (Zhu, 1992). In other words, for a new item to gain recognition and priority on the public agenda, an existing item must be discarded. What the Zero-Sum model does not consider, or account for, is how an issue rises and falls on the public agenda over a period of time rather than fading from the agenda altogether. Regionalism and consolidation are just such issues—they have risen to prominence on the agenda as reflected in coverage of the issues, but they have also disappeared from the agenda for, in essence, decades at a time, only to reappear as a priority once again.

Public Arenas Model: The Public Arenas model, presented by Hilgartner and Bosk in the late 80s, does look at how issues appear, reappear, gain attention and fade from view over

time. They developed a model of the "process through which social problems rise and fall" (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.53, 1988). The authors suggest that the "natural history" model of how an issue goes through the stages of development on the public agenda--"incipience, coalescence, institutionalization, fragmentation, and demise" was too "crude" and simplistic (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.56, 1988). They suggest instead, that the "fates of potential problems are governed not only by their objective natures but by a highly selective process in which they compete with one another for public attention and societal resources" (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.56, 1988). They further suggest that the way in which the social problem is framed, which "'reality' comes to dominate public discourse has profound implications for the future of the social problem, for the interest groups involved, and for policy" (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.57, 1988).

Hilgartner and Bosk suggest the media, among others, act as "operatives" who "publicly present social problems" and that their relative standing on the issue to be presented impacts the framing of that issue on the public agenda (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.66, 1988). They also say that "The amount of attention received by a given social problem varies dynamically over time: a) problems that have achieved some success are constantly in danger of undergoing a decline and being displaced; and b) while some problems may rise, decline

and reemerge, very few maintain a high level of attention over many years" (Hilgartner and Bosk, p.70, 1988). This is particularly important regarding regionalism/consolidation and the focus of this dissertation because it suggests that the relative value the newspaper placed on regionalism over the years and the relative influence the newspaper held over the community in terms of setting the agenda, may have allowed regionalism to survive over five decades on the local public agenda. The model also suggests the manner in which the issue was framed and the manner in which the actors in the issue were portrayed has consequences for the "life cycle" of the public policy issue.

Second-level Agenda-Setting: Without specifically connecting the Public Arenas model to Agenda-setting, McCombs and others have recently suggested that the *attributes*, "Those characteristics and properties that fill out the picture of each object" help determine and "frame" issues over time in the media (McCombs, p.3, 1997) He says "An important part of the news agenda and its set of objects are the perspectives and frames that journalists, and subsequently, members of the public employ to think about and talk about each object" (McCombs, p.3, 1997) That, again, the "media also tell us *how to think* about some objects" (*italics in text*, McCombs, p.3, 1997).

McCombs suggests that the framework for the second-

level of Agenda-setting, the transmission of attribute salience, has its beginnings in the earliest work in Agenda-setting (McCombs, 1997). He suggests that agenda-setting is linked with "a major contemporary concept, *framing*" (italics in text, McCombs, p.5, 1997) but that framing is a part of Agenda-setting as opposed to an entirely new paradigm, as some research may suggest (for example, Tankard, 1991)

Robert Entman, one of the major contributors to the Framing paradigm said "To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a community text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described" (italics in text, Entman in McCombs, p.5, 1997). McCombs said that to "paraphrase Entman in the language of the second level of agenda-setting, framing is the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the a media agenda when a particular object is discussed." (McCombs, p.6, 1997).

McCombs says that there have been (as of the late Fall, 1997) only 10 articles written that address the second level of Agenda-setting (McCombs interview, October, 1997 Framing Conference) but he admits in his paper presented to the Senior Scholars at AEJMC in August of 1997 that "This new frontier has opened up rapidly" (McCombs, p.7, 1997). The 10 articles McCombs refers to are summarized in his conference

paper and include an "inaugural study to explicitly focus on both the first and second levels of agenda setting . . . During the 1993 Japanese general election" (McCombs,p.7, 1997). Takeshita and Mikami (1995) looked at the impact of "intensive news coverage on political reform" which constituted the vast majority of issue coverage in the newspaper and Tv networks examined by the researchers. McCombs suggests that the authors found "significant evidence for both kinds of influence on the pictures in our heads" (McCombs,p.8, 1997).

The second study involved examining an environmental controversy in Austin,Texas that pit environmentalists' against developers by Maher in 1995 (Maher, 1995) Maher found that the issue was framed most frequently by identifying "developers, new housing and shopping makes as the key causes of . . . pollution. Much lower on the news agenda was the growth of Austin, a city which grew by more than 25% in the 1980s and continues to add about 20,000 residents annually" (McCombs,p.9, 1997) McCombs said there was a "perfect correspondence in the relative salience of the attributes that define the pictures of this environmental issue in the newspaper and among the public" (McCombs,p.7, 1997.)

The third study, conducted by Salam Ghanem while a doctoral student at the University of Texas-Austin, looked at the dichotomous issue of rising public fears about crime and

low actual crime statistics (Ghanem, 1992). Ghanem found that "how" the media framed the crime story when reported had profoundly strong links with what and why the public was concerned about in terms of crime although the actual rate of crime was low (Ghanem, 1992). McCombs, in terms of this particular study said, the "strong relationship between media framing and the salience of crime among the public brings to mind a prescient comment by Doris Graber a decade ago: *"The media set the agenda when they are successful in riveting attention on a problem. They build the public agenda when they supply the context that determines how people think about the issue and evaluate its merits"* (italics added, Graber in McCombs, p. 11, 1997)

The fourth study by Bryan in 1997 looked at the agenda setting influence of newspapers and political advertising on voters perception in 1995 local sales tax referendum in a an "isolated midsize city on the Gulf coast" (McCombs, p.11, 1997). McCombs suggests the results of the study show an "increase in learning that took place among voters during the campaign during the strong role of advertising in framing voters views of what the proposed sales tax would do for " the city (McCombs, p.11, 1997).

A fifth article by Bryan in 1997 "compared the second-level agenda setting effects of newspaper coverage and political advertising in the 1995 mayoral election in Victoria, Texas" (McCombs, p.14, 1997). The findings concluded

that political ads were the major agenda setter in this local election (McCombs,p.14, 1997)

A sixth study sought to replicate Shaw and Martin's 1992 study that suggested "evidence that the agenda setting role of the news media also promotes social consensus.. With increasing exposure to the news media, different demographic groups, such as young adults and older adults or men and women, show greater agreement about the salience of issues on the public agenda" (McCombs,p.15, 1997). Lopez-Escobar, Llamas and McCombs in 1996, attempted to replicate this hypothesize for both levels of agenda-setting and found "there is considerable evidence that the agenda setting role of the news media enhance consensus. The pattern of the data also suggests a stronger role for newspapers than television news and greater impact on affective attributes and substantive attributes" (McCombs,p.15, 1997)

Four more studies (King, 1997; Lopez-Escobar, McCombs and Rey, forthcoming in *Journalism Quarterly* ; Lopez-Escobar, McCombs and Rey, 1997 and Lopez-Escobar, Llamas and McCombs, 1997) discuss the implications of the second level of agenda setting in Japan and Spain. (McCombs, 1997)

Although not an investigation of the second level of agenda setting, but important to the study at hand, Baumgartner and Jones suggest through case study analysis, that "major shifts in public opinion and public policy are preceded by significant shifts in images" (Baumgardner and

Jones in McCombs, p.18, 1997). McCombs hypothesizes that "framing has consequences for attitudes and, perhaps, even public behavior" (McCombs, p.19, 1997). He says that "news coverage can influence the salience of objects on the public agenda . . . The framing of those objects on the media agenda also can influence the pictures of those objects in our heads. That is the second level of agenda setting" (McCombs, p.19, 1997.)

In essence then, the Agenda-setting theory of the media, and particularly the second level of Agenda-setting as framed by the Public Arenas model described in the literature review suggests, that media have some influence over the selection , framing and retention of an issue over time on the public agenda, but that that influence is somewhat ameliorated by other social influences and by the constraints of the agenda itself. The literature also suggests that the longevity of an issue over time is, somewhat, rare given the competition and the constraints, but that the "pictures in our heads" may be the reality as portrayed by the media.

LEGISLATIVE ORIGINS OF REGIONALISM IN VIRGINIA

The February 24, 1997 issue of *U.S News and World Report* has a picture of hockey fans "cheer(ing) their team's players at a game in Hampton Roads, Va." (*U.S News and World Report*). No such city exists in Virginia, although it is obvious to

southern Virginia residents the reporter was commenting on the Admirals hockey team that plays its home games in Norfolk. The "idea" of a "Hampton Roads, Va." has, however, been a matter for the Virginia legislature for more than 40 years.

Jane Jacobs, in her 60s classic The Death and Life of Great American Cities suggested, even then, that the current organizational structure of cities was anachronistic in terms of their ability to respond effectively to the problems facing them. She suggested that American cities did not plan for vitality. (Jacobs, 1961) But, it appears, Virginia was on the cutting edge of recognizing the need to plan for vitality in its cities because the legislative beginnings of regionalism can be traced to the 1950s. The origins of regionalism coincide with the changing world American's faced after the end of WWII. There were issues of growth, of housing, of transportation, of economic development never before faced by Americans or Virginians in such a complex manner.

In Virginia, Section 701 (d) of the Housing Act of 1954 laid the initial groundwork for what later would become known as regionalism in Virginia in general and on the Virginia Peninsula specifically (Winter, 1977). The act required that communities applying for federal funds under this program institute the coordination of local planning activities, including an explanation of how urban renewal would affect

local land users and public facilities (Winter, 1977).

The Housing Act prompted the emergence of the Virginia Metropolitan Areas study Commission in 1966. The commission's purpose was "to conduct a comprehensive study of the problems produced by urbanization within the state and to develop recommendations regarding alternative state and local government approaches to these problems" (Winter, p.231, 1977).

The final report, referred to as the Hahn Commission Report, provided the impetus for the Virginia Area Development Act of 1968, which became the enabling legislation for creating metropolitan governance structures in Virginia. The act refers specifically to metropolitan governments forming "service districts" but also opened the door for more regional cooperation especially in terms of the idea of an overarching governance structure made up of cooperating municipalities and counties (Winter, 1977). The act said that if localities wanted to, they could agree to create a service district commission which would have authority over a number of service delivery functions (Virginia Development Act, 1968; Winter, 1977). The legislation created a large number of districts which, according to some, fragmented jurisdictional responsibility and made regional cooperation on the Peninsula more important than ever (Winter, 1977). The enabling legislation also "permit(ed) consolidation of local governments"

(Winter,p.230, 1977).

In the 1970s, the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) suggested that the decade would be a "watershed period" for regionalism and American federalism (Winter,p.15 1977). But thirty years later, regionalism is still a matter of debate rather than implemented public policy in the traditional Hampton Roads region ,although there are a limited number of effective examples including: the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; a solid waste collaborative, the Virginia Public Service Authority, made up of 11 cities and counties on the Peninsula (with the notable exception of the city of Newport News); another solid waste collaborative, the Southeastern Public Service Authority, made up of Southside municipalities ;and perhaps the longest running example of regional cooperation, Newport News Waterworks which provides water for the Peninsula.

In the 70s, ACIR suggested that "regional activity. . . accompan(ies) the evolution of our federal system including centralization-decentralization, responsiveness, representation and accountability. Taken together, the above items constitute an agenda of challenges that will have to be faced and successfully resolved if 'mild chaos' is to be preserved and extreme disorder is to be averted"

(Winters,p.15, 1977).

Regionalism is still very much a current issue in the

urban affairs arenas. As Bruce Katz, speaking at a National Issues Forum in May, 1997 said, there is a "bubbling of metropolitan interest and thinking and action" nationally about regionalism (National Issues Forum web site, 1997)

Contemporary Regionalism: Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson coined the phrase "citistate" in 1993 to describe how metropolitan regions "operate in the new, post-Cold War world economy" (Peirce, web page, 1997). Peirce and Johnson suggest, as does Rusk (1993), that one of the major benefits of regional cooperation is the ability to expand, enlarge, "elasticize" traditional political boundaries and allow "a labor-market, a commute-shed, a broadcast area, the circulation area of a large newspaper" the ability to compete in the wider economy (Peirce, web page)

Peirce and Johnson define a citistate as "A region consisting of one or more historic central cities surrounded by cities and towns which have a shared identification, function as a single zone for trade, commerce and communication, and are characterized by social, economic and environmental interdependence" (Peirce web page).

Tony Hiss, co-author of A Region at Risk, says there are compelling reasons for the emergence of metropolitan regions because, ". . . Like it or not we're all in the same boat . . . We suffer from many of the same afflictions. And we share

in the same treasures and inheritance" (Peirce web page). He continues, "The brawling, or border wars, between communities within regions, as cities and suburbs fight among themselves to steal the jobs that already exist from each other, squanders billions of dollars in local resources that could be used to heal wounded areas--and worse, make enemies of future partners by perpetuating the illusion that cities and suburbs are separate places" (Peirce, web page).

Minnesota State Representative, Myron Orfield, quoted in a press release from the Brookings Institute (2/14/97) echoes the melodrama of the 1970s doomsday prediction of the ACIR that urban chaos will break out if cooperation is not realized. Orfield says without regional cooperation, cities have laid a "blueprint for political chaos" (Brookings press release, 2/14/97) He further suggests that the solution "is the creation in each metropolitan area of a regional authority, preferably elected, whose ultimate mission is to induce (note coerce) the news suburbs to permit development of affordable housing according to a fair-share formula . . . Tax base sharing, limits on outward expansion of the metropolitan boundary, and efficient use of new and existing infrastructure" (Brookings press release 2/14/97).

Orfield's contemporary definition of and rationale for the development of regional governance is reflected, albeit less emotionally, in the 1977 unpublished dissertation by the now Chair for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University

in Newport News, Virginia, William Winters. Winters said, in his late 70s investigation into regionalism on the Virginia Peninsula, that the regionalism movement was based primarily upon "deeply held values of efficiency and economy" (Winters,p.49, 1977). He went on to suggest that the fundamental principles of regionalism are as follows:

- each urban area should have but one central government which is headed by a centralized executive

- should be as few local elected offices as possible
- corps of professional civil servants separate from political elements and organized on the basis of an integrated command structure be responsible for policy application

- purpose of municipal government is to advance an overarching public interest which is divorced from particularized local interest (Winters,p.49 1977).

But most contemporary literature on regionalism is focused more on civic renewal, civic survival, social equality and governance structures than simply on ideas of economy and efficiency and a need for an overarching mega-municipal governance structure. However, there are notable exceptions.

One individual, very active and prominent in regionalism is David Rusk, the ex-mayor of Albuquerque, who still espouses the need for overarching metropolitan governments.

As mentioned earlier, David Rusk , in his 1993 examination of regionalism, looked at 522 central cities within 320 metropolitan areas from 1950-1990 and found an increase in racial segregation and urban underclass in cities without metropolitan governance structures (Rusk, 1993). He suggests that regional tax sharing and stricter growth management be used as tools to contain urban distress (Rusk, 1993). Rusk suggests that regionalization for "inelastic" cities, cities that cannot physically grow outward is "essential to survival" (Rusk,p.7, 1993.)

However, Rusk's approach to regional governance structures is said by some, like Allan Wallis, to be flawed because it does not account for the general dislike among the populace and existing local players of anything that smacks of additional layers of government. It also neglects to account for the idea that people and local officials as well will bristle at attempts by the state or federal government to mandate local governance structure.

Wallis, in his article "Governance and the Civic Infrastructure of Metro Regions", says that "'top down' federal programs were effectively subverted in the course of local implementation . . . State legislatures tread lightly in attempts to encroach on home rule . . . And regional that appears to create a new layer of government, regardless of whether it does so in fact, is unacceptable to voters and local government" (Wallis,p.41, 1994). In the prevailing

political climate of "less government" some studies, including one done in Maryland, suggest the perception of regional governing bodies as having too much power or growing too big was unacceptable to the citizenry. In the Maryland study specifically, Maryland's regional councils were commended by survey participants for "passive and traditional duties" but "newly assertive duties" did not fare well at all (Wallis, p.459, 1994)

Even Anthony Downs, who has been an advocate for regionalization says in his book New Visions for Metropolitan America that the overwhelming belief by "both city and suburban residents . . . that transferring all local government powers to a metro government would make officials more remote from any influence individual cities might hope to exert" is the reason that "almost no one favors metro area government except a few political scientists and intellectuals. . . ." (Peirce, web site, 1997)) He concludes that efforts to totally eliminate urban/suburban governments in favor of regional or metropolitan governments are "doomed" (Downs,1993). These sentiments are reflected again in Downs' article "Some Controversial Aspects of the Atlanta Region's Future" which appeared in **Urban Realities** in the Summer of 1994.

Downs suggests that the "'disjointed incrementalism'" that is causing the downward spiral of American cities cannot be cured by creating a "single metropolitan government to

replace all existing governments. Rather, it is developing a process in which existing local governments retain primary responsibility for developing comprehensive land-use plans-- but must do so within a uniform framework of goals and procedures..." (Downs,p.28, 1994). Downs argues that although a megamunicipality will fail, there must be a "single coordinating agency at either the state or regional level responsible for ensuring that each locality's plans service statewide goals and are consistent with the plans of surrounding local governments and major state agencies" (Downs,p.28, 1994).

Swanstrom stresses the interdependence of suburbs and inner cities and says there is a "more compelling vision of regional governance based on noneconomic territorially rooted values" (Peirce web site, 1997)

In recognition of this "bubbling" of ideas about the importance of regionalism in modern urban life, the American Planning Association in 1994 even launched an initiative "aimed at helping states modernize statutes affecting planning and the management of change" in relation to regional issues (Growing Smart, web page,1997) The program, **Growing Smart**, addresses a wide-range of urban issues like State Environmental Policy Acts, Local Development Regulation, and Tax Equity devices and is geared toward helping municipalities and other government structures learn to work together and share information (APA web site,1997).

Neal Peirce's June 15, 1997 syndicated column revolves around what he calls "America's first-ever 'Chatauqua' on regional governance" which was held at the Chatauqua Institution in upstate New York in early June (Peirce, column, June, 1997) Peirce suggests that with delegates from a dozen states the event "may have been the most far-reaching citizen-based conference on regionalism ever held in the United States (June, 1997). He says that the conference echoes the warnings and predictions made by those cited above: " . . . Start thinking and begin acting collaboratively, or urban rot will creep out from center city across one ring of suburbs after the other, trailing poverty and shriveling economic growth in its wake" (June, 1997).

But perhaps most relevant to the issue of regionalism for this dissertation, Peirce says there needs to be two requirements present for regionalism to be more than just a "chatauqua." There needs to be a "'civic entrepreneur', a person with fire in the belly to champion a new regional agenda . . ." and "the local press has to care" (Peirce column, June 15, 1997).

Regionalism in Hampton Roads: Although this study discusses regionalism and consolidation only from the perspective of the 11 cities and counties on the Virginia Peninsula, according to the definition provided by the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council (VPEDC web

site, 1997) the following information is provided as background in order to better understand the climate for regionalism in the larger region defined by the SMSA. Only by understanding the contentious nature of the issue of regionalism for the whole region, can the subtleties of the controversy on the Peninsula be understood.

Neil Peirce, in a 1995 column in which he discussed Hampton Roads, asked the question, "Can a traditionally fractious and argumentative bunch of cities get their act together to prepare for the 21st century economy?" (Peirce, web site, 1997).

He summarizes many of the reasons the region must act cooperatively and also summarizes many of the reasons they just cannot seem to do so. Peirce says, for instance, "How do you cooperate if divisiveness is the name of your politics? Suburban, spread-out Virginia Beach, for example, never forgets it owes its very existence to a timely move to escape Norfolk's annexation claws" (Peirce web site, 1997). He mentions Norfolk's "trump card" (Peirce web site, 1997) its fresh water supply, and he sums up the economic need for regionalism by characterizing the area as a strong-hold of blue-collar labor dependent on an infusion of dwindling defense department money (Peirce, web site, 1997). Peirce quotes Carl Abbott from his 1981 book, The New Urban America, as describing Hampton Roads as "'partners in a failing marriage, bickering and sparring at every turn'" (Abbott in

Peirce, web site,1997).

However, Peirce applauds the efforts of local government officials in Hampton Roads for promoting regional cooperation in the area--although he emphasizes that Hampton Roads' brand of regionalism will be based on the model of "borderless" elastic governance structures, not on the traditional model of consolidation or mega-municipalities (Peirce, web site,1997).He highlights the efforts of the Mayors and Chairs group, an assemblage of officials, neighborhood activists and corporate leaders from the 15 municipalities , who meet monthly to discuss regional opportunities and constraints (Peirce, web site,1997). Peirce quotes Norfolk Mayor Paul Fraim as saying "'It's immoral not to cooperate; we're a family of cities' and must develop a 'shared vision'" (Peirce,web site,1997).

The Mayors and Chairs that Peirce refers to is part of a larger effort by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce (VCC) to promote regional cooperation throughout the state of Virginia (VCC, interview, October, 1997). The Urban Partnership initiative, sponsored by the VCC, hopes to educate municipalities and counties how to focus on positioning their regions for national and global economic competition--the citistate model. (Interview, VCC, 1997). The VCC emphasizes the role of the private sector in accomplishing the goal but recognizes the importance of other "operatives" like community-based activities and public officials and

administrators (Interview, VCC,1997). In fact an "Urban Summit" was held in Norfolk in June, 1997 to provide a forum for debate about regionalism (Interview,VCC,1997).

But despite supposed economic and social benefits, regional cooperation has not been so easy to achieve in Southern Virginia or anywhere according to some experts. Peirce quotes William Dodge, chief of the National Association of Regional Councils as reminding delegates to the summer, 1997 chatauqua that "regionalism remains an unnatural act among rarely consenting jurisdictions" (Peirce, web site,1997).

The difficulty and the controversy about Regionalism in Hampton Roads is poignantly displayed in an April Fool's edition of the *Virginian-Pilot* in which the banner headline read, in about 96 point type, "NORFOLK, VA BEACH TO MERGE, OTHER HAMPTON ROADS CITIES INVITED TO JOIN". The smaller headline in the far left column read "Scientists :Pigs can Fly" (*The Virginian Pilot*, April, 1997)

Adding to the controversy and confusion about regionalism in Southeastern Virginia, the region can really be seen as two distinct regions: the traditional Hampton roads region ,which encompasses both the Peninsula and the Southside, and the Peninsula region ,which encompasses only those 11 cities and counties on the Virginia Peninsula. Regional efforts are often separated by the Chesapeake Bay. According to some, the Bay provides not only the geographic

delineation for the Peninsula and the Southside but the perceptual barrier as well (Interview, Shuford, 1994). Although the Mayors and Chairs group and other regional activism groups like Forward Hampton Roads, the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and the Future of Hampton Roads, emphasize cooperation among members of the entire SMSA and try to cross geographic and perceptual boundaries, there are parochial and traditionally competitive reasons why the Peninsula has created its own version of regionalism to encompass only those cities and counties on the Peninsula and exclude those on the Southside. The following information, again, is meant to serve as background to provide a clear understanding regarding the climate for regionalism in Hampton Roads and the Virginia Peninsula.

The rivalry and perceived differences between the two areas is so great that one wealthy, influential individual interviewed in 1992 about regionalism in terms of the entire SMSA said "Regionalism is a must. I'm afraid it will just take a few funerals for it to happen but mine might precede them" (Interview, Tom Chisman, May, 1991) Unfortunately that did come true, but not before he was a catalyst for many of the existing "collaborative" ventures like the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council, Focus 2000, Forward Hampton Roads and the Urban Partnership.

Julius "Bud" Denton, then director of the VPEDC, interviewed in 1994 regarding regionalism, suggested

that historically, the Peninsula has always been treated as the "stepchild" in comparison to the Southside . This "favored child" v. "stepchild" conflict makes it difficult, according to Denton, to "sell cooperation between the two sides of the water" especially since the Peninsula has had some success defining itself as a regional economy detached from the Southside.

Some believe there is some inherent value in keeping the two sides of the bay apart. Ross Kearney, a high-school civics teacher and current Hampton city council member believes competition between the Peninsula and Southside is more beneficial than regional cooperation (Kearney interview, 1995). Gerston and Hass, in a 1993 study published in *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, suggest Kearney's viewpoint is a relatively common argument against regionalism, especially espoused by the suburban inhabitants of proposed regions who "ostensibly covet the political independence of their suburban municipalities" (Gerston and Haas, p.154, 1993).

And although there are indications that there is official recognition of and active involvement in affirming regional cooperation in the SMSA, Ed Joseph, a local business elite said "the existing political establishment", views governing the cities as a "hobby--they act like they enjoy playing in their own sandboxes" (Joseph, interview, 1994).

Joseph also indicated in the 1994 interview that "lip service" is paid to including the non-profit or community

agencies in planning for regional cooperation and that there is an inability to get the word out to "people who would most benefit from regionalism or consolidation" (Joseph interview, 1995). Joseph said , importantly, that leadership in the African American community has been largely ignored in the discussion regarding regionalism but that the issues regionalism addresses, housing, revenue sharing, transportation, schools, are all relevant and important issues to that particular political constituency (Joseph interview, 1995).

And community leaders like Arleen Crittendon, Director of Phoebus Improvement League, said in a 1995 interview that housing and human services were not being addressed as current regional activities but were being "equally ignored by all" with an emphasis on private/public partnerships and entrepreneurialism (Interview, Crittendon, 1994).

Perhaps Ed Joseph best summarized the difficulties in establishing regional cooperation on the Virginia Peninsula in 1995 when he said it would take "about a million bucks and two years of someone's life and a lot of effort to" gain regional cooperation even on the Peninsula (Interview, Joseph, 1994)

Not only is there disagreement about the benefits or detractions of regionalism but even the "official" definition of the region is also somewhat confusing and again, takes on geographic connotations. The Hampton Roads Planning District

Commission (HRPDC), a regional planning agency authorized by the Virginia Development Act of 1968 (and one of 21 PDCs in the State of Virginia) is a "voluntary association of 15 local governments established to promote the effective and efficient physical, social and economic development of the Hampton Roads Region" (HRPDC web site, 1997). The HRPDC is composed of the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg and the counties of Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, York and Gloucester. So an initial look at what constitutes the official region would suggest an MSA perspective.

But, if one were to log on to the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council web site first, the perspective of the region would be much more narrow. The Virginia Peninsula, which the VPEDC says is considered a "metropolitan area", is billed as "included in the 27th most populous Metropolitan Statistical Area", not as part of a larger regional economy popularly known as Hampton Roads (VPEDC web site, 1997). For example, in discussing cost of living, the VPEDC compares the *Virginia Peninsula* (italics added) to other regional economies like Raleigh/Durham; Miami/Dade County; Los Angeles/Long Beach, CA; New Haven/Bridgeport/Stanford/Danbury, CT. (VPEDC, web site, 1997)

There are parochial barriers to cooperation, there are definitional problems, there are problems in terms of

emphasis and focus, there are some perceptual problems in terms of public sector leadership or an overemphasis on public private partnerships and there is the additional problem that the SMSA is served by two newspapers, owned by two different media giants, that do not, as a matter of mission, (*Daily Press, The Virginian Pilot*) overlap circulation areas. Therefore, when the Carolina's Partnership (Heath and Hennigar, 1994), the Savannah Economic Development Authority (Knowlton, 1994), Anthony Downs, (1994), Wallis (1994) and Neal Peirce (web site, 1997) all emphasize that you must have newspaper or media support to develop a "region", it is not difficult to determine why SMSA regional cooperation has not flourished and why the Peninsula has set out on its own to define itself as a "citistate."

That is not to say however, that the two "sides" have not, as evidenced by the quality of discussion reportedly (Peirce web site, 1997) emerging from the Mayors and Chairs meeting, tried to envision a single goal for the area as a whole. **Plan 2007**, which has gone through many iterations since the original plan was espoused in 1993, has as a subtitle: "For a Global Hampton Roads: Restructuring the regional economy" (Plan 2007, 1995)

Plan 2007 is supported by Christopher Newport University, Forward Hampton Roads, Future of Hampton Roads, the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Old Dominion University, the Virginian

Peninsula Economic Development Council, and the Williamsburg Area Chamber of Commerce and has on its executive committee a number and a mix of high-powered business people from both the Peninsula and the Southside (Plan 2007, 1995)

In the 1994 version of the Plan, the vision for Hampton Roads by the year 2007 is that the region will be:

- America's gateway, the premier port on the nation's eastern seaboard
- the defense establishment primary strategic location on the east coast
- a maritime community with unique shipbuilding and ship repair capabilities
- a center of advance technological research, engineering and manufacturing
- a globally competitive tourism destination
- the model wellness community of the eastern United States and Hampton roads will be renowned for its
- superior multi-modal transportation system
- strong support network for business and manufacturing
- excellent system of schools an universities
- high qualify of life and culture
- sound government and committed community leaders.

(Plan 2007)

In short, "By 2007, the region's unique and human strengths will be recognized as the foundation of Hampton

Roads' premier ranking as a globally competitive and internally oriented marketplace" (Plan 2007, 1994).

The Plan's original "430 dreamers and doers" have identified six areas of "achievement as essential building blocks for a community's economic growth" and they are as follows: education, infrastructure, quality of life, sound government, private leadership and economic development" (Plan 2007, 1995). Each of the building blocks has specific strategic initiatives and "dreamers and doers" associated with it.

It is interesting to note, however, that the Peninsula had its own regional vision "planning and doing" commission in the 80s called Focus 2000 (Focus 2000, notes from 1981). That commission eventually fell apart and in general, the work done by that commission was assumed by the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council which has been successful in terms of promoting the Peninsula as a region unto itself (Interview, Bud Denton, VPEDC, 1995).

Because of the constraints offered earlier, this investigation will, as noted in the Introduction, use the definition of the region to include only the Virginia Peninsula as construed by the VPEDC: James City County, Williamsburg, York County, Gloucester County, Newport News, Poquoson and Hampton. This investigation will also use the definition of a region as provided by Neil Peirce earlier: "A region consisting of one or more historical central cities

and towns which have a shared identification, function as a single zone for trade, commerce and communication and are characterized by social, economic and environmental interdependence" (Peirce, web site, 1997). As mentioned earlier, the study will also use the definition of the region, specifically, to mean those 11 cities and counties on the Virginia Peninsula as defined by the Virginia Economic Development Council (VPEDC, web site, 1997).

Therefore, although there are many definitions of what a region is, what regionalism means, how areas get to the regional ideal, why they need to get there, the primary question for the purposes of this investigation is : if the newspaper on the Peninsula has been a civic activist for this obviously much discussed and long term public issue, has the newspaper helped to create, frame and foster the issue on the public agenda and has it framed the issues involved?

Public Journalism

Eugene McGregor, Jr., Indiana University, says that there exists "The Great Paradox of Democratic Citizenship and Public Personnel Administration." He says that "Popular self-government exists only when citizens are very, very smart about their civics" (McGregor, p.126, 1984) He continues on to say that "Citizenship appears to need help in performing its democratic function. . . The reality is that if citizens are

to be self-governing, they are going to have to be sustained, encouraged, spoon-fed ,and educated about public decisions by those who know what is going on" (McGregor,p.128, 1984).

Public journalists would suggest that is precisely the point (minus the spoon-feeding)--in order to reinvigorate citizens about the civic agenda, the media needs to become civically active in issues and to encourage public debate about issues.

Without explicitly referring to journalists, and in fact with out referring to journalists at all, but rather to public servants, McGregor points out a fundamental purpose of public journalism: that journalists "(serve) as this conduit, this facilitator to help make a better democracy, a better public discourse" (Tom Still, *Wisconsin State Journal* as quoted in a brochure for Civic Journalism video and study guide provided by the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, 1997).

The Name Game in Public Journalism: As mentioned in the Introduction, part of the confusion and controversy surrounding public journalism is a matter of nomenclature, connotation and ownership. Some suggest the intellectual and philosophical origins of public journalism are connected to the UNESCO proceedings of 1948 (Christians, 1997); some suggest it is a logical next step in terms of Yankelovich's position in Coming to Public Judgement (Rosen, 1994). Some view the practice as an outgrowth of "disgust" with contemporary political campaigns (Merritt, 1995).

Arthur Charity, in a **National Civic Review** article in 1996 traced the origins of the practice to an individual journalist: Jeremy Iggers, an ethics columnist at the *Minnesota Star Tribune* (Charity, 1996) Jay Black and others associated with ethical considerations in the media suggest there is a utilitarian philosophical underpinning to the practice of public or what they refer to at times as Communitarian journalism--"to what extent is (the journalist) a 'communitarian' or a committed member of the wider community?" (preface, Black, 1997).

Others suggest, as does Edmund Lambeth, also writing in the **National Civic Review** in 1996 , that civic and public journalism has suffered " widespread loss of public credibility by a systematic attempt to assume more responsibility for the vitality of civic life in the United States" (Lambeth,p.18, 1996). He says, instead, public journalism is about reporters listening and acting. He says ". . .Civic journalists are listeners. They say they sift through what citizens themselves think about public affairs, not as a prelude to 'pandering' or marketing, as critics content, but to 'frame' their own stories in ways more likely to foster genuine public deliberation. So equipped, it is hoped, citizens will not only be less disaffected but will actively participate in civic life" (Lambeth,p.18, 1996) But he decries the idea of civic activism on the apart of the journalist (Lambeth, 1996), whereas Merritt and Rosen say

community activism is a necessity.

For the purposes of this dissertation, the definition of public journalism is both a descriptive and prescriptive one provided by Jay Rosen in 1994: "Traditional journalism over-values the image of separation. A good journalist, it is commonly thought, separates facts from values, mind from soul, reality from rhetoric. The press imagines itself as separate from all other political actors . . . Public journalism recommends a different task: getting the connections right, especially the all-important connection between the journalist and the citizenry. One way of defining public journalism is to call it the undeveloped art of attachment to the community in which journalists work-- including the political community. . . public journalism succeeds when it strengthens the political community's capacity to understand itself , converse well and make choices . . . More than mere observers, they are willing to join in creating the well-connected community, in adding to civic capacity. In this sense they themselves become public actors" (Rosen,p.381, 1994).

This definition seems the best response to the conundrum offered by Entman in Democracy without Citizens: "Journalism's decisions arise in part from the doomed effort to produce news that services two conflicting ideals: mirroring reality and holding government accountable. According to the mirror standard, journalism should be

objective: that is, it should passively reflect and exert no political influence apart from reality" (Entman,p.40 1989). But, Entman argues, the media cannot be passively reflective because it must make decisions regarding what to put in the story, what to leave out , how to write the story and when to publish it (Entman, 1989) Rosen and others active in public journalism suggest that reporters and editors admit to a degree of lack of objectivity and recognize their role as political actors in news, not just mirrors of events. This concept is evidenced by Davis Merritt's (a leading practitioner of public journalism) reaction to what has been described as his "disgust" over the 1988 presidential campaign coverage (Rosen, 1994). Merritt, editor of the *Wichita Eagle* "announced a break with tradition in a Sunday column headlined 'Upfront, here's our election bias'" (Merritt, 1990, in Rosen,p.374, 1994).

As for the preference for public v.civic journalism, Rosen suggests that Peirce in 1994 actually began using civic journalism interchangeable with public journalism and, "By 1994, both terms had currency in the American press" (Rosen,p.378, 1994) So, for the purposes of this investigation, public journalism will take on the overtones of journalistic civic activism in the community in which it serves. The research will not focus on those aspects of the "movement" which pertain to small-town newspapering or localizing issues (as addressed by the Huck Boyd National

Center for Community Media at Kansas State University), nor will it take on the philosophical leanings of Communitarian journalism as reflected in the works of Black, Dardenne, and others.

The Emergence of the Movement: Since the definition of public journalism as used in this investigation is from Rosen, it seems logical to use some of the same basis for the emergence of the practice as does Rosen. Although Rosen mentions a meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research as a epiphany of sorts, in terms of realizing that journalists, public opinion pollsters and the public were not in synch with one another, and although he credits the Kettering Foundation for creating a series of "conversations" about how the public might emerge as a "deliberative body"; and although he mentions the importance of the Poynter Institute's "call for leadership" in 1992 (Rosen, 1994); the jump from theoretical musings to practical implications for the emergence of the public journalism movement lies with Daniel Yankelovich and his book Coming to Public Judgement.

Rosen says that in his own work with journalists, the book "has a special place. No book succeeds more in bridging the gap between theorizing about the public sphere and working in the daily press. Particularly effective is the author's notion of 'working through' as a critical stage in

the formation of opinion...the book invites reforms aimed at improving the process" (Rosen,p.380, 1994).

Yankelovich stresses the importance of reconnecting with the citizenry, of not relying too heavily on traditional elitist sources, of measuring public not mass opinion. He says there is a "creeping expertism . . . (That) the dominant mind-set of the culture stress information, not judgement. The gap between the public and the elites grows larger by the day" (Yankelovich,p.8,1991). Yankelovich suggests the result is a "Culture of technical control" whereby "culture is busy exercising technical control over as many aspects of the human environment as it can--the economy, the physical environment . . ." (Yankelovich,p.30,1991) This culture, he suggests, generates very little controversy, which lessens the opportunities for public debate or deliberation and creates an environment where only a few elitists make or even read the news (Yankelovich, 1991)

His basic thesis is that the culture of technical control is undermining the country's ability to reach agreement between the public and experts on "the serious problems that beset the society" (Yankelovich,p.38,1991).

At the root of the problem, according to Yankelovich is "the dominant philosophy . . .of 'empiricism' or 'objectivism'" (Yankelovich,p.10,1991). He says this philosophy mistakenly assumes that good information leads, automatically to good judgement (Yankelovich,1991) According

to Yankelovich, "journalists , above all others, equate being well informed with high quality. The media are fascinated with opinion polls that show how ignorant the public isJournalists hold as an article of faith the traditional belief that a well-informed citizenry is indispensable to the proper functioning of a democracy" (Yankelovich,p.16,1991). But Yankelovich argues that, as stated in this thesis, knowledge is not quality judgement and that "journalists will devote unlimited amounts of space to trumpeting how poorly informed the public is. But their eyes glaze over when it comes to efforts to grasp and report the subtleties and complexities of the public mind"(Yankelovich,p.36,1991). Yankelovich suggests the way to create more public deliberation of issues and to enhance civic participation lies not in creating more information but in engaging the citizenry in terms of agenda-setting, sourcing and consciousness raising (Yankelovich,1991) He says journalists must reconnect with citizens and must refrain from a heavy reliance on elites, that when "the people fail to see the connection between their own concerns and someone's work, they pay scant attention to the work, however brilliant it may be" (Yankelovich,p.201,1991). He says journalists must work to reinvent the meaning of being a citizen--that they need to make citizens feel a part of the process, that they have worth (Yankelovich,1991). It is this premise, that journalists need to be more "public" about their journalism

that provides the real working framework for the movement. The battle cry, it appears, is to avoid creating information as news that is devoid of a "public" spirit and that relies on what V.O Key defined in Public Opinion and American Democracy as the political elite, "that thin stratum of persons referred to variously as political elites, the political activists, the leadership echelons, or the influentials" (Key in Yankelovich, p.8, 1991). However, the rub appears to be how to create that 'publicness' without sacrificing traditional tenets of journalism like objectivity, independence and a lack of "boosterism." That is the challenge for the proponents of public journalism.

Toward a new definition of a journalist: In his book, Doing Public Journalism, Arthur Charity says journalists today need to abandon the old definitions of a good journalists as "the ones who root out the inside story, tell the brave truth, face down the Joseph McCarthys and Richard Nixons, exposed corruption and go on crusades, 'comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable'" (Charity, p.9, 1995). He suggests instead, that new journalists, public journalists are "heroes for a post-Woodstein age" (Charity, p.9, 1995) He suggests, in a graph contained in his book, that "Conventional journalists believe: the traditions of journalism are fine; if anything needs it improve, its the practice." But, the "Public journalists believe: something

basic has to change, because journalism isn't working now" (Charity, p.10, 1995) At the heart of the controversy is a push towards change in deeply rooted tenets of journalism like objectivity, a lack of boosterism and independence coming from Rosen, Charity, Merritt and others met by an equally hearty shove back from the "mainstream" journalism community that holds those traditional tenets as gospel. In the following few paragraphs, the constructs objectivity, and boosterism will be examined in terms of their meaning in public journalism. This will be more helpful in developing a full understanding of public journalism and the controversy surrounding the practice than simply reiterating the boundaries of the controversy which can be found in the Introduction to this investigation.

William Woo, editor of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, summarized the concern of the "mainstream" media regarding public journalism and a slippery slope towards advocacy journalism: "From (public journalism) assumptions flow that challenge the most deeply held principles of traditional journalism: detachment, objectivity, the belief that editors are the final judges over what is news....I am concerned about the question of where news and editorial decisions are made. Are they made in the newsrooms or at the town hall meeting, within the deliberations of the editorial board or in the place where the editors sups with civic coalition? . . . (Public journalism) . . . Poses hard questions for

traditions and values that we have held and respected for a long time. I fear that we are abandoning these too easily, letting them go without sufficient critical examination" (Speech, February, 1995).

Glasser and Craft, both of Stanford University, say the controversy about objectivity, independence and boosterism is simple, ". . . The purpose of the press is to promote and indeed improve, and not merely report on or complain about, the quality of public or civic life" (Glasser and Craft, p.122, 1997). That word, "promote" and that word "improve" are the sticking points, the controversy. It is the idea that "If public journalism stops short of equating 'doing journalism' with 'doing politics,' it nonetheless 'places the journalist within the political community as a responsible member with a full stake in public life" (Glass and Craft, p.121, 1997).

Glasser and Craft suggests that public journalism "rejects conception of 'objectivity' that require journalists to disengage from all aspects of community life" (Glasser and Craft, p.123, 1997) and that indeed that disconnection from the community is at the center for why public journalism is needed now. Merritt says journalists can be "impartial" and "fair" but not necessarily "objective." He says, "one can be objective in looking at the facts and still care about the implications of those facts. For instance, a scientist seeking a cure for a disease must be objective in evaluating results, but he or she can still care very much about whether

a cure is found. That's the difference between objectivity and detachment" (Merritt in Glasser and Craft,p.123, 1997). Glasser and Craft say this distinction between a objectivity and detachment is public journalism's answer to critics who cry journalists are being asked to be advocates in the political arena (Glasser and Craft,p.123, 1997).

In terms of "boosterism", Craft and Glasser say that "public journalism embraces of a kind of 'good' news, which is not to say a witless boosterism that uncritically accepts, or mindlessly supports, the status quo. Rather it is good news in the sense that it conveys optimism about the future and confidence in 'our' ability to get there" (Glasser and Craft,p.124, 1997). Public journalism, then, some suggest, is a backlash against the "pre-Woodstein" era newspaper person who is characterized by a chain-smoking, hard-driving, cynical stereotype who believes , literally, no news is good news. Public journalism, according to Glasser and Craft allows journalists to "report the news while conveying, quietly and discreetly, their disgust for it" (Glasser and Craft,p.124, 1997).

Glasser and Craft say then, that "the challenge for public journalism, then, is not simply to reconcile its rhetoric with its role but to transform its hopes into ideals and its assumptions into realities" (Glasser and Craft,p.126, 1997). The challenge is, using Charity's chart, to get the "conventional journalist" who currently believes that "it

would be nice if public life worked, but it's beyond our role to make it work and it's dangerous to think we can" to accept what the "public journalists believes: Public life should work, and journalism has a role in making it work"

(Charity, p.10 1995). The challenge according to Steele, is to recreate the role of the journalist from passive commentator to problem-solving facilitator. The result of the challenge, the question for this particular investigation, is posed by Steele in a chapter written for Mixed News: The Public/Civic/Communitarian Journalism Debate: "Therein lies a major question about the role of public journalists. Are they merely conscientious citizens, or is there something in the role of the journalists that distinguishes them from other citizens? *Is the newspaper merely a recorder and reporter of events or is it a catalyst to change?* (Italics added, Steele, p. 166, 1997).

But perhaps the challenges to public journalism discussed are not necessary; perhaps, as Richard Aregood, an editor at the *Philadelphia Daily News* suggests, public journalism is not so new, not so controversial, but what good newspapers may have been doing all along (Aregood in Case, 1994) Perhaps, as James Fallows, in his 1996 book Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine Democracy, says the fears about public journalism are unwarranted. He says one reason traditional journalists decry public journalism is the nature of journalism's "involvement" in public life. " When

(editors) . . .Hear that term, they seem to imagine drumbeating campaigns by a newspaper on behalf of a particular candidate or specific action-plan for a community. What the editors who have put public journalism into effect mean is 'just good journalism'--that is, making people care about the issues that affect their lives . . ." (Fallows, 1996) For example Joann Byrd, a former Ombudsman at the *Washington Post* agreed with Fallows when she wrote "The goals of civic journalism can be accomplished without compromising journalism's' important principles" (Byrd in Steele,p.166, 1997) .

But Jane Eisner, editorial page editor at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* maintains a position closer to Woo's: "Our central mission is to report the news, to set priorities, to analyze, but *not to shape or direct events or outcomes. Subsume or diminish the central mission and we become like any other player in society, like any other politician, interest group, do-gooder, thief*" (italics added, Eisner in Steele, p. 167, 1997)).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Literature Review has provided a theoretical framework (second-level agenda-setting), a model within which to frame the discussion (Public Arenas Model) and an understanding of both the historical context

(regionalism/consolidation) and the practice involved (public journalism) in investigating the answers to the three research questions asked in the Introduction. Again, :

RQ1: Was the Daily Press, through both private and corporate ownership, civically active in the issues of regionalism/consolidation during the 52 years under study?

RQ2: Was the coverage of regionalism/consolidation during the time under study biased?

And,

RQ3: Did the appearance of bias or the lack of bias in daily news coverage affect the way in which the issues of regionalism/consolidation were created, framed and fostered during 1944-1996?

The following chapter will discuss, in detail the methodology used in the study, the rationale for the methodological choices and provide some background about the chosen methods as well as detail the protocol used.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study will employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods: content analysis and elite interviewing. The content analysis of a census of newspaper articles and editorials/columns from January 1, 1944 to December 31, 1996 will be used to answer the three research questions. The use of elite interviewing as a supplemental, qualitative tool will explicate those findings. Following, again, are the research questions:

RQ1: Was the *Daily Press*, through both private and corporate ownership, civically active in the issues of regionalism/consolidation during the 52 years under study?

RQ2: Was the coverage of regionalism/consolidation during the 52 years under study was biased?

RQ3: Did the appearance of bias or lack of bias in daily news coverage affect the way in which the issues of regionalism and consolidation were created, framed

or fostered during 1944-1996?

Before proceeding to the actual methodology and protocol used in this study, information regarding content analysis and elite interviewing is provided in order to provide a background for understanding their selection in this study.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

According to Klaus Krippendorff, of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, "empirical inquires into communications content date back to studies in theology in the late 1600s--when the Church was worried about the spread of nonreligious matters through newspapers." (Krippendorff, p.13, 1993)

The more recent underpinnings of content analysis date back to the turn of the 20th century when the mass production of newspapers available to a mass audience more capable of reading and comprehending the information coincided with a new interest in public opinion and public affairs in America.

Krippendorff says the study was then called "quantitative newspaper analysis" and focused on measuring column inches to divine what the newspapers were telling the masses to think about--and more importantly, that they were telling them to think at all (Krippendorff, p.14, 1993). This field of inquiry was being conducted at and around the time

that Woodrow Wilson and other pioneers in Public Administration were concerned with the idea of public opinion in terms of the art and science of Public Administration. The popular idea of content analysis as a quantitative tool came to prominence as social and political problems were deemed to be causal. (Krippendorff, 1993)

Content analysis now moved from measurement of column inches to measurement of message content. The major impetus for modern content analysis was its use in propaganda analysis during WWII. Harold Laswell, who worked with the Experimental Division for the Study of Wartime Communications and Hans Spier, who worked on a project at the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service of the FCC during the war, were pioneers in the new applications of the old but now more refined methodology. (Krippendorff, 1993)

After WWII, content analysis was used in more disciplines than just communications (a 1943 study by Berelson and Lazarsfeld, representing the first integrated picture of content analysis.) (Krippendorff, 1993). The method quickly spread to other disciplines. Laswell for instance, looked at his idea of "world attention survey" (Krippendorff, p.18, 1993) and Gerbvner looked at "cultural indicators to trace trends about women, children and the aged.:" (Krippendorff, p.18, 1993). However, content analysis is still a dominant methodological tool for inquiry into mass communications.

Content analysis can be defined as a "research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context." (Krippendorff, p.21, 1993) It can also be defined as a "method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables." (Krippendorff, p.21, 1993).

The second definition, perhaps, provides a more concrete base for the applicability of content analysis in social science research. The idea of looking at the communication, at the message, in a systematic way means that the "content is selected according to explicitly and consistently applies rules: sample selection must follow proper procedures, and each item must have an equal chance of being included in the analysis." (Krippendorff, p.26, 1993). In other words, the idea of "randomness", the idea that each message has an equal and independent chance of being selected for analysis, is preserved in content analysis. Evaluation is also systematic: "all content under consideration is to be treated in exactly the same manner. There must be a uniformity in coding and analysis procedure and in length of time coders are exposed to the materials." (Krippendorff, 1993). Instrumentality and the idea of the effects of testing and the threat of interaction effects of the intervention and testing are considered in designing the protocol for the analysis.

Secondly, content analysis, according to this

definition, is objective and stresses the importance of generalizability. Wimmer and Dominick state that the "operational definitions and rules for classification of variables should be explicitly and comprehensive enough that other researchers who repeat the process will arrive at the same result." (p. 164, Dominick and Wimmer, 1993). In short, they maintain the opportunities for replication will be enhanced through attention to internal validity. However, it is important to note that perfect objectivity may not be achieved in content analysis because the "relevant categories areas in which individual researchers must exercise subjective choices." (p. 180, Dominick and Wimmer, 1993). This really is not at all at variance with well accepted quantitative research in which the researchers make axiological choices in terms of what and how to study something: in regression or analysis of variance studies axiological decisions are made in terms of variables.

Third, the definition states that the analysis is quantitative. Wimmer and Dominick say that the "goal of content analysis is the accurate representation of a body of messages." (p. 164, Dominick and Wimmer, 1993). The important law of Parsimony or Lord Ocham's Razor is dealt with in terms of this notion. The more direct and simple a hypothesis or research question, the better the opportunity for disproving it.

Thus, content analysis is a sound method for exploring

social phenomena. It meets the rigorous measures of "good" quantitative exploration according to the scientific method and has a historical connection with the study of communication and social science inquiry. One research methodologist suggests that content analysis may be superior to other methods of empirical inquiry in the communications domain, if properly applied because:

- content analysis is an unobtrusive technique
 - it accepts unstructured material
 - it is context sensitive and thereby able to process symbolic forms
 - it can cope with large volumes of data
- (Krippendorff, p.29, 1993)

Importantly, content analysis is uniquely suited to allowing the researcher to combine quantitative and qualitative methods as in this study. This combination of methodologies allows researchers not only to define and quantify problems (for example, the quantitative data may indicate that the news coverage of the college campus violence in 1969 contained 90 percent nonviolent coverage); but to analyze and interpret the data to give it more ecological validity (for example, the remaining 10 percent of the coverage may have been of events so powerful and graphic that the impact on the reader was much more substantial." (Krippendorff, 1993). Specifically then, content analysis will allow the researcher in this study to

look not only at the "what" but also at the "why" and "how " of the research questions .

ELITE INTERVIEWING

Wimmer and Dominick stipulate two kinds of interview research: structured interviews and unstructured interviews. The interviews conducted for this dissertation are unstructured in order to garner as much explication of quantitative findings as possible. They suggest that in an unstructured interview "broad questions are asked, which allows interviewers freedom in determining what further questions to ask to obtain the required information . . . [They] elicit more detail but take a great deal of time to . . . analyze." (p. 128, Wimmer and Dominick, 1994) The authors say intensive, unstructured interviews are "unique" because they "generally use smaller samples . . . provide detailed background about the reasons why respondents give specific answers . . . elaborate data concerning respondents's opinions, values, motivations, recollections, experiences , and feelings . . . allow for lengthy observation of respondent's nonverbal responses . . . are customized to individual respondents." (p. 128, Wimmer and Dominick, 1994)

Indepth, elite interviewing, like any methodology has advantages and disadvantages. One of the primary disadvantages relates to the idea of generalizability.

Intensive interviewing is a nonrandom technique and nonstandard since the goal is to provide an indepth look at the derived data. But for the purposes of this study and because the interviewing is supplemental to the content analysis, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. The wealth of detail to be gotten from the elite interviewing, which will explicate the quantitative findings will allow more accurate analysis of the overall data through triangulation. Wimmer and Dominick even suggest that indepth, elite interviewing "makes it easier to approach certain topics And provides more accurate responses on sensitive issues." (p. 129, Wimmer and Dominick, 1994).

Following are the suggested steps for constructing interviews: select a sample, construct the questionnaire, prepare an interviewer instruction guide, train the interviewer, collect the data, make necessary callbacks, verify the results and tabulate the data. (p. 128, Wimmer and Dominick, 1994). Information is provided below regarding sampling for the interviews and a copy of the initial standard questionnaire is provided in the Appendix. The interviewer was the researcher so there was no need to provide an instruction guide or train the interview.

Sampling: A list of prominent and influential individuals in the private and public sectors on the Peninsula active in regional issues was assembled using the following criteria:

frequent appearance in newspaper coverage; membership in issue-related organizations; participation in civic affairs. The list was kept short in order to provide the researcher with, as suggested by Wimmer and Dominick (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994) ,the capacity to do in-depth interviews on a few, rather than superficial interviews with many. A total of 18 individuals were initially contacted.

Will Corbin, Editor of the *Daily Press* was consulted as to whom should be sent letters at the newspaper. Although some may question if allowing the editor to suggest the recipients might bias the selection, the researcher believed, again, since the interviewing was a supplementary method of inquiry, that it was more important to send letters only to those who actively report and editorialize about regionalism and consolidation than to send letters randomly to reporters might not be knowledgeable about the subject.

When the researcher was familiar with the potential interviewee, or was familiar with someone known to that potential interviewee, a personal note was added to the standard cover letter in order to increase the chances of cooperation. One week after the initial letters were sent out, a follow-up phone call was made. For most, two follow-up calls were made. In some instances, more follow calls were made at the request of the individuals themselves or their support staff. If no response was forthcoming at after the follow-up calls were made, the individual was not

contacted again regarding the study.

Those who were not able to participate in the phone interview were asked to reply to the baseline questions provided to them in the original mailer in a SASE, by fax or by e-mail, by a specific date. Those who did participate either by mailing, faxing or e-mailing the questionnaires back to the researcher, or by participating in an interview were sent a personal thank-you note within two weeks of the response.

All the interview subjects were asked the same 12 questions initially, to provide some consistency in the tone, manner and direction of the questions but then, depending on the individual and the interview, additional questions were asked and recorded in order to enhance the interview.

The 12 standard interview questions may be found in the Appendix.

PROTOCOL

Following is the specific outline for the protocol for the study using the qualitative and quantitative methods described above. The protocol for this research project developed over time and went through a number of iterations before the final coding sheets were complete and actual coding took place. This process was based on Altheide's idea that the researcher must "treat the development of your

protocol as part of the research project and let it emerge over several drafts. . . .Keep categories to a minimum at first, but others can be added as the investigator interacts with documents and relevant theoretical issues. Third, no item in the protocol should stand alone or be included just because the answers would be interestingFourth, your protocol should be capable of accommodating both numericalCodesAs well as descriptions. . . .Fifth, your protocol categories should have more than one possible outcome or value to them" (p.27,Altheide, 1996).

Sampling: The sampling unit for the content analysis was all stories written by Daily Press reporters or editors between January 1, 1944 and December 31, 1996 that covered, as the primary news angle for the story, regionalism or consolidation issues. For the purposes of this study, regionalism will be defined as " A region consisting of one or more historic central cities surrounded by cities and towns which have a shared identification, function as a single zone for trade, commerce and communication, and are characterized by social, economic and environmental interdependence (Pierce web site, 1997).

However, this study will not define the region by the SMSA boundaries that constitute what is commonly referred to as Hampton Roads, but will instead, define the region geographically as the Peninsula to include: Hampton, Newport

News, York County, Williamsburg, the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck. (VPEDC, web site, 1996). The primary reason for this delineation is that one, these areas are served by the *Daily Press* newspaper and two, there have, and continue to be, specific public-private partnerships on the Peninsula that are engaged in investigating and advocating regionalism on the Peninsula only. Wherever "Southside" is used, it will refer to Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Chesapeake. Although this will not be an issue inherent in this study, as was indicated in the discussion of regionalism in the Literature Review, the definition of the region itself and the reluctance of the various municipal and county governments to define and align themselves as a region is a major problem in regional cooperation. Stories or editorials that do not discuss regionalism or consolidation primarily as related to the Peninsula as defined, were not included in the study. For instance, stories or editorials about the construction of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel are not included if they do not specifically address issues of regional cooperation or dissention between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula. An example of a story that would not be included in the sample because it does not meet the parameters of the study would be a September 28, 1924 story in the *Times-Herald*, the now defunct afternoon sister paper of the *Daily Press*, that discussed the importance of the tunnel: the story was not printed in the *Daily Press*, the story did not focus

predominantly on regionalism or consolidation, and the story did not appear during the time frame under consideration. Another example would be a story from the *Daily Press* on June 1, 1953 in which the story announced that soil testing had begun in preparation for building the tunnel: the news angle of the story was not predominately about regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula.

The time period was selected because one of the first reported meeting to discuss regional activities on the Peninsula itself was held in 1944 (*Daily Press*, 1944) and regional activities and potential legislation and discussion continue today (*Daily Press*, 1996). Taking representative samples of the 52 years was not considered a viable option since regional issues are not confined to specific times, seasons or even pages of the newspaper.

Therefore, it is a population sample or census. There were a total of 526 articles and editorials from this 52-year time period. There were 408 stories and 118 editorials. Stories and editorials appear in 23 of the 52 years under study, or slightly more than 40 percent. Table 1 shows the number of stories and editorials appearing in each year that data appears from 1944-1996 (Table 1).

year	story	editorial	total
1944	9	1	10
1945	16	0	16
1946	3	0	3
1947	2	0	2
1950	49	8	57
1951	1	0	1
1952	45	22	67
1953	5	6	11
1954	1	2	3
1955	26	2	28
1956	152	18	170
1958	25	18	43
1959	2	2	4
1969	0	1	1
1979	15	0	15
1989	2	1	3
1990	2	0	2
1991	2	3	5
1992	8	3	11
1993	0	1	1
1994	1	1	2
1995	19	17	36
1996	23	13	36

Table 1: Stories and Editorials per year, summary

There are 23 years, during 1944-1996, in which stories and/or editorials regarding regionalism and consolidation appear in the *Daily Press*. For instance, in 1944 there were nine articles: eight were stories, one was an editorial.

Table 2 shows the percentage of editorials and stories appearing in each decade; for instance, in the 40s (1944-1949) there were 30 stories and one editorial.

year	story	editorial	total
1940s	30	1	31
1950s	106	77	183
1960s	0	1	1
1970s	15	0	15
1980s	2	1	3
1990s	55	38	93

Table 2: Stories and Editorials per decade, summary

Table 3 shows the years in which the greatest percentage of stories or editorials appear; for instance, in 1956, 37 percent of the total number of stories appear.

year	stories	editorials
1940s	7%	<
1950s	75%	65%
1960s	<	<
1970s	<	<
1980s	<	<
1990s	13%	32%

Table 3: Greatest Percentage of Stories and Editorials, per decade

The *Daily Press* was selected for study, rather than the larger, more dominant regional newspaper, the *Virginian-Pilot*, because the *Daily Press* has never identified itself a

"public journalism" practitioner or devotee whereas the *Virginian-Pilot* has been on the leading edge of the public journalism movement. Because the *Daily Press* was selected, only their readership area, the Peninsula can be studied, not the coverage of regionalism for the region itself. The *Daily Press* was also selected because the afternoon newspaper, which ran concurrently with the *Daily Press* for many years, the *Times Herald*, was discontinued in 1991 and would not have included recent coverage of regionalism/consolidation. One more interesting note regarding the selection of the *Daily Press* as the paper to investigate is that the newspaper has experienced both private, family, local ownership and large, corporate ownership via the Tribune Company during the time involved in the study. The *Daily Press* was purchased by the Tribune Company in 1986.

The coding sheet was developed to provide answers for the three research questions, based on information extrapolated from the literature review and based on conversations with Will Corbin, Editor of the *Daily Press*. Every effort was made in creating the coding sheet to establish mutually exclusive, exhaustive and reliable categories as Dominick and Wimmer suggest. (Dominick and Wimmer, 1994). Although the researcher was, in the end, the only coder, a sample of 20 stories and 10 editorials, selected randomly were given to two graduate students to code to attain some level of intercoder reliability. Holsti's

method of determining the "reliability of nominal data in terms of percentage of agreement was used(Dominick and Wimmer, 1994): "where M is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree, and N_1 and N_2 refer to the total number of coding decision by the first and second coder, respectively." For instance:

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$$

(p.179,Wimmer and Dominick, 1994).

The current coding sheet represents an evolution in terms of its content. The coding sheet went through three iterations before the final set of questions were settled upon. Not only did the initial low intercoder reliability numbers suggest a change needed to be made, but comments from Mr. Corbin were also incorporated regarding the questions asked specifically in terms of newspaper coverage. After the third iteration was complete, a random sample of 20 articles and 10 editorials randomly selected was again rated by the researcher and the two other coders. Intercoder reliability rose to an acceptable level as presented below in Tables 4 and 5:

question (for stories)	Intercoder reliability percentage
1	100
2	96
3	100
4	100
5	100
6	100
7	92
8	91
9	93
10	90
11	100
13	100
14	89
15	100
16	100
17	100
18	100
19	100
20	100
21	100
22	100
23	100
24	100
25	93

Table 4: Intercoder Reliability for Stories, by year

Question (editorials)	intercoder reliability percentage
1	100
2	97
3	100
4	100
5	100
6	100
7	99
8	99
9	100
10	100
26	94

Table 5: Intercoder Reliability for Editorials, by year

Again, these iterations were performed based on Altheides idea that the analysis should "evolve" rather than be static.

Following are the definitions used to determine content categories on the coding sheet:

1. The story is primarily about:

a) consolidation/merger: consolidating or merging two or more different city or county governments or some combination of city and county governments. For instance, the consolidation of Elizabeth City County, Phoebus and Hampton but not the incorporation of Warwick as a city.

b) regionalism: two or more different city or county governments acting together to the mutual benefit of both according to the definition provided already. A demarcation

was drawn between regionalism and consolidation in terms of content categories for the coding sheet in order to be as specific as possible about the primary focus of the story.

c.) both: both regionalism and consolidation are covered equally in the story.

2. What was the primary focus of the story or editorial:

a. taxes/revenue sharing/financial condition of the local governments: Will taxes be affected? Is one city more financially solvent than another? Will revenues be shared?

b. Schools/education: Will schools be overcrowded or under-used? Is there a perception that the quality of education will be affected?

c. Sports (other or professional/semi): Will regionalism or consolidation affect the quality or number of, for instance, high school sports? Will it help attract semi or professional sports teams?

d. Tourism or economic development: Will tourism increase because of name recognition or pooled resources? Will more businesses come? Are smaller structures better at attracting new business than larger cities?

e. Area nomenclature: Suggested names for the consolidated areas proposed in the article like Hampton Roads, North Hampton Roads, Peninsula City, Port City. Suggested names for the regional activities proposed in the article like the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel were not included in this category.

- f. Transportation (methods of): public transportation methods including rail, light rail, buses, trolleys etc.
- g. Housing: Will the cost of housing increase? Will the quality of housing be better or worse?
- h. Infrastructures or their coordinate administrative functions: For instance, building or planning to build the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel; building or getting funding for interstate construction.
- i. Service Delivery: Consolidating or acting regionally in terms of items like water, sewage, police and fire services.
- j. Administrative functions or personnel: Consolidating or acting regionally in terms of the administrative functions of cities or counties. For instance if the efficiency and economy of consolidation is proposed in the article because it will mean less duplication of effort in terms of administrative function. The issues relating to local courts is also included in this category. Political ramifications of representation for each municipality or county are also included in this category: ie. Will there be bigger government or smaller government? Will there be less representation of a smaller city or more for a larger city under a new governance structure?
- k. Health care: Acting regionally or consolidating hospitals, tuberculosis clinics, health departments.
- l. Racial issues: Racial issues as the determinant for consolidation or regional activity. "White Flight" is an

example.

m. Social: Acting regionally or consolidating to ameliorate social ills like homelessness, poverty etc. or to improve quality of life. Cultural issues, like acting regionally to support the arts, are also included in this category.

n. Annexation: Acting regionally or consolidating to avoid annexation.

o. Reliance on military; Acting regionally or consolidating to lessen reliance on military industrial complex.

p. other

3. Does the story focus on how regionalism/consolidation will affect: a,b,c,d or not applicable? Is the central focus of the story how regionalism or consolidation will impact residents or issues relating to the more suburban or rural areas like York County, Warwick County, James City County? Does it relate to the needs of the traditional downtown areas like Newport News or Norfolk? Does it concentrate on both issues?

4. The story is about consolidation or regionalism on: a,b,c,d. Which of the areas does the story focus upon?

5. If the story is about consolidation on the Peninsula, it is about the merger or proposed merger/consolidation of: This question enabled the researcher to determine what areas were involved in the proposed consolidation .

6. If the story is about consolidation/merger, does the story advance or suggest a preferred or recommended

governance structure for the proposed consolidation/merger?
Does the story suggest a borough system? A city council-
mayor system?

7. Does the story connote an adversarial relationship
between the Peninsula and the Southside? A,b,not applicable.
Did the story suggest there were tensions between the two
sides of the Bay regarding the issues presented in the story?
It is the tone of the story, not the presence of quotes that
defines the answer to this question.

8. Does the story connote a cooperative relationship between
the Peninsula and the Southside? A,b, not applicable.
Again, same rationale as for the question above.

9. Does the story connote an adversarial relationship
between the cities or counties on the Peninsula itself? A,b,
not applicable. Again, same rationale as for the questions
above.

10. Does the story connote a cooperative relationship
between the Peninsula and the Southside? A,b, not
applicable. Again, same rationale as for the question above.

11. If the tone is competitive or adversarial, are there
quotes from sources which explicitly imply the relationship?
In other words, is it the way the story was reported or
framed by the reporter that provided the adversarial or
cooperative tone, or were there actual quotes from sources
that specifically implied the relationship?

12. What were words or phrases, not in quotes from sources,

which explicitly imply the relationship? What words or phrases did the reporter use to imply a relationship?

13. The sources are predominantly from: a,b,c,d,e,other. Where did the sources originate?

14. Regarding consolidation or regionalism, the story or editorial is: negative, neutral or positive? What was the overall tone of the story regarding the issue or regionalism or consolidation? In some instances, even though the story was about a regional or consolidation effort, the overall tone of the story did not relate to the issue and is therefore indicated by "not applicable." For instance, in the nomenclature battle, the issue really became, to an extent, the name of the proposed cities, not the issue of regionalism or consolidation, so there was no real overall tone for the regional or consolidation issue.

15. The story relies on "experts" :yes, no and not applicable. Experts in this instance are defined as those "elites" or "operatives" referred to in the Public Arenas model. An expert would be a public figure, a prominent business person, an organized community leader (like the head of the pro consolidation or anti consolidation leagues, the Civic Leagues, the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club), an academic source. When the term "not applicable" was chosen as the answer, the reporter named no specific sources and paraphrased the story. This situation occurred primarily in the 40s-50s.

16. The story relies on "citizens": yes, no and not applicable. Citizens are categorized as individuals quoted acting as individuals and not part of an organized community action group. In some instances, sources were categorized as citizens and later became members of organized community action groups and therefore became, when quoted, "experts" or "elites." When the term "not applicable" was chosen as the answer, the reporter named no specific sources and paraphrased the story.

17. The story uses newspaper employees, owners, editors, publishers as sources: yes, no, not applicable. Did the story quoted or paraphrased a *Daily Press* employee, owner, editor, or publisher?

18. If the story relies on "experts", it focuses on:

a, b, d, c, e, f. In which category did the primary sources fall?

19-22. Regarding regionalism or consolidation, when private (public, community, academic) sector sources are used they appear to be: 1-6 or not applicable. With (1) being extremely negative and (6) being extremely positive, where on the continuum did the sources in this category fall with regard to regionalism or consolidation? To rate a (1) a story had to indicate that the source(s) was extremely negative or opposed to the issue because of a specific issue A (2) meant the source(s) was negative or opposed to the issue overall. A (3) meant the source(s) was somewhat negative about the issue. A (4) meant the source(s) was somewhat

positive about the issue. A (5) meant the source(s) was positive about the issue overall and again, a (6) meant the source(s) was extremely positive about the issue for a specific reason. When the term not applicable is the answer to the question, the story focused more on things like nomenclature or getting a particular bill presented or passed.

23. Is there evidence or discussion in the story of involvement by the newspaper in activities in the community relating to regionalism or consolidation? Does the story indicate that the newspaper co-sponsored or sponsored a meeting relating to the issues? Does the story indicate that an employee, publisher, reporter, owner was active in the community regarding the issue? Does the story indicate that the newspaper had a particular stake in the outcome of the issue?

24. Is there specific mention of minority participation in the issues of regionalism or consolidation? Does the story use minority sources? Does the story indicate the minority community interests were being heard?

25. Does the story indicate general public involvement in the discussion about regionalism/consolidation? For instance, is the story about a public meeting, does the story announce a public meeting, does the story explicitly call for a public meeting.

26. Regarding the issue of regionalism or consolidation, the

editorial appears :1-6, not applicable. The same definitions apply to this continuum as for the Question 22.

Quotes were taken from specific articles which specifically illustrated the tone and tenor of some of the stories and times. These quotes are used in Chapter Five to support data provided in the next chapter.

Document Collection: The *Daily Press* has digitized articles from 1981 to the present so an electronic search, using the keywords regionalism and consolidation was conducted via the library computer system. The keywords searched headlines and stories and editorials for a match. The electronic search also included letters to the editors, "Radar" columns (newsy, gossipy political blurbs run occasionally) and phone-in results to occasional polls conducted by the paper in its "Sound-Off" section, but these were removed immediately upon receiving the initial list since reader reaction and comment is not under study in this dissertation. The stories or editorials that did not conform to the definition of regionalism/consolidation used in this study were discarded. Discarded stories or editorials covered items like the consolidation of Girl Scout troops or regional air or water quality.

For articles appearing prior to 1981, a manual search using microfiche was conducted. Articles were gathered based on their applicability to the keywords regionalism and/or

consolidation. There are 351 stories and 78 editorials from this time frame for a total of 429 stories and editorials or 81 percent of the total stories and editorials. Although every effort was made to make sure every story which related to the parameters of the study was collected, the researcher does acknowledge that the sample may be incomplete because of the difficulties in newspaper layout in the 40s and somewhat in the 50s, and because of the occasionally poor quality of the microfiche. Stories which were primarily announcements of public meetings, lectures or studies were included in the population. The percentage of stories which were primarily announcement, lectures or studies may be found in Chapter Four.

Each story and editorial or column selected for retention was coded for the following during data collection: date, byline if any, headline if any, page upon which the story or editorial appeared (front page, business section, special section; however, because newspaper layout has changed dramatically in the last 52 years, location, at times, was a matter of judgement.)

Study Design: The specific design for the study will be the design to test research questions. In this design the analyst attempts to "compare the results of a content analysis with data obtained independently (elite interviewing) . . . Very often, content analyses are only

part of a larger research effort." (Krippendorff, p.52, 1993).

This design seems to fit well with the idea of triangulating the data with qualitative and quantitative data. Krippendorff suggests that triangulating data also increases the correlational validity of content analysis (Krippendorff, 1993). Krippendorff suggests that this design "provides insights into the relations that might exist between phenomena and content analysis is concerned with their surrounding conditions . . . Correlations between message content as inferred from a content analysis...yields insights about antecedent conditions and effects." (Krippendorff, p.52, 1993). He gives an example of a study that measures the volume of news about unemployment, compared to public opinion about the issue and actual employment figures.

Units of Enumeration: The units of enumeration, or those things to be counted, will be referential. In this study, "referential units" will be questions about, and statements referring to, the coverage of regionalism/consolidation. Referential units, according to Krippendorff, may be defined as "particular objects, events, persons, acts, countries, or ideas to which an expression refers." (Krippendorff, p.55 1993). Krippendorff suggests that "referential units are indispensable when it is the task to ascertain how an existing phenomena is portrayed."

(Krippendorff, p.55, 1993).

Recording Units: The recording units for this study will be frequencies for categorical data and a six-point Semantic Aspect scale for those items which must be viewed as a continuum. Krippendorff suggests that frequencies are "by far the most common" way of recording data in content analysis. This is the preferable method of recording data when the "source material is conceptualized as a continuum..." (Krippendorff, p.60, 1993). So frequencies (i.e 80 percent) will be the recording unit when findings can be specifically categorized.

However, several of the questions asked in the content analysis can only be answered on a continuum, and for these questions, a scale to reflect the continuum will be provided and results will be recorded as a reflection of the magnitude represented on the scale.

Type of Analysis: The type of analysis given to the findings of the content analysis will be what Krippendorff refers to as Image, Portrayal. (Krippendorff, 1993). This particular type of analysis described as an analysis that focuses on a "special entity, person, idea or event and attempts to find out how it is depicted or conceptualized..." (Krippendorff, p.113, 1993). In this study, the results of the frequencies and the scales will be analyzed to determine

civic activism and bias. The elite interviewing will provide insight into portrayal and framing.

Examples of the coding sheets may be found in the Appendix

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explained the quantitative method of content analysis as well as the qualitative method of inquiry, elite in-depth interviewing and provided a rationale for their specific use as well as the synergy and robustness the combination will provide in terms of the research findings. The specific protocol followed in terms of the research was also provided. The following chapter contains the findings of this research in terms of the three research questions.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The information presented in this chapter reflects the findings of the content analysis and the initial 12 questions asked in the elite interviewing. Information is first provided according to the questions asked in the content analysis. In order to provide a more clear understanding of the data derived from the content analysis, the questions are broken down according to the following categories of stories for presentation: Focus questions, which were designed to provide information regarding the focus of the story (Questions 1-6); Framing questions, which were designed to provide information regarding bias and tone in stories (Questions 7-11, 13-14); Attribution questions, which were designed to provide information about the way sources were used in stories (Questions 15-22); Participation questions (Questions 23-25), which were designed to provide information about whether certain groups were portrayed in the news stories as being active in regionalism or consolidation.

Data is also presented in terms of editorials. The editorials are also presented by category for more clarity. Focus questions, which have the same purpose as described above (Questions 1-6) and Framing Questions, which have the

same purpose as described above (Questions 7-10, 26).

Questions 11-25 have no relevancy in terms of editorials and were not part of the analysis.

One question included in the data collection ,but not detailed in the findings as they follow,is Question 12. Question 12 in the content analysis asked the following: "What were the words or phrases, not in quotes from sources, that explicitly imply the relationship?" (referring to either an adversarial or cooperative or "not applicable" relationship between the Peninsula and the Southside or among the cities and counties of the Peninsula itself.) The answers to the question were too varied and non-specific to have meaning and lost much of their power once taken out of context, and therefore the data pertaining to that question has been eliminated from the findings. Therefore Question 12 is not included in any of the categories presented above.

Finally, a synopsis of the 12 standard questions asked of all interviewees is provided. A chapter summary, which follows the presentation of data, will summarize the findings and provide the focus for the final chapter.

Focus Questions (1-6): Again, these questions were designed to provide information regarding the focus of the story or editorial in terms of whether the story or editorial was primarily about consolidation or regionalism or whether the story focused on both issues. The questions were

designed to determine which areas were specifically targeted in the story or editorial for discussion about regionalism or consolidation. In addition, questions were asked about what specific urban public policy issues were the primary focus of the story or editorial and whether regionalism or consolidation affected the suburbs, the traditional downtowns or both areas. A question was also asked to determine if governance issues were covered in the stories or editorials.

In terms of whether the stories or editorials focused primarily on consolidation, regionalism or both: 69 percent of the stories focused on consolidation; 45 percent of the editorials focused on consolidation. Only 31 percent of the stories focused on regionalism ;55 percent of the editorials focused on regionalism. Table 6 shows, by year, the number of stories with a focus on regionalism or consolidation. Table 7 shows, by year, the number of editorials with a focus on regionalism or consolidation.

The story is primarily about	consolidation	regionalism	both
1944	1	8	0
1945	0	16	0
1946	1	2	0
1947	0	2	0
1950	0	49	0
1951	1	0	0
1952	42	1	0
1953	4	1	0
1955	25	1	0
1956	150	2	0
1958	25	0	0
1959	1	1	0
1969	na	na	na
1979	2	13	0
1989	0	2	0
1990	0	2	0
1991	1	1	0
1992	7	1	0
1993	na	na	na
1994	0	1	0
1995	13	6	0
1996	5	18	0

Table 6: Story Focus, by year

The editorial is primarily about	consolidation	regionalism	both
1944	1	0	0
1945	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na
1950	6	2	0
1951	na	na	na
1952	0	22	0
1953	0	6	0
1954	1	1	0
1955	2	0	0
1956	18	0	0
1958	3	15	0
1959	1	0	0
1969	1	0	0
1979	na	na	na
1989	0	1	0
1990	na	na	na
1991	1	2	0
1992	2	1	0
1993	1	0	0
1994	0	1	0
1995	7	10	0
1996	9	4	0

Table 7: Editorial Focus, by year

In the 1940s, only two of the 30 stories were primarily about consolidation; the only editorial from that decade was about consolidation on the lower Peninsula. In the 1950s,

the majority of stories focused on consolidation (83 percent); fewer than half the editorials were about consolidation (40 percent). In no year or decade were there stories that had a dual focus in terms of regionalism or consolidation. In two years, 1969 and 1993, no stories, only editorials, were printed regarding regionalism or consolidation, so they are identified in the table as "not applicable". There are also years in which no editorials, only stories appear, and those years are designated as "not applicable."

In the one year in the 1970s in which stories do appear (1979), the vast majority focus on regionalism (87 percent). No editorials appear from this time. The two stories which appear in the 80s (1989), both focus on regionalism rather than consolidation. The one editorial which appears in 1989 continues the trend by focusing on regionalism.

The 90s are nearly equal in terms of focus: 47 percent of the stories have a regional focus; 53 percent of the stories have a focus on consolidation, primarily on the Peninsula. Editorials in the 90s are nearly as evenly split with 52 percent of the editorials focusing on consolidation and 48 percent having a focus on regionalism.

Years in which consolidation appear to dominate in terms of stories are: 1952, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1958, 1992 and 1995. Years in which consolidation dominates in terms of editorials are: 1944, 1946, 1950, 1956, 1996. Regionalism was a dominate

theme in terms of stories in 1944, 1945, 1950, 1979, 1989, 1990, 1996. Regionalism was a dominant theme in editorials appearing in 1952, 1953, 1958, 1995.

With regard to specific public policy issues covered in stories, following is a breakdown by year and by selected public policy issues (Table 8). A relatively large number of the stories which appear as "other", are stories which were primarily announcements of meetings or appointments (83 percent of the 89 stories in the "other" category). The remaining 17 percent are stories that reported on a variety of issues other than the 15 categories provided for in the coding.

Policy emphasis: story	taxes	schools	sports	Tour/eco dev	name	transportation	housing	infrastructure
1944				6		1	1	
1945		1		10			2	1
1946				1	1			1
1947								2
1950	5	1		2	7			
1951		1						
1952	8	1	1	1				
1953				1	1			
1954								
1955					2			3
1956	18	2		4	45			4
1958	1	2						4
1959				1				1
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979	2	1		7	4			
1989				1				1
1990				1				1
1991				2				
1992				7				
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994				1				
1995	2	5		10	1	2		
1996				10		2	2	1

Table 8: Policy Focus for Stories, by year

Table 8: Policy Focus for Stories, by year (con't)

Policy issue: stories	Service delivery	Administrative functions or personnel	Health care	Race or racial issues	Social or cultural issues	Avoid annexation	Reliance on military economy	other
1944	1							
1945	1							1
1946								
1947								
1950	3	6	1	4			7	13
1951								
1952	1	21						12
1953	3							
1955		1				8		11
1956	2	8		6	3	2	2	54
1958	4	2		4				8
1959								
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979		1						
1989								
1990								
1991								
1992		1						
1993								
1994								
1995								2
1996								8

The issue of economic development is clearly an issue in each decade, if not each year. In the 1940s economic development accounts for 57 percent of the stories and

accounts for the only editorial which appears for that decade (1944). However in the 1950s, economic development, though it accounts for more than five percent of the total number of stories in this decade, lags behind administrative functions (25 percent) and taxes (20 percent) as the dominant issues covered in stories. The name for the newly proposed cities is the public policy issue most mentioned in the editorials in the 50s (14 percent); however the 50s represent a wide array of editorial positions regarding public policy issues as opposed to other decades. For instance, in the 50s, the newspaper spoke out, in the editorial pages, about taxes, schools, sports, tourism and economic development, nomenclature, service delivery, administrative functions and personnel, health care, race or racial issues, avoiding annexation and the area's reliance on a military economy. By contrast, the editorials in the 70s (1979), the 80s (1989) and the 90s focus almost exclusively on the issue of economic development.

Housing is only mentioned in 1944 and 1996 as being policy issues covered in the stories; no editorials focus on housing. Proposed names for newly or proposed consolidated cities also make scattered appearances in stories and editorials throughout the years of data: one story appears in 1946, 55 stories appear in the 1950s, four stories appear in 1979 and one story appears in 1995. Nearly a dozen editorials appear during the 50s regarding names and one

editorial appears in 1995 regarding nomenclature.

The dominant public policy issue in the 1950s, as reported in the stories about regionalism or consolidation, was administrative functions or personnel (25 percent); followed closely by taxes (20 percent). The issue of taxes or revenue sharing nearly disappears as an issue covered in the stories as the years go by, with the exception of two stories appearing in 1979 and two stories appearing in 1995. Likewise, attention to administrative functions and personnel also dwindles dramatically after the 50s with the exception of one story in 1979 and one story in 1992 .

The issue of schools is another public policy issue that sporadically appears throughout the data years. One story about schools appears in each of the following years six years: 1950, 1951, 1952, 1956, 1958, 1979. The greatest number of stories focusing on schools appears in 1995 with five stories. Only one editorial appears about schools (1952) prior to three editorials appearing in 1995. The one year which appears as the exception to the "economic development" frame is 1995.

The controversial issues of "white flight" and minority domination of local government appear only in the 1950s. Four stories in 1950 mention race specifically, as do six in 1956 and four in 1958. Two editorials in 1956 speak specifically about and focus on race as a public policy issue. Other stories and editorials in the 1950s referenced

race or racial issues as secondary or tertiary issues, but did not focus on the issue as the primary emphasis of the story or editorial.

A relatively large number of editorials and stories appear in the "other" designation: 24 percent of all stories and 22 percent of all editorials. Nearly 78 percent of the editorials in this category were simply calls for action regarding regionalism or consolidation; the remaining 22 percent had no clear public policy emphasis. Nearly all the stories in this category were "announcements" of meetings or appointments (77 percent); the remaining 23 percent focused on issues other than those available for recording.

Following is a breakdown, by year and by public policy issue, of editorial coverage (Table 9):

Policy issues: editorials	taxes	schools	sports	tourism /ecodev	name	transportation	housing	infrastructure
1944				1				
1945	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1950	1				2			2
1951	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1952	2	1	1	1	1			
1953								1
1954								1
1955				1				
1956					8			2
1958	2							6
1959								
1969				1				
1979	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1989								1
1990	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1991				1				
1992				2				
1993				1				
1994								
1995	1	3		12	1			
1996			1	10				2

Table 9: Policy Focus for Editorials, by year

Table 9: Policy Focus for Editorials, by year (con't)

Policy Issues: Editorials	Service delivery	Administrative function or personnel	Health care	Race or racial issues	Social or cultural	Avoid annexation	Reliance on military economy	other
1944								
1945								
1946								
1947								
1950			1					
1951								
1952		1	4				1	10
1953			1					2
1954								1
1955								1
1956				2				6
1958			3					7
1959			1					
1969								
1979								
1989								
1990								
1991		2						
1992		1						
1993								
1994		1						
1995								
1996								

The majority of stories and editorials tended to concentrate on either both the suburbs or traditional downtowns in terms of regionalism or consolidation, or neither the suburbs or traditional downtowns. Only 28 stories (six percent) focused on the suburbs as the primary emphasis of regional or consolidation concerns and only 19 stories (four percent) focused on traditional downtowns as related to regionalism or consolidation. Editorials continued the pattern: only three editorials emphasized how regionalism or consolidation would affect the suburbs and only two editorials emphasized how regionalism or consolidation would affect the traditional downtowns. Following is a breakdown, by year, regarding emphasis in stories about suburbs, traditional downtowns, both or neither regarding regionalism or consolidation (Table 10).

Focus by story	The suburbs	The traditional downtowns	both	neither
1944	1		2	6
1945			1	15
1947			1	1
1950	1	8	15	25
1951				1
1952	5	3	19	18
1953			1	4
1954	1			
1955			1	25
1956	17	7	53	75
1958			7	18
1959			2	
1969	na	na	na	na
1979	3	1	6	5
1989			2	
1990			2	
1991			2	
1992			6	2
1993	na	na	na	na
1994				1
1995	2		7	10
1996	5		8	10

Table 10: Focus on Suburb, Downtown, Both, Neither for Stories, by year.

Following is a breakdown, by year, of the editorials regarding emphasis on the suburbs, the traditional downtown, neither or both in terms of regionalism or consolidation (Table 11).

Focus by editorial	The suburbs	The downtown	both	neither
1944			1	
1945	na	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na	na
1950			4	4
1951	na	na	na	na
1952	1	1	10	10
1953			3	3
1954	1			1
1955				2
1956				18
1958	1	1	5	11
1959				1
1969			1	
1979	na	na	na	na
1989				1
1990	na	na	na	na
1991			2	1
1992			3	
1993			1	
1994			1	
1995			3	14
1996			11	2

Table 11: Focus on Suburb, Downtown, Both, Neither, for Editorials, by year.

Almost all the stories focused on consolidation or regionalism on the Peninsula as opposed to consolidation with , or regional cooperation with the Peninsula and Southside,

the Southside itself, or the Peninsula and Richmond. Only 18 stories (four percent) and 14 editorials (11 percent) emphasized regionalism or consolidation between the Peninsula and the Southside and no stories or editorials appeared suggesting regional cooperation or consolidation on the Southside or between the Peninsula and Richmond. Nearly 80 percent of the stories that emphasized regionalism or consolidation with the Peninsula and the Southside appear in one year: 1996. More than 85 percent of the editorials emphasizing regionalism or consolidation with the Peninsula and the Southside appear equally in each of two years: 1958 and 1996.

Following are the number of stories, by year, with regard to whether regionalism or consolidation is focused upon the Peninsula itself, the Peninsula and the Southside, the Southside, or the Peninsula and Richmond (Table 12).

Where consolidation or regionalism re: stories	peninsula	southside	Peninsula and southside	Peninsula and Richmond
1944	9			
1945	16			
1946	1			
1947	2			
1950	49			
1951	1			
1952	45			
1953	4		1	
1954	1			
1955	26			
1956	152			
1958	25			
1959	2			
1969	na	na	na	na
1979	13		2	
1989	1		1	
1990	1		1	
1991	2			
1992	8			
1993	na	na	na	na
1994	1			
1995	17		2	
1996	12		11	

Table 12: Focus on General Area, Stories, by year.

Following are the number of editorials, per year, with regard to whether regionalism or consolidation is focused upon the Peninsula itself, the Peninsula and Southside, the

Southside or the Peninsula and Richmond (Table 13).

Consolidation or regionalism focus: editorials	peninsula	southside	Peninsula and southside	Peninsula and Richmond
1944	1			
1945	na	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na	na
1950	8			
1951	na	na	na	na
1952	22			
1953	5		1	
1954	1		1	
1955	2			
1956	18			
1958	12		6	
1959	1			
1969	1			
1979	na	na	na	na
1989	1			
1990	na	na	na	na
1991	3			
1992	3			
1993	1			
1994	1			
1995	17			
1996	7		11	

Table 13: Focus on General Area, Editorials, by year.

Although the vast majority of stories emphasized regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula itself, there

was some variety as to where, specifically, that action was taking place. If the stories for 1956 (the year in which Hampton, Newport News and Warwick attempted to merge) are taken out of the data pool, the majority of stories focused on the consolidation or regional cooperation on the entire Peninsula, as defined in this study. Stories which relate primarily to regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula appear in all but two of the years for which data is present (1951, 1955).

Even in 1952, the year in which Hampton, Elizabeth City County and Phoebus merged, there were nearly as many stories about the regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula overall, as there were stories about the successful merger. Only in 1955 and 1958, years in which stories about the consolidation of Warwick County and Newport News dominate, are there more stories about regionalism and consolidation not regarding the entire lower Peninsula. Indeed, 37 percent of all stories, in all years in which data appear, relate to regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula overall. If the stories for 1956 are deleted from the sample, 58 percent of the stories pertain to regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula overall.

Following are the stories, by year, regarding locality focus in terms of regionalism or consolidation (Table 14).

Locality focus: story	Newport News/Warwick	Hampton ECC. Phoebus	Hampton Newport News, Warwick	Peninsula overall	James City County/ Williamsburg York County	Peninsula and Southside	other
1944				9			
1945				16			
1946				3			
1947				2			
1950		1		48			
1951		1					
1952	8	19	2	18			
1953	1			2		2	
1954				1			
1955	26						
1956			149	1	2		
1958	25						
1959	1			1			
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979			1	11	1	2	
1989				1		1	
1990				1		1	
1991				2			
1992				8			
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994				1			
1995				17		2	
1996				12		10	

Table 14: Specific Locality, Stories, by year.

Editorials follow a similar pattern. Even if the 18 editorials appearing in 1956 and the eight editorials

appearing in 1952 remain in the data pool, 58 percent of editorials pertain to regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula overall. In terms of decades, there was one editorial in the 40s (1944); 57 in the 50s (or nearly 50 percent of the total); one in the 60s (1969); none in the 70s; one in the 80s; and a resurgence in the 90s with 38 or more than 30 percent of the total. More than 75 percent of the editorials in the 90s appear in two years: 1995, 1996.

Following are the number of editorials, by year, with regard to locality in terms of regional or consolidation focus (Table 15).

Locality focus: editorials	Newport News/Warwick	Hampton ECC, Phoebus	Hampton Newport News, Warwick	Peninsula overall	James City County Wimg, York County	Peninsula Southside	other
1944				1			
1945	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1950				8			
1951	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1952	1	18		13			
1953				5		1	
1954				1		1	
1955	2						
1956			18				
1958	8		2	7		1	
1959	1						
1969				1			
1979	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1989				1			
1990	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
1991				3			
1992				3			
1993				1			
1994				1			
1995				17		2	
1996				7		6	

Table 15: Specific Locality, Editorials, by year.

Stories and editorials clearly focus on consolidation and regionalism on the Peninsula as a whole, but very few stories and editorials emphasized, advocated or recommended a

particular form of governance structure relative to the formation of new cities or cooperatives. Only six percent of stories discussed a particular form of governance and only three percent of editorials addressed specific forms of governance. More than 90 percent of all stories that did mention a specific governance structure appear in the 40s and 50s; 84 percent of all such stories appear in the 1950s.

Of the very few stories that do emphasize a particular governance structure, 64 percent mention or suggest a borough system; 24 percent focus on a city council/mayor with at large elections; and eight percent focus on a regional government. Following are the number of stories per year which provide information relative to a specific governance structure in terms of regionalism or consolidation (Table 16).

Governance: stories	borough	City council/mayor with at large, elections	Regional government	Other
1944	1			
1945				
1946	1			
1947				
1950	1		1	
1951				
1952	5	4		
1953				
1954				
1955	1			
1956	7	2		
1958				
1959				
1969	na	na	na	na
1979				
1989				
1990				
1991				
1992				
1993	na	na	na	na
1994				
1995				
1996				

Table 16: Governance Issues, Stories, by year.

Only one editorial, in 1952 discusses a city council/mayor arrangement. No editorials discuss a borough system, but three, or 75 percent of the editorials, discuss

the merits of a regional government (1950,1969,1995). Table 17 illustrates the numbers.

Governance: editorials	borough	City council/mayor with at large elections	Regional government	other
1944				
1945	na	na	na	na
1946	na	na	na	na
1947	na	na	na	na
1950			1	
1951	na	na	na	na
1952		1		
1953				
1954				
1955	1			
1956	7	2		
1958				
1959				
1969			1	
1979	na	na	na	na
1989				
1990	na	na	na	na
1991				
1992				
1993				
1994				
1995			1	
1996				

Table 17: Governance Issues, Editorials, by year.

Framing Questions (7-11, 13-14 for stories; 7-10,26

for editorials: The questions in this section sought to identify tone in editorials, as well as identify consistent patterns of framing in terms of the reported relationships between and among the localities. The questions sought to identify tone and bias in stories, as well as to identify consistent patterns of framing the relationships between and among the localities. As mentioned earlier, questions 13-14 were not relevant to editorials.

Only 13 percent of all the stories suggested an adversarial relationship between the Southside and the Peninsula. However, there are substantially more stories that indicate an adversarial relationship between the two "sides of the water" than there are stories that focus on regional cooperation or consolidation between the two. There are only 18 stories or four percent of the total stories, which focus on regionalism or consolidation between the Peninsula and the Southside but there are, again, 54 or 13 percent of all stories which indicate an adversarial relationship between the two areas.

The stories that portray an adversarial relationship appear sporadically throughout the decades with the majority (64 percent) appearing in 1956. But stories with this tone also appear in 1946 (one); 1950 (six); 1979 (three); 1989 (one); 1995 (two) and 1996 (five).

Fewer than 20 percent of all editorials related an

adversarial position between the two areas. No editorials after 1958 portray an adversarial tone between the Southside and the Peninsula. Following are the respective tables which show the number of stories per year, and the number of editorials per year, which portray an adversarial relationship between the Peninsula and the Southside (Table 18 and Table 19).

Adversarial position: stories	yes
1944	
1945	
1946	2
1947	
1950	6
1951	
1952	
1953	
1954	
1955	
1956	15
1958	
1959	
1969	na
1979	3
1989	1
1990	
1991	
1992	
1993	na
1994	
1995	2
1995	5

Table 18: Adversarial: Southside/Peninsula, Stories, by year

Adversarial: editorial	yes
1944	
1945	na
1946	na
1947	na
1950	6
1951	na
1952	
1953	5
1954	1
1955	1
1956	8
1958	13
1959	
1969	
1979	na
1989	
1990	na
1991	
1992	
1993	
1994	
1995	
1996	

Table 19: Adversarial, Southside/Peninsula, Editorials, by year.

Stories which indicate a cooperative tone in terms of the relationship between the Peninsula and Southside are negligible: one in 1950, two in 1953, and one each in 1989

and 1990. Likewise, there are only three editorials which portray a cooperative relationship between the areas: one each in 1950, 1954 and 1996. Since the data is so clearly negligible, no table is provided for either stories or editorials to provide a graphic illustration of the story/editorial pattern.

A large number of stories indicate an adversarial relationship between and among the communities on the Peninsula itself. More than half of all stories, 56 percent, indicate an adversarial relationship between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula itself. The adversarial stories appear most prominently in the 40s and 50s (86 percent), with 1956 the most dominate year in which they appear (51 percent). However, if 1956 is taken out of the data, nearly 73 percent of all the stories with an adversarial tone occur prior to 1979.

No stories at all appear in 1969 regarding regionalism or consolidation, but of the 15 stories appearing in 1979, eight, or more than half relate an adversarial relationship. All eight of the stories appearing in 1992 are adversarial in tone; 63 percent of the stories appearing in 1995 are adversarial in tone, but only 30 percent of the stories appearing in 1996 are adversarial in tone.

Editorials follow a somewhat similar pattern. More than half, (53 percent) of all editorials portray an adversarial relationship between and among the localities on the

Peninsula. The majority of those editorials appear prior to 1969 (71 percent). But 29 percent of all editorials with an adversarial tone appear in only seven of the 17 years in which editorials were found: 1969, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1996. More than half of the 29 percent, occurred in only one of those seven years: 1996.

Below is a table which illustrates the number of stories per year with an adversarial tone (Table 20). Following Table 20 is an illustration of the number of editorials per year with an adversarial tone (Table 21).

Adversarial stories Peninsula	yes
1944	5
1945	6
1946	
1947	1
1950	18
1951	
1952	10
1953	1
1954	
1955	
1956	119
1958	20
1959	na
1969	
1979	8
1989	1
1990	2
1991	
1992	8
1993	na
1994	
1995	12
1996	7

Table 20: Adversarial, InterPeninsula, Story, by year.

adversarial: editorial peninsula	yes
1944	
1945	na
1946	na
1947	na
1950	4
1951	na
1952	14
1953	5
1954	1
1955	
1956	9
1958	13
1959	1
1969	1
1979	na
1989	1
1990	na
1991	3
1992	2
1993	
1994	1
1995	10
1996	1

Table 21: Adversarial, InterPeninsula, Story, by year.

Little more than five percent of all stories indicate a cooperative relationship between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula; nearly half of those stories occur in two years in the 40s (1944, 1945). Only one story with a

cooperative tone appears after 1959 (1989).

Only three percent of all editorials indicate a cooperative relationship between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula. All the editorials with a cooperative tone appear in the 50s; one editorial each in each of the following years: 1950, 1952, 1954, 1956. Again, because of the paucity of findings, no table is provided to illustrate the number of stories or editorials, by year, in which a cooperative tone is present.

In total, 75 percent of the stories suggested some tone, whether it was adversarial or cooperative regarding regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula or regarding the Peninsula and Southside. Nearly 71 percent of those stories provided some attribution for the tone. Of the 156 stories in 1956 which show some evidence of an adversarial or cooperative tone, 75 percent show some form of attribution for the tone. Of the stories which indicate an adversarial or cooperative relationship in the 90s, nearly 86 percent show some form of attribution for the tone. The 1940s show the lowest percentage of attribution for tone at 55 percent. The few stories appearing in 1979 also show a relatively low attribution rate at 63 percent of the total.

Editorials, again, were not included in this tabulation because attribution is irrelevant to the editorial. Below is an illustration of the number of stories per year which show some form of attribution for the tone presented. No

distinction was made in the data collection relative to attribution, as to whether the tone was adversarial or cooperative. Some years may also show more attribution than stories covered because some stories presented both an adversarial and a cooperative relationship (Table 22).

Tone attribution: stories	yes
1944	1
1945	
1946	1
1947	
1950	13
1951	
1952	16
1953	3
1954	
1955	2
1956	118
1958	20
1959	2
1969	na
1979	7
1989	2
1990	1
1991	2
1992	6
1993	na
1994	
1995	17
1996	7

Table 22: Tone via Attribution, Stories, by year.

The vast majority of the sources provided in the stories came from the Peninsula rather than from the Southside, a combination of the Peninsula and the Southside, the Peninsula and Richmond or other origins. Just over 82 percent of all sources for all stories were Peninsula sources. The next greatest number is 13 percent from the Peninsula and the Southside with the majority of those stories (76 percent) occurring in 1956. The greatest number of sources emanating from both the Peninsula and Richmond was six stories, occurring in 1952. Peninsula sources dominate the source base for all years except 1996 in which nearly an equal number of stories appear with sources from the Peninsula and stories with sources from the Peninsula and the Southside.

In only three stories, less than one percent of all stories, were the predominant sources from other than the Peninsula, the Southside or Richmond. Studies performed by outside agencies (consulting firms, a University of Virginia study) were referenced in some stories, but not provided as primary sources. In other words, if a study was referred to, it was referenced by a source most often from the Peninsula, the Southside or Richmond.

Following are the number of stories categorized by source origination (Table 23). Again, editorials were not included in this set of data because the source is the editorial writer.

Source. story	peninsula	southside	Peninsula and southside	Peninsula and Richmond	Richmond	other
1944	7	1		1		
1945	16					
1946	2				1	
1947	2					
1950	46	2				1
1951	1					
1952	39			6		
1953	4	1				
1954					1	
1955	23		3			
1956	117	2	33			
1958	24				1	
1959	2					
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979	12	3				
1989	1		1			
1990	1		1			
1991	2					
1993	8					
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994	1					
1995	17		2			
1996	10		11			

Table 23: Source Origination, by area, Stories, by year.

The majority of stories throughout the 52 years under study were neutral in tone regarding the issue of regionalism or consolidation: 57 percent. However, a chasm exists between the number of stories which indicated a positive or

negative tone regarding the issue of regionalism or consolidation: only eight, or less than one percent of the total number of stories indicated a negative tone regarding regionalism or consolidation; however, 37 percent of the total stories indicated a generally positive tone regarding the regionalism or consolidation. All eight negative stories appear in one year: 1956. In 1952, 13 stories were purely announcements of meetings and therefore did not indicate a positive, negative or neutral tone.

More than 75 percent of the stories appearing in the 1940s had a neutral tone. In 1947 both stories reported that year were positive in tone regarding regionalism and consolidation. More than half (60 percent) of all the stories with tone reported in the 1950s, were neutral.

In 1950 more than half the stories (63 percent) were positive; 94 percent of the stories in 1952 were positive in tone; all five stories appearing in 1953 were positive in tone; 53 percent of the stories in 1955 were positive; and in 1959 both stories appearing that year were positive in tone.

There were no stories about regionalism or consolidation in the data set for the 1960s and the stories in the 1970s (1979) were overwhelming neutral (87 percent). The stories appearing in the 1990s are also generally neutral in tone; however, only 64 percent of the stories are neutral and 36 percent are positive in tone regarding regionalism and consolidation. In 1991, both stories appearing that year are

positive regarding the issue of regionalism and consolidation; in 1991, 62 percent of the stories appearing in that year are positive; in 1995, 47 percent of the stories are positive in tone.

Following are the number of stories, per year, categorized by tone (Table 24). Again, editorials were not included in this data set because Question 26 asks if the editorial was positive, neutral or negative in nature.

Tone: stories	negative	positive	neutral	Not applicable
1944		3	6	
1945			16	
1946		2	1	
1947		2		
1950		19	30	
1951			1	
1952		30	2	13
1953		5		
1954			1	
1955		14	12	
1956	8	49	95	
1958		5	21	
1959		2		
1969	na	na	na	na
1979		2	13	
1989			2	
1990			2	
1991		2		
1992		5	3	
1993	na	na	na	na
1994			1	
1995		9	19	
1996		4	19	

Table 24: Overall Tone, Stories, by year.

Attribution Questions (15-22): Again, these questions do not apply to editorials because of the very nature of editorials. This set of questions sought to determine specific sources and how those sources were portrayed

relating to the issue of regionalism or consolidation.

No stories relied only on primarily on citizens for source material. Only 4 percent of stories included citizens as sources and, again, always in conjunction with experts. The four years in which citizens are included as sources (along with expert sources) and the respective number of stories which appear in those years are: 1955 (one); 1956 (14); 1958 (two); and 1995 (one). As mentioned earlier, 13 stories in 1952 were purely announcements of meetings and carried no source identification as to expert or citizen. No table is provided to illustrate the numbers of stories which include citizens as sources since the total numbers are so low.

The years in which the newspaper was directly quoted as a source and the respective number of stories in those years are: 1950 (two), 1955 (five), 1956 (seven), 1958 (one); 1992 (five) and 1995 (four). Although only five percent of stories indicate that individuals affiliated with the *Daily Press* were directly quoted in news stories relating to regionalism and consolidation, 10 percent of all stories referenced employees, publishers or owners of the newspaper as indirect sources. This is not to say that 10 percent of the stories indicated involvement in the issue of regionalism or consolidation by people affiliated with the *Daily Press*; just that 10 percent of the total number of stories referenced the newspaper as sources. Again, no table is

provided to illustrate the number of stories per year because the numbers are so confined.

The stories are dominated by sources from two segments: the private sector and the public sector: 25 percent from the private sector and 36 percent from the public sector. Another 25 percent of stories had a combination of sources, with fewer than 12 percent of those stories providing other than private or public. Only 10 percent of stories used community leaders as the predominant sources and only one story, appearing in 1992 and 1995, directly attribute information to an academic source as the predominant source for the news article.

The 90s dominate in terms of the use of multiple sources; 58 percent of multi-sourced stories about regionalism or consolidation appear in the six years in the 90s for which data is present. More than one-third (35 percent) of all stories rely predominantly on public sector sources, with 64 percent of the stories from the 40s and 50s relying predominately on public sector sources. The year of the failed merger attempt among Hampton, Newport News and Warwick, 1956, the single greatest number of community leaders were used as predominate sources: 74 percent of all stories with community leaders as predominate sources.

Following is a table which indicates the number of stories, per year, dependent on source origination (Table 25).

Source origination: stories	Private sector	Community Leaders	Public Sector	Academic	Other	Combination
1944	3		3			3
1945	6		10			
1946	2		1			
1947	2					
1950	13	5	15			16
1951			1			
1952	3	5	11		13	13
1953			5			
1954			1			
1955	16	1	9			
1956	49	31	52			20
1958			23			
1959			2			
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979	6		5			4
1989						2
1990	1		1			
1991						2
1992			2			6
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994						1
1995	1		1	1		16
1996	2		4			17

Table 25: Source Origination, by Sector, Stories, by year.

When private sector sources were quoted, they were overwhelming supportive of the issues involved in regionalism or consolidation; 74 percent of all stories which rely

predominately on private sector sources were "extremely positive"; less than one percent of these stories were less than generally positive.

Community leaders quoted as primary sources in sources were varied in opinions reported: nearly an equal number were portrayed as being negative or generally negative towards the issues involved in regionalism and consolidation as were portrayed as being positive or generally positive about the issues (18 percent were negative or generally negative; 14 percent were positive or generally positive). The greatest number of "extremely positive" quotes appear in the same year as the greatest number of "extremely negative" quotes--1956.

Below is a table which shows, according to a six-point semantic aspect scale, based on the definitions provided in Chapter Three, the number of stories in which community leaders were portrayed as being primary sources and their relative opinions based on the news stories (Table 26)

Community sources	Extremely positive 1	2	3	4	5	Extremely negative 6
1944						
1945						
1946						
1947						
1950			3	2		
1951						
1952		1	1	3	2	1
1953						
1954				1		
1955						
1956	4	7			6	8
1958						
1959						
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979						
1989						
1990						
1991						
1992						
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994						
1995					4	1
1996			6		1	

Table 26: Community Source Opinion Portrayal, Stories, by year.

Public sector sources are, like community leaders used as sources, more varied than private sector sources quoted, although a much larger percentage are positive about the

issues in regionalism and consolidation than community leader counterparts. For instance, 88 percent of public sector sources quoted are generally positive, positive or extremely positive about regionalism and consolidation; only 12 percent are negative, generally negative or extremely negative about regionalism and consolidation. Again, 1956 stands as an exception to the rule: it is the only year in which public sector sources, used as primary sources in stories about regionalism and consolidation, are quoted as being "extremely negative" about the issue; 1952 and 1979 are the other two years in which public officials are portrayed in stories as being generally negative about regionalism and consolidation. However, in 1956, 71 percent of the stories appearing in that year were still positive or extremely positive.

The greatest single percentage, 47 percent, of the stories which are predominantly public sector sourced, fall into the "positive" category; the next highest fall into "extremely positive" with less than half that number at 23 percent.

Following is a table which illustrates the number of stories in which public sector leaders are primary sources and their reported positions regarding regionalism and consolidation (Table 27).

Public Sector sources	Extremely positive 1	2	3	4	5	Extremely negative 6
1944				1	3	2
1945					6	4
1946						1
1947						
1950				12	1	2
1951				1		
1952		2	1	10	5	6
1953				1	1	3
1954						
1955				4	4	
1956	7	4	4		28	9
1958					20	3
1959						2
1969	na	na	na	na	na	na
1979		1	3	2	3	
1989						2
1990						1
1991					2	
1992				6	2	
1993	na	na	na	na	na	na
1994						1
1995				1	2	7
1996			4		7	9

Table 27: Public Sector Source Opinion Portrayal, Stories, by year.

Again, only two years, 1995 and 1996 indicate that academic sources were used as the predominate sources for stories about regionalism or consolidation. In both those

years, the sources indicated that they were "extremely positive" about regionalism or consolidation. Other stories have referenced academic sources as secondary or tertiary sources but again, only two indicated that the academic sources were the primary sources for the story. No table is provided to graphically illustrate the years in which the stories appear since, again, there are only two years in which data appear for this category.

Participation Questions (23-25 for stories, 26 for editorials): These questions were designed to determine if the newspaper was actively involved in the community or political arena regarding the issue of regionalism and consolidation and to determine if the minority community and the community at large were reported as active regarding the issues.

Individuals affiliated with the newspaper, whether they were owners, publishers, reporters, editors, were reported in news stories to be active in the community or in the political arena regarding regionalism and consolidation in seven of the 23 years for which data is available for the 52 year time span of study. Or, for 30 percent of the data years, the newspaper is reported as being actively involved in the issue. More than 10 percent of all stories then, suggest some level of activism by individuals affiliated with the *Daily Press* in the community or political arena regarding

regionalism or consolidation, although that civic activism appears to be concentrated in certain years.

The greatest number of stories which relate civic activism on the part of the newspaper, or rather those that represent the newspaper, occur in the 50s (73 percent); the greatest percentage of those stories occurring in 1952 (53 percent). Five stories in 1992 and four stories in 1995 report active involvement by newspaper personnel in the community or political arena regarding regionalism or consolidation--several point to involvement by one-time publisher, Joseph Cantrell, who was at one point, president of the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Council (VPEDC). No table is provided to illustrate newspaper civic involvement since there are so few data years involved.

Reporting of minority participation in the civic process regarding regionalism and consolidation is low. Only in four years: 1950, 1955, 1956 and 1958 are there stories which indicate minority participation, whether individual or community-based, in the debate regarding regionalism and consolidation. Only six percent of all stories indicate minority participation and all six appear in the 50s; the greatest percentage of those stories appear in 1956 (66 percent). No table is provided to illustrate minority involvement in the civic process regarding regionalism and consolidation since the number of data years is so small.

Like coverage of minority involvement, community

participation is reported most often in the 1950s, but overall is relatively high: 55 percent of all stories indicate some level of community involvement. The highest percentage falls in the year 1956 (52 percent of stories reporting community involvement appear in 1956). No stories indicating community involvement appear before 1950 or after 1979, with the exception of seven stories (three percent) in 1995. Again, no table is provided for the same reasons as mentioned above.

The last question asked in the content analysis was relative to editorials only. It indicated that with only a rare exception, the *Daily Press*' editorial position, as evidenced by editorials written throughout the 17 years of data present for editorials, was overwhelmingly positive regarding the issue of regionalism and consolidation. For example, 98 percent of the editorials fell into the category of "extremely positive"; only four editorials, falling equally in the years 1956 and 1958, were negative about regionalism and consolidation and they were in reference to the Southside and regionalism and consolidation. The greatest number of editorials, and therefore, based on the information just provided, the greatest editorial support falls in the 50s and the 90s. As shown earlier, 65 percent of all editorials fall in the 1950s and 32 percent fall in the seven years in the 90s in which editorials appear. Again, no table is provided for the reasons mentioned in the

above instances.

Summary of Interviews (Questions 1-12): Letters with a list of 12 standard interview questions were mailed, faxed or delivered to 18 individuals, including four individuals associated with the *Daily Press*, according to the protocol outlined in Chapter Three. A total of 12 individuals responded by mailing, faxing, or e-mailing the information back to the researcher or by participating in a telephone interview with the researcher. An important unanticipated, and intervening variable, which may have affected both the rate of participation and the depth of participation, was the traumatic flooding that occurred on the Virginia Peninsula the week after the letters were sent out and the week in which the potential interviewees were being contacted by the researcher. Some businesses closed due to flooding, some phone service was down and some, particularly those in the public sector, were busy dealing with the implications of the flooding during the time allotted for information gathering. Another intervening variable, which should have been anticipated, was the onset of the state's legislative session in mid-January: some public officials may have been deluged with legislative concerns and therefore unable to take time out to participate in the questionnaire. A third variable is the resignation of the city of Hampton's mayor, James Eason, to replace Barry DuVal (now Secretary of Commerce and

Trade for the Commonwealth of Virginia) as the President of the Hampton Roads Partnership.

Following is an aggregate summary of the answers to the interview questions, by question rather than by respondent. Where appropriate the responses from the two individuals affiliated with the newspaper are reported separately.

The first question on the standard list asked how long the individual had been involved in issues relating to regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula: the longest was 56 years, the shortest was 10 years. All but two respondents were involved for a minimum of 15 years. The two reporters had been involved in writing about regionalism and consolidation for 10 and 20 years respectively.

The next question asked what groups the individual was involved in regarding regional or consolidation issues. Respondents currently belonged to, or previously held leadership positions in a variety of organizations with a regional focus--none currently belonged to organizations with a focus on consolidation, although at least two were leaders in the pro-consolidation movement of 1956. The respondents from the *Daily Press* belonged to no formal organizations and limited their "participatory" view to that of writing stories or editorials about regionalism and consolidation. Following is a short, representative list of the kinds of organizations respondents belonged to: VPEDC (now called the Peninsula Alliance for Economic Development--PAED); Hampton Roads

Partnership; Mayors and Chairs (both for the Peninsula and the Southside); Hampton Roads Partnership; Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; Industrial Development Authority; Peninsula Sports Facilities Authority; Virginia Peninsula Public Service Authority; Regional Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Forward Hampton Roads.

All but one of the private sector respondents belonged to at least two regional organizations; PAED being the primary affiliation. Respondents also tended to belong to organizations on the Peninsula and the Southside. Public sector respondents usually belonged to a wider variety of regional organizations, again with both Peninsula and Southside affiliations.

The third question asked for a definition of the region. No clear dominant answer emerged from the respondents. Most, nine, believed the region to be the MSA; some believed there were really two regions: the Peninsula and the Southside. One even said there were really three regions: the Peninsula, the Southside and the York County/James City County/Williamsburg region.

Next, interviewees were asked if they believed the owners/publishers, editorial staff or reporters at the *Daily Press* advocated regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula and asked them to explain how or why they held that belief. All of the private and public sector respondents answered "yes" to this question. All but one respondent believed the

Daily Press was very active in supporting regionalism for the larger region defined by the MSA, and equally active in supporting consolidation for Newport News, Hampton and York County specifically. The one exception was a respondent from the *Daily Press*, who believed that the primary area of support was for "regionalism."

The majority of respondents, eight, believed the publishers of the newspaper had been very outspoken and active in the community particularly in the last six to seven years, but many, six, also mentioned the active participation of the publishers when the paper was "family owned." Most respondents, nine, believed active civic participation was limited to the publisher, though, as indicated in a question asked later in the interview, eight believed that publisher activism "seeped" into the daily coverage of the issues of regionalism and consolidation. The two respondents from the *Daily Press* both said the paper was either "objective" or "fair" in the daily reporting of the issues.

The fifth question asked if they believed the stance of the newspaper regarding regionalism and consolidation had remained constant over time or if it had changed in some way. All respondents believed the coverage had remained relatively constant. The respondents from the paper indicated that coverage had remained constant as well although one indicated that some "anti-consolidation" focus occurred as a result of the fear that the Peninsula might be "subsumed" by the

Southside. Although all the respondents believed the emphasis of the coverage had remained constant throughout the half-century under discussion, seven noted that the tone of the coverage seemed to have changed from a "community" based orientation and rationale for regionalism or consolidation when the paper was a "family" operation, to more of an "economic development" based orientation or rationale one when the paper came under the corporate auspices of the Tribune Company.

Interviewees were then asked if they thought the owners/publishers, editorial staff, reporters at the *Daily Press* were active in the community or "political arena" regarding the issues of regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula. Without exception, the respondents believed only the publishers were actively involved in the community or political arena regarding regionalism or consolidation. One respondent from the *Daily Press* emphasized that "editors and reporters ...must maintain professional objectivity." Please see the Appendix for a copy of the "Conflicts of Interest" statement for *Daily Press* employees. However, many respondents, nine, believed that the publishers activism reflected itself in the tone and quantity of stories appearing in the *Daily Press* regarding regionalism and consolidation.

The seventh question dealt with whether the respondent believed it to be appropriate or important for a newspaper to

be active in its community regarding political or public policy issues. Responses were a bit mixed, although there was general support for free and outspoken editorial page comment about political or public policy issues. The primary area of dissonance seemed to be related to the fact that the *Daily Press* is seen as a "monopoly" with a very limited focus on the Peninsula. Three respondents complained that they had to subscribe to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* or the *Virginian Pilot* in order to find information about news happening in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Suffolk or Chesapeake. This was particularly disconcerting to those who supported the paper's stand on regionalism for the entire MSA.

Four respondents also believed this "monopoly" created a situation wherein the *Daily Press* may have "undue" influence regarding "shaping" public opinion regarding public policy issues and politics. These respondents believed that most people were reading only the *Daily Press* and not subscribing to outside papers, therefore, those citizens views were potentially skewed by the daily coverage and editorial stance of the *Daily Press*. However, again, most believed it was important for the newspaper to be involved in the community in order to "keep the pulse of the community" in mind as long as the paper did not actively advocate support for an issue in daily news coverage of issues.

Next, respondents were asked if they thought coverage of regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula was balanced

and objective or biased in some way. With only three exceptions, the respondents believed the daily news coverage in stories dealing with regionalism and consolidation was biased for regionalism regarding the entire MSA and biased for consolidation for Newport News, Hampton and York County. Two of the three exceptions were the respondents from the *Daily Press*. There was also some discussion that the volume of coverage about regionalism and consolidation, both in the daily stories and on the editorial page, contributed to the bias almost as much as the perceived "tone" of the stories.

Interviewees were also asked what they believed the editorial position of the *Daily Press* to be regarding regionalism or consolidation. The answers to this question reflect previous comments. With only one exception, a reporter, respondents believed the paper advocated regionalism in relation to the entire MSA, but advocated consolidation for the lower Peninsula.

Respondents were also asked if they believed the *Daily Press* had played an important role, over the years, regarding the issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula. One respondent from the *Daily Press* said the paper played an important role as "one of the regions agenda-setters" and most respondents seemed to agree that in terms of creating an awareness of the issue, the stories and editorials have help to put regionalism and consolidation on the public agenda. However, seven respondents believed the paper has never been

a "true ignitor of public consciousness to achieve the agenda" and questioned the paper's "vision" and "motivation."

Finally, respondents were asked what events they believed precipitated coverage of regional issues or consolidation issues on the Peninsula. The vast majority of respondents (11) believed the coverage of regionalism and consolidation correlated with two factors: failure or controversy regarding some regional effort (for instance, Newport News pulling out of the Virginia Peninsula Public Service Authority, which was envisioned as a regional cooperative for solid waste disposal) or more often, some economic or social crisis like the end of WWII, desegregation of the schools, defense related spend-downs or increased competition and pressures between and among localities for the dollars associated with attracting economic development.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter summarized the quantitative findings of the content analysis and the qualitative findings of the interviewing. The quantitative findings were presented according to four categories: focus, framing, attribution and participation.

In terms of Focus questions, the majority of stories and editorials, with the exception of 1956, focused equally on regionalism and consolidation as issues. About one-third of

all editorials with a regional or consolidation focus appear in only six of the 23 data years--all six of which are in the 90s.

A number of different public policy issues appear as dominate news themes over the years, but economic development clearly emerges as the dominant theme, especially after the 1950s.

Almost all the editorials and stories focused on the impact of regionalism and consolidation on either *both or neither* the suburbs or downtowns and almost all the editorials and stories focused on regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula itself, (with the exception of 1956.) Virtually none of the stories or editorials emphasized or suggested a particular governance structure.

In terms of Framing, a large number of stories provided an adversarial frame regarding the relationship between the Peninsula and the Southside or the relationships between counties and cities on the Peninsula itself. Nearly three-quarters of all stories provided some attribution for the tone of the story and most of the sources came from the Peninsula itself as opposed to the Southside or Richmond or a combination of those areas.

With regard to the issues of regionalism or consolidation themselves, the stories were generally positive. Less than one percent of all stories were generally negative and all of those stories appear in one

year, 1956.

In terms of how individuals were used as sources and how their opinions were portrayed in the stories, (Attribution), primary sources were almost exclusively from private sector elites and public sector elites. The 50s dominate in terms of citizen sources and community elite sources, but even in those years, citizen sourcing in particular is extremely limited.

The newspaper affiliates are referred to in 10 percent of all stories for the period, with the vast majority appearing in only four years in the 50s and only two years in the 90s. The 90s also dominate in terms of the use of multiple-sector sources.

When private elites were quoted as predominate sources, they were portrayed as overwhelmingly in favor of regionalism or consolidation; community elites were portrayed as nearly equal in terms of negative and positive feelings about the issues; and public elites, although the diversity of reported opinion was more varied than private elites, still showed a generally positive response in regard to regionalism or consolidation in the stories in which they were the primary sources.

With regard to Participation questions, again, newspaper affiliates were portrayed as active in the community or political arena regarding regionalism or consolidation in seven of the 23 years in which data appears or 30 percent of

the data years; more than 10 percent of all stories refer to an employee, publisher or owner of the paper as a source. The participation is most clearly evident in the 50s and 90s and in the 90s is relevant primarily to participation by the respective publishers.

Reports of minority participation in regional or consolidation issues is negligible. Only six percent of all stories indicate some level of minority participation and all occur in the 50s.

Reports of community participation occur in more than half of the stories, the majority appearing in the 50s and the majority of those appearing as announcements of forums for discussion.

Finally, 98 percent of all editorials are positive regarding the issues of regionalism or consolidation.

Responses from interviewees reflect the findings of the content analysis. All but one of the individuals were positive about regionalism and consolidation in general, although the definition of the region was varied. The average individual interviewed, belonged to at least two regionally-oriented groups, usually on both sides of the water, and had a minimum of 15 years of activity regarding the issues of regionalism or consolidation.

Nine respondents also believed the newspaper was supportive of regionalism in the MSA but consolidation for the Peninsula itself. Nine believed that newspaper activism

was relegated to the editorial pages and to the actions of the publisher, but eight also believed that editorial position "seeped" into daily coverage of the issues and therefore generally helped to "frame" the issues for the public.

All believed that some level of activism was important for the newspaper in order to maintain the "pulse" of the community but that the perceived "parochial" viewpoint of the Daily Press and its perceived "monopoly" on the delivery of news to the people on the Peninsula created an "undue" influence in regard to the placement of news on the public agenda. Conversely, seven did not believe the newspaper had had much of an impact in regard to regionalism or consolidation beyond placing the issue on the agenda and providing fodder for public discourse about the issues.

All but one respondent also believed that economic and startling social events precipitated coverage of the issues of regionalism and consolidation.

In the next chapter, Conclusions and Directions for Future Research, the findings will be related to the three research questions. A summary of the research will be provided and conclusions drawn based on implications for theory and implications for practice. Finally, directions and recommendations for future research will be addressed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this, the final chapter of the study, data derived from the findings will be summarized and then used to answer the three research questions posed in the Introduction.

Next, conclusions about the findings will be drawn relative to their implications regarding the second-level of Agenda-setting and the Public Arenas model, and relative to their implications for the practice of public journalism, especially as it relates to the creation, framing and fostering of public policy in an urban setting. Finally, directions and recommendations for future research will be addressed.

Findings Summary: As reflected in the summary for Chapter Four, the content analysis findings indicate a general profile of the stories and editorials written during the period between and inclusive of, 1944-1996. The findings below also incorporate the findings of the elite interviewing. However, rather than treating the responses from those affiliated with the *Daily Press* as part of the respondent pool, those responses have been taken out of the pool and will be identified separately, as needed, in this

summary. Interestingly, although the current publisher of the *Daily Press*, Jack Davis, is well-known for his outspoken support of regionalism and consolidation for the Peninsula, he declined to be interviewed for this study; regretfully, his insights are not reflected in the findings.

Although the quantitative data was somewhat decade dependent in terms of findings, and although the year 1956, in which Warwick, Newport News and Hampton attempted to merge into one consolidated city, appeared at times as anomalous, overall, the quantitative and qualitative data indicate a constancy to the focus and framing of stories and editorials as well as a constancy in terms of sources and their participation in the issues of regionalism or consolidation.

Following are the conclusions for the research based on the profile of stories and editorials based on the content analysis;:

- Stories in the *Daily Press*, primarily about regionalism and consolidation, appeared in 23 of the 52 years under study, or slightly more than 40 percent. Editorials appeared in 17 of the 52 years under study or nearly 33 percent. These two figures point to the longevity and constancy of the issues of regionalism and consolidation in the news and on the public agenda. Because this is a baseline study, no tests to determine if the figures are statistically significant were able to be done but the findings are supportive of the underlying premise of the

Public Arenas model which suggests that issues rise and fall on the public agenda over time, based, partly, on the activities of "operatives" and partly, on other ameliorating issues.

- The majority of stories and editorials appear in two decades: 1950s and 1990s, so the findings for those two decades are the foundations for the majority of the conclusions drawn in the study. Again, the issue rose and fell on the public agenda over time, and only by using a census was it possible to actually see how the issue appears, disappears and then appears again. Coordinately, all but one of the individuals surveyed regarding regionalism and consolidation said they had been involved in the issues for 15 years or more, ranging from 52 years to 10 years. The two respondents from the newspaper had been active in writing about regionalism and consolidation for 10 and 20 years respectively.
- Interestingly, beyond the potential implications with regard to what influences news items to be usurped on the public agenda, since there are whole decades in which no stories or editorials appear in relation to regionalism and consolidation (1960-1968; 1970-1978; 1980-1989), there is the finding that in the 23 years in which data do appear, there are individual years in which stories appear but no editorials

(1945,1946,1947,1951,1979,1990) and conversely there are individual years in which editorials appear but no stories with regard to regionalism and consolidation (1969,1993). Discussion of this finding is beyond the scope of this particular investigation.

- The majority of stories and editorials about regionalism and consolidation appear in the 1950s, the period of "consolidation fever" on the Peninsula. But about 13 percent of all stories and nearly one-third of the total number of editorials regarding regionalism and consolidation, appear in only six years in the 90s. Following is a table which shows that even given the lack of any one particular coalescing issue, like the proposed consolidation of independent cities in the 50s, that the 90s were still a time of real news and editorial interest in regionalism or consolidation

Consolidation Regionalism

1944-1959	74 %	26 %
1960-1996	39 %	61 %

Table 28 : Story focus by decade, summary Consolidation or
Regionalism

One possible explanation for the fact that despite the dearth of public activity regarding consolidation in the

90s, more than one-third of the stories were still predominantly about consolidation, is that the 90s were one of the two decades in which publisher-activism in the civic and political arenas regarding regionalism and consolidation was most prevalent. A similar relationship is apparent in editorials as indicated in Table 29.

	Consolidation	Regionalism
1944-1959	42%	46%
1960-1996	53%	47%

Table 29: Editorial focus by decade, summary Regionalism and Consolidation

- In the aggregate, stories and editorials focused nearly equally on regionalism and consolidation with the exception of 1956, the year in which Warwick, Newport News and Hampton attempted to merge into one consolidated city. This balance with regard to focus even remains so during the time that Elizabeth City County, Hampton and Phoebus actually did merge. Again, this is an important finding because only in the 50s was consolidation a "community" concern waiting to be acted upon. In addition, issues of regionalism and consolidation appear to be separate and unconnected issues in terms of the way in which they were reported.

In no year did a story appear which had an equal emphasis in terms of regionalism and consolidation; the stories were simply either about regionalism or consolidation, not both. This dichotomy is interesting in light of some answers given by respondents in the interviews. Most of the respondents belonged to two or more regionally-oriented issue-based groups (both on the Peninsula and on the Southside) but many also supported consolidation on the Peninsula. Respondents did not seem to draw as great a separation between regionalism and consolidation as did the newspaper coverage. The years in which stories tended to dominate with regard to consolidation were, again obviously, the early 50s, but consolidation stories also appear prominently in 1992, 1995 and 1996: years in which there was no reported concerted effort either in the community, the public sector or the private sector regarding consolidation efforts. Regionalism was a dominate theme on the post-WWII Peninsula (1944-1950) but disappeared from the paper for nearly 30 years until 1979 when 13 stories ran, and then virtually disappeared again until 1995 and 1996.

- All of the private and public sector individuals interviewed, believed the paper had a long, steady and staunch history of supporting regional cooperation overall and consolidation on the Peninsula in

particular, but they also indicated that they perceived an increase in the paper's willingness to admit that support publicly not only on the editorial pages but also by virtue of the perceived amount of emphasis the issues received in daily coverage in the 90s. In other words, some believed the paper in the 90s was, finally, willing "not to hide on the editorial page" and to, somewhat openly, admit their bias with regard to the issues. Those who perceived this "openness" regarding the newspaper's bias, seemed to appreciate the "honest intent" but were stridently opposed to the notion that the paper should actively *advocate* a public policy issue in daily news stories but rather act as a forum for promoting public discourse about public policy. All respondents believed that the publisher and editorial page "bias" should not "seep" into daily news. Both respondents from the newspaper believed activism on the part of the publisher and editorial board was important, but both agreed that activism in civic issues related to public policy was not appropriate for reporters.

- There were a number of public policy issues addressed in stories and editorials during the data years, but economic development was the most prevalent and most dominate issue spanning the decades. Economic development, almost without exception, is the public policy issue focus of both news stories and editorials

after the 1950s. It is also, without exception, one of the precipitating factors interview respondents from the public and private sectors believed led to coverage of regionalism and consolidation over the years.

Overwhelmingly, interviewees named economic development and a threat of economic crisis as events which heralded increased coverage of regionalism and consolidation by the *Daily Press*. Five respondents, including one from the newspaper, point to the inviolate fact that the region, whether defined as the Peninsula, or by the MSA, has grown beyond traditional, historical, and politically parochial boundaries and has taken on an economic identity of its own. The economic frame of the stories, post 1958, then is seemingly reflective of the reality with regard to regionalism and consolidation.

- The 50s, however, stand out as the only decade in which economic development does not dominate as the public policy focus of stories or editorials. Issues like taxes, schools, fear of annexation, nomenclature, infrastructure, administrative functions/personnel, service delivery and the areas reliance on a military economy were focused upon in the reporting significantly more than economic development as a rationale for or concern regarding regionalism or consolidation. Several interviewees believed the *Daily Press* in the 50s, under family ownership, was more

"community" oriented but that the emphasis in reporting the issues of regionalism and consolidation changed to a more "economic" orientation under corporate ownership by the Tribune. In fact, however, that emphasis became clear shortly after 1956, 30 years before the paper was bought out. Although, it is important to note that regionalism and consolidation were not heavily covered or editorialized about between 1960-1989. In addition, racial issues relevant to regionalism or consolidation are dealt with openly, but singularly, in the news stories and editorials of the 50s; (in fact, reaching a zenith within a couple of years of the 1954 landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision) although anecdotally, "white flight" still appears to be an issue particularly with regard to consolidation among Hampton, Newport News, York County, James City County, Poquoson, and Williamsburg. Perhaps coordinately, the 50s are also the single decade in which minority participation in the issues of regionalism and consolidation are reported in news stories or mentioned in editorials. Following this frame, significant social "occurrences" or crises, or in the language of the Public Arenas Model, ameliorating social events, were also named by respondents as major precipitating events for increased coverage by the *Daily Press* of regional or consolidation issues. They pointed to demographic changes which occurred after the end

of WWII in the cities of the Peninsula, and later the desegregation of schools as well as the continued decay of the traditional central core cities as major variables associated with concern about regionalism or consolidation and coordinate coverage.

- There was no steady focus on the impact of regionalism or consolidation in terms of suburbs or the downtowns. The stories generally focused either on the impact on both or the impact on neither and generally, the stories focused on neither. This was interesting because some of the interviewees, primarily those from the private sector, said they believed regionalism and consolidation were increasingly important issues because of the "rampant" decay of the areas central core cities. Indeed, three respondents noted a study headed by Tom Chisman Sr., in the 70s, which specifically addressed the decay of inner cities as a rationale for discussing regionalism and consolidation as public policy issues in general. Five believed regionalism in general and consolidation in particular, would always be a matter of debate because of the "jealousness" with which the more suburban areas approached the issues.
- The vast majority of stories throughout the decades focused on regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula itself, as opposed to regional or consolidation efforts between the Peninsula and the Southside or the Peninsula

and Richmond. However, 80 percent of the stories that emphasized regionalism or consolidation between the Peninsula and Southside appear in just one year: 1996. More than 85 percent of the editorials with a similar focus appear equally in each of two years: 1958 and 1996; more than 57 percent of those were written just in 1996. However, stories and editorials in the 90s were still predominately focused on regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula: 75 percent of editorials written in the 90s had the Peninsula as the focal point and 70 percent of the stories written in the 90s had a similar focal point. It appears that the focus of the daily news stories in the 50s and 90s is reflective of the focus on the editorial page. The dominant frames apparent on the editorial page are reflected in the dominant frames of the daily news. Again, this is a particularly interesting finding because of the length of time studied. Although the interviewees from the private and public sectors were relatively evenly split with regard to their belief that coverage of regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula was objective and relatively balanced, most believed the editorial "obsession" with consolidation in particular "seeped" into daily news coverage, if not in tone then by a perceived volume of coverage. One poignant comment from a respondent from the newspaper, which was a total

departure from comments made by most of the respondents from the public and private sectors, said that "fair" was a better word than "objective" in relation to the news coverage of regionalism and consolidation because "the news coverage does *not* take sides." Following are tables which show the relationship between editorial focus in the 50s and editorial focus in the 90s and story focus in the 50s and story focus in the 90s (Table 30, Table 31).

Economic Development All other issues

1944-1959	10%	90%
1960-1996	61%	39%

Table 30: Focus of stories, summary by decades

Economic Development All other issues

1944-1959	6%	93%
1960-1996	69%	31%

Table 31: Focus of editorials, summary by decades

The tables do not include those stories which were coded as "other"; in other words, the relationship is between those stories which had a primary news angle of economic development and those stories which were included in the

other 14 coding items, excluding the "other" category. Clearly, there is a relationship between editorial and news focus as it relates to the primary frame of the stories. A Pearson Correlation which looked at two pairs of variables by year: one, stories with an economic development focus and editorials with an economic development focus and two, stories with other focus and editorials with other focus, indicates that the relationship between editorial public policy focus and story public policy focus in those decades where there was the most newspaper activism was significantly positive. Following are the correlation tables (Table 32 and Table 33).

	#Eco.dev editorials	#Eco. Dev. stories
Pearson Correlation	1.00	.845**
Significance (2 tailed)	.000	.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 32: Correlation editorial and story for economic development as story focus

	#Other editorials	#Other stories
Pearson Correlation	1.000	.761**
Significance (2-tailed)	.002	.002

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 33: Correlation editorial and story focus for "other" as story focus.

- More than one-third of all stories focused on regionalism or consolidation on the Peninsula overall (as defined earlier) as opposed to consolidation or regional efforts between, for instance, Newport News and Hampton or between James City County, York County and Williamsburg. If stories from 1956 are deleted from the sample, the percentage leaps to more than half, 58 percent. This is particularly interesting considering that there is a moratorium state-wide on cities annexing adjacent counties, so York County could not be annexed - or consolidated--by Newport News or Hampton. And, according to one public official, even if the Virginia Legislature were to abandon the statewide moratorium on such annexations, York County would still be protected from annexation because of a law enacted in the late 70s which prohibits the annexation of a county with more than 300 people per square mile residing in the county.

Originally enacted to protect the powerful northern Virginia counties from annexation by older core cities, York County sneaked in under the population protection parameters in the 80s. Without the expanse of York County, consolidation between simply Newport News and Hampton provides no "elasticity"--both cities have little room to grow. It appears, given this information, that the paper's strong stance regarding consolidation is, perhaps, misplaced.

- Editorials follow a similar path in terms of focus regarding regional or consolidation efforts. Even if 1956 is retained in the data pool, 58 percent of editorials focused on regionalism or consolidation on the overall Peninsula instead of again, Newport News and Hampton or some other combination of entities. Importantly, the 90s appear again as a standout decade regarding focus on regional and consolidation issues. More than 30 percent of the total number of editorials appear in the 90s, with 75 percent of those appearing in just two years: 1995 and 1996. And those editorials are 98 percent positive in tone regarding regionalism and consolidation.
- Virtually no stories or editorials emphasized or reported a particular governance structure.
- Only 13 percent of all stories related an adversarial relationship between the Peninsula and the Southside;

fewer than 20 percent of the editorials portrayed a similar relationship. Many of these stories focused on the controversial name of the proposed consolidated cities of Newport News, Hampton and Warwick in the mid-50s. In addition, many of these stories reflected the "step child" insecurities of the Peninsula in relation to the Southside, particularly Norfolk. And although more than half of all stories which focused on regionalism and consolidation portrayed an adversarial relationship between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula, nearly all appear before 1979. More than half of all editorials reflect this same tone. But nearly 30 percent of all editorials with an adversarial bent in terms of the relationships between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula, appear in only seven years: five of which are encompassed by the 90s. This is a situation in which daily coverage appeared to have emancipated itself from editorial tone. Although daily coverage of regionalism and consolidation may have become more neutral in regard to framing some sort of inter-city and inter-county relationship after the contentious 50s, the editorial focus continued to emphasize an adversarial relationship rather than cooperation. This contentious frame provides a basis for the paper to continue to call for consolidation rather than just regional cooperation: the suggestion is that

in-fighting between and among the localities belies the effectiveness of regional cooperatives and can only be eliminated through consolidation.

- In keeping with the pattern established above, only one story with a cooperative tone appears after 1959 (1989) and only five percent of all stories reflect a cooperative tone between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula. Fewer still are the number of editorials which relate a cooperative relationship: only three percent and they all appear in the 1950s.
- Overall, of the 75 percent of stories which suggested some kind of relationship between and among the cities on the Peninsula and between the Peninsula and the Southside, a large majority provided quoted attribution for that tone (71 percent). The 40s dominate as the era of non-attribution, as was more the style of newswriting of the time. Again, this points to the relatively neutral style of reporting for *individual* stories and supports the assumption that coverage is not *advocacy* journalism.
- Regardless of whether the story suggested a particular frame of relationships between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula or between the Peninsula and the Southside, the vast majority of primary sources used in news stories throughout the decades were from the public and private sectors. Virtually no primary sources

came from "citizens" as opposed to "elites", and virtually no primary sources came from "academic" elites. The major players in regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula, based on representation in stories, were reported to be public and private sector elites, both of whom were portrayed in the reporting as overwhelmingly in support of regional and consolidation efforts throughout the decades, although public sector elites tended to be more generally positive as opposed to extremely positive like private sector elites. This is interesting in two ways. One, many editorials (and even the enabling legislation for consolidation provided by the General Assembly) suggests that efforts for consolidation must be "from the people", must have a grass-roots beginning, must be "the will of the people." Even though the stories after the 50s were more likely to be "multi-sourced", the sources were still a combination of private and public sector elites as opposed to, for instance, citizens and public sector elites or community leaders and private sector elites. Only four percent of all stories show citizen sources used as a component of a multi-sourced story. Second, although individual stories did not appear to be biased per se regarding regionalism and consolidation, (57 percent were neutral in their reporting of the issues), the overall bias for the 52 years under study

was positive to the issues (less than one percent of all stories indicated a negative tone regarding the issues and more than one-third were specifically positive in tone). In addition to tone, the vast majority of sources used in stories originated from the Peninsula, not the Southside, not Richmond and not a combination of any of those. Concern about this reliance upon a narrow selection of sources is reflected in the comments by seven of the interview respondents from the public and private sectors who suggested that the *Daily Press* is "parochial" in its coverage. Some suggested that in order to be exposed to "non-Peninsula" sources about happenings *on the Peninsula*, like regionalism or consolidation, they had to subscribe to the Norfolk or Richmond papers. So, by virtue of the choice of sources selected and quoted, by virtue of the way in which their opinions were reported and by virtue of the sheer number of stories presented over the years with a positive tone even without quoted attribution, a positive cumulative bias *over time* with regard to the issues of regionalism and consolidation concurs with a strong and long-held editorial position of support. The public and private sector respondents to the interviews reflected this conclusion as well in terms of their perceptions of bias, although as mentioned earlier, the respondents from the *Daily Press* perceived the paper as "fair" or

"objective" in its daily coverage of the issues over time.

- The newspaper itself, primarily the publisher of the newspaper at any given time, is referred to as a source in news stories slightly more than 10 percent of the time. Again, news stories, not editorials. Because this study is a baseline study, tests for statistical significance cannot be made as there is no data available for comparison, but the Society of Professional Journalists code of ethics strongly states that there should exist a "wall" between the editorial and news pages of a newspaper. (SPJ Code of Ethics, 1997). One of the most intense periods of active participation by the newspaper in the public and political arena regarding regionalism and consolidation are the 50s , especially 1952, the year in which Elizabeth City County, Phoebus and Hampton successfully consolidated. Then the 90s connection appears again with nine stories appearing in 1992 and 1995 which specifically mention the publisher of the Daily Press as being actively involved in the issues in the community and in the polity. In fact, publisher activism was so strong in the mid-90s, the newspaper actually sponsored an Alaskan retreat for private and public officials to discuss the issues at length. It appears then, that regardless of whether the paper was "family owned", as

it was in the 50s or "corporate owned", as it is in the 90s by the Tribune Company, newspaper activism, though usually only on the part of the publisher, was evident with regard to regional and consolidation issues. It also appears that during the times of intense publisher participation coverage increased not only in the editorial pages but also in the daily pages of the paper regarding regionalism and consolidation. Interview respondents, including those affiliated with the *Daily Press*, also named Joseph Cantrell and current publisher Jack Davis as being particularly active not only in the community in support of regionalism and consolidation but also in the political arena. Most private and public sector respondents mentioned that during Cantrell and Davis' tenure, coverage appeared to increase with regard to regionalism and consolidation. In addition, most believed that publisher activism was appropriate and important in terms of creating an awareness of important public policy issues and in terms of creating and enhancing public discourse about important public policy issues, but again, the perception of the *Daily Press* as "parochial" and a media "monopoly" on the Peninsula created some problems for some of the respondents as did the perception of "seep." Following is a graph that shows the relationship between editorial focus and news story focus for those specific years in

which the newspaper acts as one of its own sources (Table 34, Table 35).

The years 1950, 1952, 1955, 1956, 1958 are indicated as 1950s and the years 1992, 1994 and 1995 are indicated as the 1990s. Once again, stories originally coded as "other" have been deleted.

	Economic Development	All others
1950s	35%	65%
1990s	60%	30%

Table 34: Stories in participation years, summary by decade

	Economic Development	All others
1950s	0%	100%
1990s	70%	30%

Table 35: Editorials in participation years, summary by decade

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the conclusions presented above, with regard to

RQ1:

Was the *Daily Press*, through both private and corporate ownership, civically active in the issue of regionalism and Consolidation during the 52 years under study?

the answer is affirmative. Although activism was almost exclusively limited to participation in the community and political arena by the publishers, that activism is evident both in the 50s (under family ownership) and in the 90s (under corporate ownership)--the two decades with the most intense coverage of the issues of regionalism and consolidation. In addition, in the 90s, in which no coalescing effort was under way by the communities, the politicians or the private sector with regard to consolidation, the preponderance of stories about consolidation appearing in the daily news, can only be attributed to publisher civic activism and its coordinate impact on daily news coverage. Still, it should be noted, that the newspaper never actively advocated regionalism or consolidation in the daily news stories. Individual stories are, for the most part, neutral with regard to the issues themselves--again, the distinction between advocacy and activism is clear and important.

With regard to RQ2:

Was the coverage of regionalism and Consolidation during the 52 years under study was biased?

The answer is yes, cumulatively speaking. The longevity of the issue of regionalism and consolidation on the public agenda; the selection and portrayal of sources; the constant focus of the stories themselves; the preponderance of positively oriented stories as well as the absence of negatively oriented stories throughout the decades, indicate that although individual daily stories may have been relatively neutral over the years and the stories did not openly advocate regionalism or consolidation, the cumulative result is a substantially positively biased frame with regard to regionalism overall, and consolidation for the Peninsula.

There is evidence that publisher activism reflected itself not only on the editorial pages, where most would suggest it traditionally belongs and can be expected, but also reflected itself in the daily coverage of stories dealing with regionalism and consolidation. This is particularly evident in the 90s, in which again, no coalescing effort regarding consolidation appeared in the private, public or community sectors, but a number of stories about consolidation appear. Again, the stories do not blatantly advocate the issues, but they do reflect civic activism on the part of the respective publishers with regard to the way in which they are framed.

And finally, RQ3 asked:

Did the appearance of bias or lack of bias in daily news coverage affect the way the issues of regionalism and consolidation were created, framed or fostered

during 1944-1996? The answer is, no, not when each story is viewed individually. Individually, the stories, although generally positively in tone, are not specifically biased against or for the issues of regionalism or consolidation. However, the answer is also yes. When the stories are considered in terms of their cumulative effect and in terms of the frames provided for in the cumulative stories, a positive bias appears for the following reasons:

- the positive bias in the tone of stories over the years with regard to the issues themselves as well as the nonappearance of negatively oriented stories
- the constant focus on regionalism for the whole and consolidation for the few
- the almost exclusive attention to private and public sector elites rather than citizens or even community elites in terms of sources
- the complete dependence on using "parochial" sources; Peninsula sources as opposed to sources from the Southside or Richmond
- the constancy of frame regarding economic development as the driving force behind the need to consolidate or regionalize

- the correlation between the number of editorials and the number of news stories appearing in years in which there was substantial publisher activism (community and political),

All these conditions, cumulatively, act to create, frame and foster a particular viewpoint by the *Daily Press* regarding the issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Peninsula, especially after 1956.

Responses from the interviewees (with the exception of the respondents currently affiliated with the *Daily Press*) about their perceptions regarding the paper's position about regionalism and consolidation reflect the cumulative effect of the frame--indeed, the qualitative responses so clearly mirror the quantitative findings of the frame, that one can conclude if the paper had indeed set out to create a frame and inculcate it in the readership, they have been most successful. The majority of respondents believed the position of the *Daily Press* in regard to regionalism and consolidation to be as follows:

- regionalism for the MSA, consolidation for the lower Peninsula, especially Newport News, Hampton and York County.
- economic development as the defining rationale for regionalism and particularly, consolidation
- the constant "bickering" and "petty

differences" between and among the cities and counties on the Peninsula perpetuate the image of the Peninsula as "secondary" to the Southside, particularly Norfolk and Virginia Beach. For many respondents, this was made clear by a perceived "constant focus" in news stories on failures in regional attempts and a constant focus on adversarial relationships between the cities and counties on the Peninsula in the editorial pages of the paper.

- that the Daily Press suffers from a "parochial" perspective in general and in relation to regionalism and consolidation specifically. Some respondents said, tongue-in-cheek, that if the *Daily Press* is so sure consolidation is the "end all" answer, they should merge with the *Virginian Pilot*.
- that coverage of the issues increased according to the relative active participation by the publisher.
- that stories, though relatively "objective" and not necessarily "fair", had a positive tone overall, either by virtue of the sources used or by the perceived constant attention to the subject, especially in the last five or six years.

IMPLICATIONS FOR AGENDA-SETTING THEORY

Given the conclusions drawn above, Lippman's suggestion that the media are responsible for "the pictures in our heads" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs, p.15, 1980), certainly suggests that the *Daily Press* has been, for the last half century, and continues to be, responsible for the "pictures in our heads" about the issues of regionalism and consolidation as urban public policy issues on the Virginia Peninsula.

The suggestion by Shaw and McCombs that Agenda-setting "typically stretches across a considerable span of time..." and "...implies long-term cumulative mass media effects" (Eyal, Winter and McCombs, p.17, 1980) is certainly borne out by this particular study. Individual impact of stories is relatively negligible in terms of setting the agenda or framing the issues, but the long-term, cumulative effects were significant, not only in terms of the quantitative results of the analysis, but in terms of the almost parallel qualitative results of the interviews. McCombs suggestion in 1997, that the media was influential in not only telling us what to think, but that it was "stunningly successful in telling us what to think about" (McCombs, p.3, 1997) is shown in a quite "stunning" fashion as a result of these parallel findings. The perceptions of the interview respondents regarding the position and practice of the *Daily Press* with

regard to this controversial public policy issue are nearly mirror images of the findings of the quantitative content analysis.

In addition, McCombs assertion that the second-level of Agenda-setting, or "framing", is the "selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed" (McCombs, p.16, 1997) again, appears well-founded based on the quantitative and qualitative results of this study. The paper, within specific years and specific decades, chose very limited, defined and thematically related attributes in relation to coverage of regionalism and consolidation. They further, within specific years and specific decades, chose very limited and defined ways in which to choose and portray the opinions of sources. The frames then, over time, became the "picture" in the heads of the readers of the *Daily Press* regarding the issues of regionalism and consolidation, based on the responses of the interviewees.

These findings are significant not only because they again reaffirm the Agenda-setting function of the media and give more power to the idea of transference of attribution of salience, framing, but because the findings test the theories over a half century, through private and corporate ownership and through social and journalistic changes. However, the impact of those frames on the consequences of the issues is

not as clear.

Attempts at regionalism during the last half century have flourished and languished at almost an equal rate (relatively recent successful attempts include Newport News Waterworks, although it is always at the center of controversy in terms of who has the "power of the water."; Virginia Peninsula Public Service Authority, although the City of Newport News pulled out of that cooperative before it ever got off the ground. Unsuccessful attempts include cooperating to build a baseball stadium to attract minor-league teams; pulling together to support major league hockey for the area; working together to promote tourism on the Peninsula via joint-funding). Consolidation in any form, as a realistic venture, disappeared after the mid-50s, especially after the defeat of the proposal to pull Warwick, Hampton and Newport News together. But still the *Daily Press* remains committed to both issues on the editorial pages, through publisher-activism and through the framing of the stories in the daily news, though the impact of that activism and framing appears negligible at least in the 90s in terms of instigating action regarding the issues.

The private and public sector respondents to the interviews clearly doubted the impact of the *Daily Press'* reporting or activism in regard to the issues of regionalism and consolidation. One said they could not credit the *Daily Press* with being "visionary" in anyway, but only as somewhat

reflective; one said that the power of the press to "spur people to action" was not apparent in terms of the power of the *Daily Press*; one suggested that although the *Daily Press* regularly covers and "overcovers" the issues of regionalism and consolidation, they are "missing the community-link" that could create action on the part of the people with regard to the issues. Conversely, the two respondents from the *Daily Press* both mentioned the "regional" impact of the *Daily Press* with regard to focusing debate about regionalism and consolidation.

Perhaps, the reliance, post-1958, on the economic development frame, so evident against the backdrop of the community-minded 50s, is one of the missing components in terms of turning activism by the newspaper regarding these issues into activism by the larger community. Perhaps, as one respondent suggested, the paper should openly admit its "bias in coverage" on more than the editorial page and "should openly seek action for the issues in an honest manner through discussions with the people." It should be noted, however, that only one respondent believed the paper should openly seek action. It should also be noted that in the last year or so the *Daily Press* has begun to initiate "community forums" where citizens are asked to come together with the publisher, editor and others from the paper to discuss public policy issues like regionalism and consolidation. Although no one from the paper commented on

these "forums", one of the respondents from the private and public sector said they were a "public relations ploy, an offer of a free dinner, to justify the papers obsession with these issues."

So, in essence, the quantitative and qualitative findings relative to the research questions, reaffirm the theory of Agenda-setting ,and the second-level of agenda setting in particular. But the findings suggest that beyond establishing a very clear frame for "the picture in our heads"about the public policy issue, the power of the newspaper to affect public policy, as suggested by the Public Arenas Model, is limited and ameliorated by other social influences , and perhaps, by the choice of the frame itself and how well that frame connects with the readership.

This study, diminishes to an extent, McCombs hypothesis that "framing has consequences for ...public behavior" (McCombs,p.20, 1997) especially when the newspaper is civically and politically active regarding a public policy issue, but it affirms his statement that "news coverage can influence the salience of objects on the public agenda...The framing of those objects on the media agenda also can influence the pictures of those objects in our heads." (McCombs,p.19, 1997).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF PUBLIC JOURNALISM

The *Daily Press* does not and has never referred to itself as practitioners of public or civic journalism. As noted in the Chapter Three of this study, that is one of the reasons the *Daily Press* was chosen for study. However, as evidenced by the findings, they have, at different times, in different ways and with different results practiced what Rosen calls the "undeveloped art of attachment to the community." (Rosen, p.381, 1994). The paper became, again at different times, in different ways and with different results, what Rosen would refer to as a "public actor" (Rosen, p.381, 1994). They helped to create, frame and foster the public policy issues of regionalism and consolidation on the Virginia Peninsula's public agenda for more than half a century through changes in ownership, changes in publishers and editors, changes in society and changes in journalistic practices. In other words, without naming it, without associating it with a journalistic movement, the *Daily Press* has been engaged in, for more than 50 years, in what some say good newspapers have always been engaged in--connecting with the citizenry (to various extents) and creating spaces for public deliberation of public policy through civic and political activism. In short, public journalism.

This research provided a unique opportunity to study not only how the second-level of Agenda-setting, and civic

activism on the part of the newspaper affected a singular public policy issue over more than half a century, but importantly, it provided a unique opportunity to explore the implications for the practice of public journalism free of the expectation that the practice would result in a change. Other research in this area has focused primarily on elections and short-term "experiments" in civic activism. In this study, public journalism was practiced not as a means to an ends, not as a conscious effort to improve or affect public life, but as a way of simply doing business as usual--over 52 years. Again, importantly, the *Daily Press* does not perceive itself as a devotee of public journalism and in fact, the comments given by the two respondents from the paper regarding the need for reporters and editors to steer clear of activism supports that notion.

This particular study is important, because it details the creation, framing and fostering of a public policy issue over more than half a century and allows us to connect the dots, so to speak, and reveal a pattern over time with relation to how a public policy issue has been covered and impacted upon when the newspaper has been active civically and politically in creating, framing and fostering a singular public policy issue.

The findings have implications for the practice of public journalism particularly as it relates to urban public policy for several reasons. First, the findings suggest that

because the newspaper has been a "citizen-journalist" for so long a period of time--without openly espousing the practice-- perhaps public journalism is, as Fallows suggested (Fallows, 1996) not so new, not so radical and not so contrary to the traditional tenets of journalistic practice as some opponents may claim. But second, perhaps public journalism, whether openly or subtly practiced, creates what Jane Eisner, editorial page editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* fears: that by becoming political actors in relation to public policy issues, publishers, editors and reporters become "like any other player in society, like any other politician, interest group, do-gooder, thief." (Eisner, in Steele, p.367, 1997)

It is a combination of the two views, made apparent only by virtue of the longevity of the issue on the agenda, that, perhaps, point to the real conundrum relative to public journalism. Civic and political activism on the part of the paper, particularly with respect to the publisher, as evidenced by the *Daily Press*, is probably not new, is probably expected by the readers and is probably important to adding to the dialog about public policy issues. This is especially true, if coverage of public policy issues is studied during a relatively short term and if stories are individually analyzed. A different pattern regarding frame and practice would have emerged if only the 50s or if only the 90s had been examined in this study.

In addition, contrary to William Woo's protestations, editorial decisions probably are, to a point, made "at the place where the editors sup with the civic coalition." (Woo, 1995). And if Yankelovich is correct, decisions about stories should be made in concert with ordinary citizens and community groups in order to override "creeping expertism" (Yankelovich, 1991)

But, when that civic and political activism subtlety seeps into daily news coverage over an extended period of time and begins to take on a life of its own--apart from the concerns, movements and comments of the citizenry--the paper indeed becomes like any other "politician, interest group, do-gooder, thief." (Eisner, in Steele, 1997)

In both the 50s and the 90s the publishers of the paper (privately owned in the 50s and corporate owned in the 90s) were civically and politically active with regard to regionalism and consolidation; in the 50s and the 90s, that activism seeped into daily coverage in terms of frame and tone. The primary difference in the two decades is the manner in which the paper dealt with its activism.

In the 50s, the paper, although heavily reliant on private and public elites, sought out the views of the citizenry, if not by individual, then by community affiliation. They engaged the "citizenry in terms of agenda-setting, sourcing and 'consciousness-raising.'" (Yankelovich, p.53, 1991). The paper allowed for discussion

primarily by white males, but also by blacks and women, by virtue of choosing to print the stories, about white flight, fears of "negro domination of city hall" and the difficult issue of racial integration in the schools. The paper was acting in *coordination* with the citizens about public policy issues with tremendous ramifications for the community. They made the citizens feel a part of the civic process, that they had "worth." (Yankelovich, 1991). Regionalism and consolidation in the 50s was a grass-roots response to legislative initiatives created by social and economic upheaval and the paper actively signed on as a member of the grass-roots response.

In addition to the attempt to include citizens as sources, a large number of stories and editorials in the 50s focused on reporting public debate about a number of issues related to regionalism and consolidation. The stories and editorials focused on inclusive, "common man" problems, like taxes, racism, schools and service delivery. Although the paper was occasionally criticized, even in news stories, about potentially selfish underlying economic motivations regarding its quest for consolidation especially, the paper was seen as being upfront and honest about its motivations and its biases. The paper was, in the 50s, "connecting with the citizens" (Yankelovich, 1991). The newspaper, through its activism, was not "merely a recorder and reporter of events..." but was indeed a "catalyst to change."

(Steele,p.166, 1997)

In the 90s, however, the paper reflected and sourced only that "thin stratum" of elites (Yankelovich, 1991) in the private and public sectors, who overwhelmingly favored regionalism if not consolidation. They lost the connection with the citizenry that Charity, Rosen, Entman, Yankelovich, Merritt, Peirce and others say is so crucial to the practice of public journalism.

In the 90s, that "disconnection" becomes even more apparent in terms of the frame: economic development. Although a strong case can be made for the fact that everybody in a community is affected by the strength of the economy in the community, it is less a personal issue than taxes, schools, racism and service delivery.

The disconnection is further evidenced by the fact that the paper is acting alone in its quest for consolidation. It is no longer an accomplice to public deliberation and action with regard to a grass-roots community concern. The paper has become a caricature of sorts as the lone voice calling for action no one appears to want, and apparently, because of a law regarding annexation of counties with a particular population, no one can achieve. The historic and suspected underlying economic motivation of the newspaper with regard to regionalism and consolidation is no longer just hinted at, it has become part of the cynical way in which the readers judge the content of the stories and editorials.

As a result, the publishers activism and the resultant "seep" into daily news coverage of the issues of regionalism and consolidation no longer carry the weight to "spur public action" or "ignite community activism". The disconnection with the citizenry, the continued reliance on the elites, the disavowal of the fact that the activism has seeped into daily coverage, have all combined to create a situation in which the newspaper acts as just another special interest, just another political entity. It has lost its "specialness". As one respondent put it " The 'educated' general public does not hold a high opinion of the *Daily Press*" with regard to its coverage of regionalism and consolidation.

These implications then, provide the following suggestions for practioners of public journalism:

- be open about your biases, motivations and practices. This admonition applies not only with regard to your readership but to yourselves. When the publisher and the paper are so civically and politically active that newspaper-sponsored retreats are happening, when community "forums" are being held to gain citizen-input, you are practicing public journalism.
- create a "publicness" in your reporting and sourcing. This includes the "hidden" communities: minorities, women, the elderly. Report on the hard issues, not just the obvious or easy issues: racial

implications v. economic development.

- recognize and be open about the potential for even publisher activism ,not just reporter activism, to create "seep" into daily coverage. Admit it like Davis Merritt mentioned earlier or correct it.
- perhaps, most importantly, act in conjunction with the community, not with disregard for the community.

CONCLUSION

This study provided a unique opportunity to gain insight into how a newspaper helps to create, frame and foster a controversial local public policy issue on the public agenda for more than half a century. It reaffirms the notion that reporters, editors and publishers help to create the "pictures in our heads" by the cumulative and long-term choice of thematically related attributes and frames; it reaffirms the Public Arenas Model as it applies to the use of "operatives" like newspapers to create, keep and reprise public policy issues on the public agenda.

But, the study also points to the necessity of a newspaper adhering to the "undeveloped art of attachment to the community" in relation to its activism and its reporting. The study showed that when the newspaper acts apart from the community, when it loses its ability to be an advocate for

diverse community interests in relation to public policy issues, it loses its sense of "specialness." In essence, it loses its ability to be perceived as fair, if not objective; it loses its ability to be "visionary" and to "instigate public action." In short, it loses its ability to connect with the citizenry and make them more a part of the civic process. In fact, it does just the opposite, it creates or enhances suspicion and perpetuates the idea of the media as biased, elitist and disconnected.

DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study suggests a number of different courses for research. First, more research on the link between the cumulative frame provided by the paper and the actual perception of the readership would provide more information about the effects and impacts of the second level of agenda-setting. An analysis of letters to the Editor from 1944-1996 would be useful.

Second, research regarding the way in which the *Virginian Pilot* may have created, framed and fostered the issue of regionalism and consolidation would again,, provide insight into the second-level of Agenda-setting and the Public Arenas model. Since the *Virginian Pilot* is such an

advocate of public journalism, it would be particularly interesting to see how and indeed if, coverage of the issue has changed over the years.

Third, an analysis similar to the present study, of a situation in which regionalism/consolidation was successful, like Charlotte, N.C, would provide insight as to the relative impact of the community-link identified in this study in regard to the paper's ability to create civic capacity.

Fourth, other long-term public policy issues should be reviewed in a manner similar to the manner undertaken in the present study. For instance, rather than looking at how a newspaper dealt with school desegregation during, say, a 10-year period surrounding the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, a long-term study, using a larger sample with regard to race and public policy implications should be studied to determine cumulative frames.

Finally, in terms of public journalism and future research: it is imperative that researchers identify variables that actually appear to impact on the paper's ability to enhance civic capacity and not just "experiment" with activism. As this study showed, activism on the part of the newspaper does not necessarily comport with enhancing civic capacity or knowledge.

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Edwin Joseph, Chairman, Great Atlantic Real Estate Management
Association, November 1994, telephone interview; Feb. 1998,
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Ross Kearney, city council member, City of Hampton, November
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Greg Lawson, president of Eason, Lawson and Westphal, PC, and
board member of VPEDC, February, 1998. Survey respondent

John Lawson, President WM Jordan Construction, Board member,
VPEDC, February, 1998. Telephone interview

Will Molineux, editorial page editor, February, 1998. Survey
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Daniel Stuck, York County Administrator, February, 1998.
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APPENDIX

NOTE TO USERS

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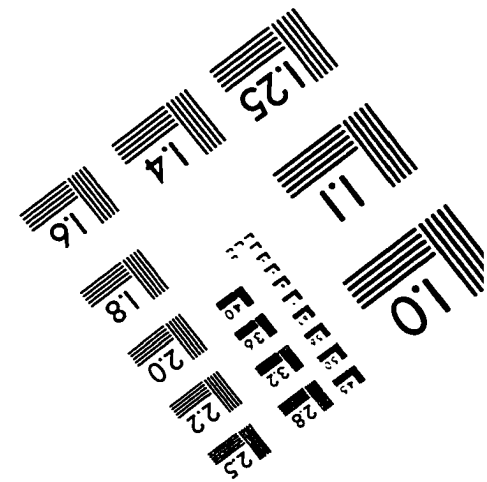
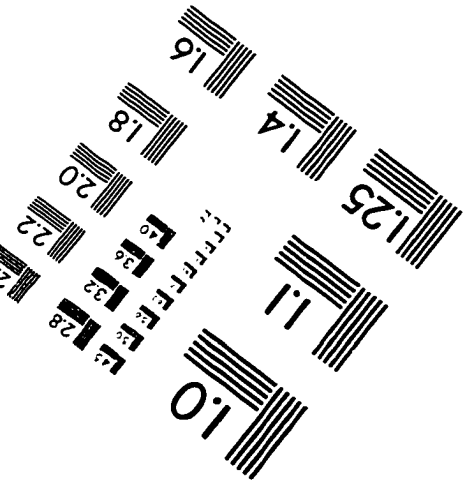
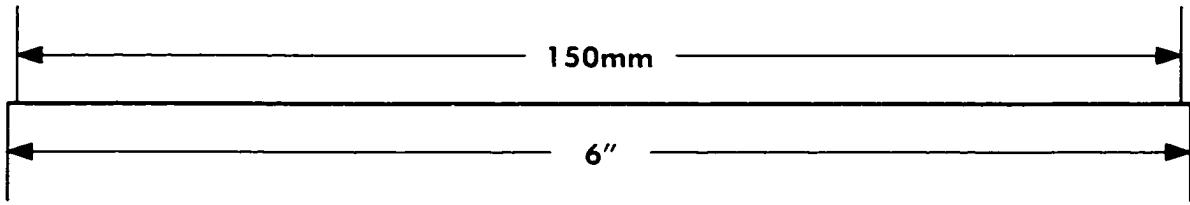
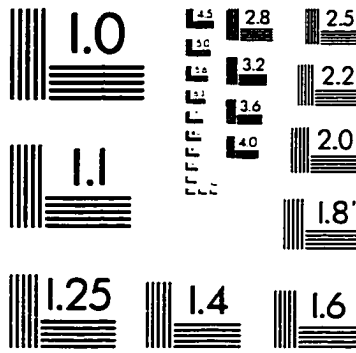
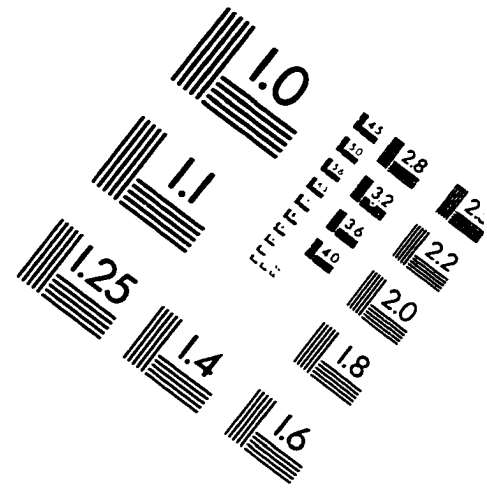
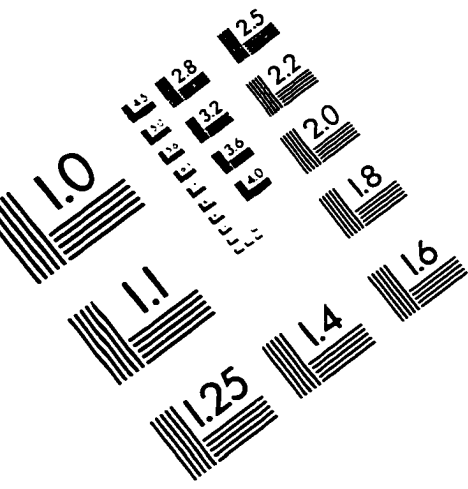
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