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Contingent conditions in media-public agenda-setting in a two newspaper market.

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Contingent Conditions in Media-Public Agenda-Setting
in a two Newspaper Market

by

Charles E. Zamaria

A thesis
presented to the University of Windsor
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts,
in
Communication Studies

Windsor , Ontario, 1984

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ABSTRACT

This investigation consists of the comparison of two newspaper agendas with their subsequent readers' agendas, to ascertain the existence of the agenda-setting process. Thirteen generic newspaper topics, rank-ordered according to total column inch space, were compared with the public's rank-ordering of interest in these topics. Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients were used to discern the strength of the relationships.

Though there were no differences found between the similar and cross-agenda relationships, the fact that there exists a strong correlation between the media and public agendas generally, provides support for the functioning of the process. It was also discovered that an agenda can be defined as general topic categories as opposed to specific issues, when making comparisons.

Several contingent conditions, hypothesized to influence the agenda-setting process, were investigated. The results from several tests using Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation and Multiple Regression procedures indicate that attention devices, geographic proximity, and the obtrusiveness of topics in the media facilitate the media-to-public transference of news and information. The frequency of readership and

demographic characteristics of the individual were found to enhance the public's receptivity of the newspaper's agenda. Finally, a cumulative index of the contingent conditions together, was found to help explain the variance of the public's interest in newspaper content.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my chairman--
Professor James Winter--for his assistance and guidance
throughout the duration of this investigation. I would like
to extend my thanks to the members of my thesis committee--
Professor Walter Romanow and Professor Richard Price-- for
their helpful comments, criticisms and continued interest.
Thanks to Sheila and Anne, the "den-mothers" of the Communi-
cation Studies Department, for all their help and kindness.
I would like to acknowledge Newspaper-X, who provided me
with the data base for this project. As well, thanks to
Fern L. and Margo S. for their many hours of service measur-
ing and coding the newspapers. Most certainly, this thesis
would not have been possible without the affection and sup-
port from my fellow peers and the Faculty at this institiu-
tion.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and Susan M~,
whose constant love and encouragement provided me with the
impetus and inspiration to carry out this investigation.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 · GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Over twenty years have passed since Bernard Cohen (1963:120)

outlined the central premise of agenda-setting in his text,

The Press and Foreign Policy:

> The press is significantly more than a purveyor of
> information and opinion. It may not be successful
> much of the time in telling people what to think,
> but it is stunningly successful in telling its
> readers what to think about. And it follows from
> this that the world looks different to different
> people, depending not only on their personal in-
> terests, but also on the map that is drawn for
> them by the writers, editors and publishers of the
> paper they read.

Many have conducted research in this area in an attempt

to formulate an accurate model to describe the process. Es-

sentially, the theory of agenda-setting states that the pro-

minence of issues or topics in the mass media influences

their salience among members of the audience. The relation-

ship between the media and the public is both causal and po-

sitive, with media priorities becoming public priorities

(Weaver, McCombs & Spellman, 1975).

Perhaps no one has contributed more to the investigation

of agenda-setting than Maxwell McCombs. He succinctly out-

lines the nature of the process in a paper he co-authored

entitled <u>Measuring the Cumulative Agenda-Setting Influence
of the Mass Media</u>:

> The central idea of agenda-setting is that the
> mass media through their day to day selection and
> display of news influence our perceptions of what
> are the important problems and issues of the day
> (McCombs, Becker and Weaver, 1975:15).

This description alludes to the fact that the agenda-set-
ting process involves the direct transference of news and
information from the media to the public. However, agenda-
setting is more than just a simple cause and effect equa-
tion. The media do not only influence the public's notion
of what is important by publishing vast quantities of infor-
mation pertaining to a specific issue or topic. They also
determine the importance of that news and information
through attention devices such as page placement, the use of
headlines, and photographs (Weaver <u>et al</u>., 1975; Shaw &
McCombs, 1977). By giving certain information more atten-
tion, the media rank-order or prioritize their content. The
public learns how much importance to attach to this content
by the emphasis the media place upon it. As McCombs sug-
gests, a contingent factor of the agenda-setting process is
the prominence and frequency of display of specific content
in the media:

> The agenda-setting idea hypothesizes that issues
> prominently displayed and frequently emphasized
> will be regarded as important by the media consum-
> ers. In other words, the priorities the media as-
> sign to issues are learned by the audiences. This
> is more than simple awareness. Media priorities
> become to a certain extent, public priorities
> (Eyal, Winter & McCombs, 1983:16).

However, media priorities do not simply become public priorities by virtue of their display and emphasis in the media. The public does not automatically accept this rank-ordering of issues and topics. Many other contingent factors are involved in the transference of an agenda from the media to the public. Research indicates that both the obtrusiveness and proximity of an issue or topic influence the audience's receptivity of media content (McCombs, 1981a). How the members of the audience use the information affects its salience as well. Some issues are more prone to be transferred to the public's agenda than others, depending on an array of audience attributes. An individual's need for orientation, frequency of interpersonal discussion, amount of media exposure, the medium used, demographic characteristics, and voting disposition are several audience characteristics that have been identified as influencing the agenda-setting process (McCombs, 1981a).

This suggests that there are numerous factors and conditions that affect the degree to which the media influence the public. Rather than being an assertion of direct cause and effect, agenda-setting is recognized more as an ongoing process whereby the media in association with other conditions form the public's agenda:

> Neither the concept nor the theory of agenda-setting is an assertion that the mass media are the sole source of influence on the perceived salience of public issues...No one contends that agenda-setting is an all powerful effect of mass communication reminiscent of the old hypodermic theory of mass communication. Agenda-setting effects often

have been demonstrated but they are not of consistent and major magnitude in all circumstances (McCombs, 1981a:18,19).

Agenda-setting is not an isolated phenomenon. It is not simply a proposition that the media affect the public's salience of issues and topics. It is a process that involves many concomittant variables and factors, facilitating the influence of the media on the public. As McCombs (1981a:22) points out, it is more a model of transaction among various conditions causing varying degrees of information transference from the media to the public:

> In a transactional model the outcomes of exposure to the contents of the mass media are seen as the results of a bargain struck by two active participants, the mass media and the individuals in their audiences. From a transactional point of view, influence results both from the content of the mass media and from the social situation in which that content is scanned by each individual in the audience.

It is the purpose of this investigation to test the influence of several of the contingent conditions that are involved in the agenda-setting process. This study will isolate several of these factors and measure their impact on the agenda-setting process. Essentially, two research questions will be addressed:

1. What message or stimulus characteristics of the media influence the level of interest by the public, and

2. What respondent or response characteristics of the individual enhance the influence of the media on the public.

While much research has been conducted on separate compo-
nents of the agenda-setting process (see: 1.3: <u>Review of
the Literature</u>), seldom have investigators integrated these
variables to devise a model that helps explain the overall
functioning of the process. This study is not only a repli-
cation of past research in the field of agenda-setting, but
is also an investigation of thé influence that many of these
variables and factors have on the process. It is hoped that
by testing the effects of these conditions, a greater under-
standing of how agenda-setting functions can be manifested,
and a clearer picture of the agenda-setting model can be
formed. It is important to discern accurately the relation-
ship and influence among all these different factors in ord-
er to contribute to a more sound theoretical explanation of
the agenda-setting process:

> The idea of an agenda-setting function of the
> press is a macro-notion of mass communication in-
> fluence. But the movement towards a real theory
> of agenda-setting has advanced the farthest in its
> definition of the micro-variables which specify
> the contingent conditions for this agenda- setting
> influence to appear among individual citizens
> (Shaw & McCombs, 1977:152).

1.2 PARAMETERS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation will compare the newspaper medium and
public agendas of <u>City-A</u>, a medium-size city in the nor-
theastern United States having a population of approximately
50,000. Extensive analysis, has already been undertaken from
two confidential marketing research reports: <u>The City-A</u>

Newspaper Research Survey (Winter & Zamaria, 1982), and A Comparison of the Content of Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y (Winter & Zamaria, 1983). Both the location and the names of the newspapers in this investigation have been kept anonymous to respect the confidentiality of the marketing reports.

The surveys shed some light on the readership behavior and preferences of the people in this two-newspaper community. The results provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic breakdown of the community, as well as valuable consumer information on the various reader subgroups: people who subscribe to either one of the local newspapers; Newspaper-X or Newspaper-Y, those who subscribe to both, and those who do not subscribe to either paper. Evaluation has been conducted on the readers' content preferences, and their relative ranking of the two newspapers in certain areas of performance (see: Appendix A). These results constitute the public agenda.

The second report is an extensive content analysis of the two newspapers conducted in three periods: before, during and after the survey period. After a random sample of newspaper editions was chosen, exhaustive analysis of all the articles in both newspapers was undertaken. The articles were evaluated in the following categories: content form, topicality, proximity, attention devices and type of reporting. Also, the number of items and the amount of space de-

voted to specific topics was measured and compared (see: Appendix B). These findings represent the media agenda.

This study will compare the results of the survey with the findings from the content analysis, the public and media agendas respectively, to test whether there is evidence of the agenda-setting process. If the content preferences of the reader subgroups closely match the rank-ordering of selected general topic categories from each of the newspapers, this will provide evidence that the agenda-setting process is taking place. It is then possible to look at several of the contingent conditions that interact with the media and the audience facilitating the transference of an agenda, from the media to the public.

In terms of the audience, evaluation will be conducted on the newspaper reader subgroups, the demographic characteristics of the audience, readership frequency, and the medium most frequently used for specific types of content (newspapers versus television). The variables from the media agenda that will be evaluated include the geographic proximity of the topic, the obtrusiveness of the topic, and the amount and type of attention devices used. It is the author's contention that certain characteristics of the audience and newspaper content enhance the acceptance of the media agenda by the public. In order to come to a clearer understanding of agenda-setting, it is necessary to expand the agenda-setting model beyond its current boundaries, and look at how the various contingent conditions affect the process:

The central proposition of the agenda-setting
hypothesis is that an audience member exposed to a
given medium agenda will adjust his or her percep-
tions of the importance of issues in the direction
corresponding to the amount of attention devoted
to those issues in the medium used. This state-
ment of the hypothesis however is deceptive in its
simplicity; because of the lack of specificity of
the process involved, the hypothesis does not im-
ply the proper lower-order concepts nor the neces-
sary controls. Due to this lack of specificity,
particular attention must be paid to conceptuali-
zation and measurement, identification of possible
limiting or contributory conditions, and correct
comparison criteria (McLeod, Becker & Byrnes,
1974:137).

As Erbring, Goldenberg and Miller (1980:28,45) add, it is
the relationship among all these factors that leads us to
the most accurate definition of the agenda-setting process:

The underlying substantive principle is one of in-
teraction between issue content in the media and
issue sensitivities among the audience... media
coverage interacts with the audience's pre-exist-
ing sensitivities to produce changes in issue con-
cerns. Media effects are contingent on issue-spe-
cific audience characteristics; or, in other
words, issue coverage in the media serves as a
trigger stimulus to salience perceptions.

Motivation for analysing these specific factors comes
from an extensive review of the literature. Many research-
ers have attempted to unravel the agenda-setting formula us-
ing the aforementioned contingent conditions in their analy-
sis. This investigation is limited in part by the
information available from the two data sets: the survey and
the content analysis. The author believes that the informa-
tion available from these sources is sufficient to construct
a theoretical framework for the purposes of the current re-
search.

1.3   REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following review of the literature presents a brief overview of the history of agenda-setting research, leading up to a discussion of the contingent conditions that have been investigated.   Researchers have discovered the existence of various factors that are linked with the media and the audience, enhancing the transference of a news agenda.   These conditions will be reviewed.   Finally, models of the agenda-setting process, appropriate for the current research, and the direction that future investigations appear to be taking will be discussed.

1.3.1   A Brief History

The earliest model describing the relationship between the media and the public is known as the Hypodermic Needle Theory of mass communication.   It specifies that media coverage, both directly and causally, affects the public's perception of what are the important issues of the day.   The notion of this stimulus-response relationship between the media and the public was most prevalent between the World Wars when the efficiency and effect of propaganda was been investigated.   Winter (1981:1-2) succinctly outlines the nature of this model:

> mass media content is directly transmitted or injected into public minds and actions.   Stimuli provided by the media were widely held to elicit massive public responses, due to the perceived aggregate nature of audiences.

The notion that the media affect public cognitions to such an extent was soon dispelled by further investigation into the various channels of communication through which messages are transmitted. Perhaps the first study that attempted to understand these channels, and most notably the first agenda-setting study conducted, was the 1944 Erie County, Ohio voter survey. Lazarfeld, Berelson and Gaudet (1948) attempted to evaluate the effect of the mass media on individual choices during the 1940 Presidential election campaign. Generally, they discovered that informal personal influence, or the interpersonal communication network, was more effective than newspapers and radio in shaping public opinion and voting behavior. Research was beginning to recognize the potential contribution of various audience attributes and an individual's preconceptions on the formation of beliefs and cognitions. No longer were the media considered to be the sole source of influence on the public. As Lasswell et al. (1942) pointed out, it is both one's environment, or in this case, the content of the press, as well as one's predisposition that determine an individual's response to incoming stimuli.

This led to the investigation of the process by which the public's beliefs, attitudes and behavior were shaped. It was during this period that Klapper (1957) formulated the Limited Effects Model or mass communication influence. Essentially, this model assumes that three different factors

determine an individual's political disposition. To begin with, it was discovered that potential voters tended to be more influenced by group norms as opposed to media coverage. Peer association and prevailing community salience seemed to have much more effect than the media on an individual's beliefs and attitudes. Secondly, there was evidence of the existence of a two-step flow of communication. Individuals tended to be influenced by interpersonal discussion with group opinion leaders within their community. And finally, several psychological concepts were identified that appeared to have far greater influence than the media on an individual's set of priorities. Perhaps the most significant of these was the psychological concept of selective exposure and perception.

Selective exposure and perception refers to an audience member's desire to peruse media content that will reinforce his or her pre-existing saliences and set of priorities (Shaw & McCombs, 1977). Berelson and Steiner (1964:529-530) define it as an individual's preference for supportive rather than non-supportive material:

> People tend to see and hear communications that are favourable or congenial to their predispositions; they are more likely to see and hear congenial communications than neutral or hostile ones.

More recently, McCombs (1972:174) describes it as a pattern of human behavior:

> actually a series of patterns at different levels of behavior-that results in maximum congeniality between an individual's existing attitudes and the communication allowed into his life space.

Klapper (1960) believed that the media had little effect
on the attitudes and behavior of the public. He felt that
the media served only to reinforce existing preconceptions
of audience members. In other words, the agenda-setting in-
fluence of the media was minimalized by interpersonal dis-
cussion and the two-step flow of communication.

However, many challenge the idea that there is a general
psychological preference for supportive information. Sears
and Freedman (1967:213), in their critical review of selec-
tive exposure, state that there is little evidence that in-
dividuals expose themselves only to news content which is in
accord with their existing attitudes. Their research de-
monstrates that individuals practice selectivity of informa-
tion at the stage of information evaluation and not at the
stage of selectively seeking or avoiding information.

Individuals also expose themselves to information that
does not support their attitudes. When individuals are ex-
posed to contradictory information, they generally search
for reinforcement of one fact or the other. This principle
is known as cognitive dissonance. Originally introduced by
Festinger (1957), McCombs (1972:175) later elaborated that
this psychological concept explains why selective exposure
does not entirely limit the agenda-setting influence of the
press:

> The concepts of selective exposure and selective
> perception are subsumed by the theory of cognitive
> dissonance. This middle-range theory (Festinger,
> 1957) asserts that the juxtaposition of two con-
> tradictory cognitions-beliefs, attitudes, facts or

> whatever-creates dissonance. Because dissonance
> is psychologically uncomfortable, the existence of
> very much dissonance motivates the individual to
> reduce it, and seeking out reinforcing cognitions
> is one way.

It is important at this point to reflect on the premise

of the agenda-setting process. Researchers who argue

against the pervasive influence of the media contend that it

is these other psychological variables, such as selective

perception and exposure, that more greatly affect the atti-

tudes and behavior of the individual: However, agenda-set-

ting posits that the media affect an individual's awareness

and cognition of an issue, rather than cause attitude or be-

havior change. Shaw and McCombs (1977:7) accurately discern

the difference between these two factors:

> Attitudes concern our feeling of being for or
> against a political position or figure. Cogni-
> tions concern our knowledge and beliefs about pol-
> itical objects. The agenda-setting function of
> mass communication clearly falls in this new trad-
> ition of cognitive outcomes of mass communication.

Some researchers argue against the limited role of agen-

da-setting. For example, Winter (1979) suggests that agen-

da-setting also influences attitudes and behavior. However,

most researchers believe that the agenda-setting influence

is restricted to salience and cognitions. It is the ability

of the press to make people aware of its priorities that is

of significance. Media coverage influences an individual's

belief of what issues are important rather than change their

opinion or position on these issues (Glavin, 1976). As

Weaver, Graber, McCombs and Eyal (1981:5) point out, this is

where the importance of the agenda-setting process lies:

cues transmitted by the mass media most directly
influence audience cognitions or pictures of the
world, not attitudes and opinions about these is-
sues and events. The agenda-setting role of the
press refers to the creation of pictures and what
is contained in these pictures, not to what people
think and feel about the components of these pic-
tures. Concern with agenda-setting shifts the fo-
cus away from opinion formation and attitude
change to an earlier state in the public opinion
process, the initiation of attention and the crea-
tion of cognitions.

Agenda-setting research began to proliferate rapidly in

the early 1970's. These early studies focused on political

issues and how the public decided who to vote for. The most

common hypothesis was that the media had a lot of influence

on a voter's disposition. Kraus (1973), for one, suggests

that the mass media have much to do with one's political so-

cialization, or the process by which we learn about poli-

tics.

What is recognized as the first contemporary agenda-set-

ting study elaborates on this idea. McCombs and Shaw

(1972:184) conducted an investigation comparing the public

and media agendas during the 1968 Presidential campaign.

They found a strong correlation between what undecided vot-

ers thought were the important issues of the campaign, and

the media agenda. This provided substantial evidence of the

influence of the media on the public, or, the agenda-setting

effect:

In short, the political world is reproduced imper-
fectly by individual news media. Yet the evidence
in this study that voters tend to share the medi-
a's composite definition of what is important
strongly suggests an agenda-setting function of
the mass media.

Much of the initial research in agenda-setting focused on political issues and found a variety of explanations for its existence. For example, the aforementioned study conducted by McCombs and Shaw (1972) revealed that the agenda-setting influence was strengthened by frequent use of newspapers and television for political information, a high perceived need for information, and a low level of interpersonal discussion. On the other hand, Mullins' (1973) study of the 1972 Presidential elections found that the agenda-setting process was facilitated by a high level of interpersonal discussion, frequent newspaper exposure, low group memebership, and a strong interest in news. McCombs and Weaver (1973) found that the agenda-setting influence was most prevalent among those individuals who were highly interested in the election and were uncertain of their voting choice.

While many of the early agenda-setting studies concentrated on political issues, research was also being performed on the transference of other nonpolitical media content to the public. Williams and Larsen (1977) conducted one of the first studies of agenda-setting using nonpolitical issues in an off-election year. Their findings indicate that the agenda-setting process functions just as effectively for nonpolitical content between elections, as for political content in an election year.

Sohn (1978) also conducted an agenda-setting study generalizing the content to include nonpolitical issues. Assum-

ing that the agenda-setting process was not restricted to political issues, he set out to test whether the media serve more of an orientation function for the consumer. In other words, does the media agenda become part of the personal agenda of individuals, due to their need to be familar with their physical and cognitive environment?

The results of his study indicate that the influence of press was minimal, in regards to providing the consumers with a sense of participation. Instead, he proposed that the media, particularly newspapers, serve more of an information seeking function:

> after people talk about a topic, they may seek out more information about that topic, by reading about it in the newspaper (Sohn, 1978:337).

However, need for orientation, as the concept is generally known, is supported by many other researchers as being a contingent factor in the agenda-setting process (McCombs, 1981a; McCombs, 1981b; McGuire, 1974; Shaw & McCombs, 1977; Weaver, 1980; Weaver et al., 1975). It refers to the individual's need to order his environment, using the media to help set priorities in the absence of his or her own priorities (McCombs, 1981b). Shaw and McCombs (1977) define three other factors as having much influence on how many and what kind of media messages an individual will attend to: interest in the content, the uncertainty about the subject, and the effort required to attend to the message. But they suggest that overriding all these factors is the individual's

need to be familar with his or her surroundings. The more
uncertain one is about the information and the more relevant
it is, the greater will be one's need for orientation. And
the greater one's need for orientation, the more susceptible
one is to the agenda-setting influence of the press (Shaw &
McCombs, 1977:109).

In their 1975 study of Watergate and the media, Weaver et.
al. (1975:461) delved into the role played by this psycho-
logical concept in the agenda-setting process. Their re-
sults confirmed that the greater the need for orientation,
or the higher the uncertainty and relevance of the informa-
tion, the closer would be the match between the media and
public agendas:

> Postulating an inherent curiousity about the sur-
> rounding environment, need for orientation is the
> cognitive analoque to the ancient idea that nature
> abhors a vacuum.

The concept of need for orientation closely resembles the
cognitive audience orientation of the uses and gratification
approach to mass communication (Weaver, 1980). The central
premise of this concept is that individuals use media con-
tent to facilitate information gain, specifically in the ar-
eas of surveillance, voting guidance and reality exploration
(Blumler, 1979). However, the uses and gratifications ap-
proach to mass communication is quite different to agenda-
setting research. Inquiry is based on what and why indivi-
duals use the media rather than what the media do to
individuals (Weaver, 1980).

Criticism of the agenda-setting influence of the press has generally focused on this issue. In what order do these events take place; do the media set the agenda that is then transferred to the public, or do individual interests and use of the media determine what agenda the media will have? McLeod et al. (1974:136) dispel the second proposition, and therefore the claim that agenda-setting research is inappropriate, by suggesting that media producers are not very aware of their audiences' preferences:

> The content of the media may merely reflect a sensitivity to the priorities of its readers. Given the research evidence that shows media gatekeepers to be relatively inaccurate in their perceptions of their audiences, this may be an unlikely explanation.

The investigation of need for orientation established the parameters for further research of the agenda-setting process. This concept is recognized as a contingent condition that interacts with the public and media increasing the agenda-setting influence. Rather than restrict itself to testing the simple equation that media priorities become public priorities, research began to focus on the various contingent conditions; those necessary for the effect to occur, and those that enhance the process. As Winter (1981:42) states, the agenda-setting process involves much more than the transference of a set of priorities:

> We cannot simply state that media emphasis influences public salience, but must go from there to describe the contingent conditions— the role played by the various time frame components such as the media and public duration; the differing roles of individual issue areas; and the effects

of audience characteristics on agenda-setting effects.

1.3.2   Contingent Conditions--The Media

Primary evidence of the media setting the public agenda comes from the attention devices used by the newspapers to give specific topics and issues prominence.   In one of the earliest studies using content analysis research techniques, Lasswell et al.   (1942)   defined prominence as availability to attention in different parts of the newspaper.   Evidently, these attention devices transform a set of media priorities into a set of public priorities:

> Newspapers clearly state their assessment of an
> item through headline size and placement in the
> newspaper.   The agenda-setting hypothesis asserts
> that audiences learn their topic saliences from
> these judgments of news media, incorporating a si-
> milar set of weights into their personal agendas
> (Weaver et al., 1975:460).

Budd (1964)   devised an attention score;   an accumulative measure of various attention devices associated with newspaper coverage, to assess and compare the nature and direction of specific newspaper content.   He hypothesized that certain devices in a newspaper give an article prominence over others.   These devices include headline size, preferential position on a page, page on which the story is published, the use of accompanying photographs, and the length of the story.   Scores were awarded if an article had any of these features, which were then cumulated and compared (Budd, 1964).

The results of his study indicate that a high correlation exists between the space measurement of an article in column inches, and the attention score. However, not surprisingly, the attention score--the sum of the attention devices used for specific content--was found to be much more discriminating (Budd, 1964).

It is indeed apparent that evaluation of attention devices can greatly improve one's measure of the priorities set by the media agenda. Attention devices used by newspapers, such as page placement, headline size, story length, and the use of photographs are examples of conditions that enhance the agenda-setting process.

McCombs and Mauro (1977) conducted a study to find out why individuals read certain stories in a newspaper as opposed to others. Their research focused on the characteristics of the news story itself, to determine what most influenced the level of readership. A stimulus-oriented perspective approach from the stimulus-response model of mass communication, was used in their study. This model posits that the structural and content attributes in newspapers will directly increase interest in the content, and therefore increase readership. These attributes include headlines, page position, form and source of the story, size of the text, topic and geographic significance, and the use of photographs. After performing a series of comparative statistical tests, they discovered that page location and

size of the text were the key overall predictors of newspaper readership (McCombs & Mauro, 1977).

Many others have devoted their efforts to find out what types of attention devices most attract readership of newspaper content. Results and conclusions have varied. Stamm and Jacoubovitch (1980) discovered that individuals are more prone to attend to attention devices than they are to read actual news stories. The results of their study suggest that in general, the audiences read twice as many headlines and view many more photographs than they do written content.

Bain and Weaver (1979) conducted a study to determine readers' reactions to the layout design of a newspaper. Their analysis provides the following results:

1. Individuals more closely follow an article that is on one page as opposed to continuing or 'jumping' to another page;

2. Headline size and placement greatly affect the audience's attention;

3. Larger pictures as opposed to smaller ones are most successful in attracting readers to an accompanying story; and

4. Front page stories receive the most attention from the audience.

All these factors and others from the aforementioned studies affect the individual's interest in and readership of a newspaper. It can be surmized that they also have an effect

on the public's attention to and salience of this content. It is evident that the media, through various attention devices, have a very powerful role in determining what content the public will peruse. Though differences exist as to which devices are most effective, there is no doubt that attention devices generally do affect the public's interest and readership. Consequently, they have much input in shaping media priorities, which in turn become the public agenda.

Another component of newspaper content that has been identified as a contingent condition of the agenda-setting process is the obtrusiveness of an issue. Obtrusiveness is defined as the relative importance and proximity that information has to the public. McCombs (1981a:8-9), referring to definitions provided by Eyal, describes obtrusive issues as "...those with which people have personal contact," and unobtrusive issues as "...the remote concerns of public opinion for which the media are the primary, often only sources."

Zucker (1978:227) further elaborates by stating how the obtrusiveness of an issue affects its transference in the agenda-setting process:

> the less direct experience the people have with a
> given issue area, the more they rely on the news
> media for information and interpretation in that
> area.

Unobtrusive content, or, in other words, issues or events that do not take place in the individual's realm of experi-

ence or immediate environment, are more likely to be prone
to the agenda-setting influence due to the simple fact that
the news media are the only sources of information. Many
researchers have investigated public issue salience of media
content on the basis of obtrusiveness and have provided re-
sults supporting this view (Erbring et al., 1980; McCombs,
1981a; Williams & Larsen, 1977; Zucker, 1978).

The public's dependence on the media for information con-
cerning unobtrusive issues and events seems to closely re-
semble the 'uncertainty' criteria of the need for orienta-
tion. Individuals, having no other source to verify or
interpret this information, accept the media's version. To
imply that the media have the ability to determine the pro-
minence of this content simply by display seems to be an ac-
curate assumption. Therefore, it appears reasonable to con-
tend that the obtrusiveness of an issue is a contingent
condition of the agenda-setting process. Winter (1981:110)
discusses the varying effect that the obtrusiveness of an
issue has on the agenda-setting process:

> For fully obtrusive issues such as the Economy, we
> do not need the media to tell us how important
> they are, we can see for ourselves every day and
> hence there is no agenda-setting effect. For par-
> tially obtrusive issues such as Civil Rights, we
> rely on the media to 'cue' us to their importance,
> but we provide interpretation, and hence there is
> a moderate agenda-setting influence. For the ful-
> ly unobtrusive issues such as Foreign Affairs, the
> media serve both cueing and interpretative roles-
> telling us first to think, and then what to think
> about.

The geographic proximity of newspaper content is another contingent factor in the agenda-setting process. Studies have revealed that people are more dependent on the media for news pertaining to international and national as opposed to local issues and events (Eyal, Winter & McCombs, 1983). Results from many reader interest surveys also indicate that the audience is more interested in international and national news. An individual can learn much more from his or her immediate environment, the local environment, through various channels of communication such as interpersonal discussion.

In terms of the agenda-setting process, the geographic proximity of the news seems very closely related to the obtrusiveness of media content. The more distant the event or issue is from the individual's environment, the more uncertain one is and therefore more susceptible to the influence of the press. This reinforces the notion that proximity is a contigent condition of the agenda-setting process.

Palmgreen and Clarke (1979) specifically studied the influence of geographic proximity of an event or issue on the agenda-setting process. They hypothesized that the agenda-setting influence would be weaker for local issues due to an individual's ability to observe local events, the existence of local interpersonal communication networks, and heavier media coverage of national and international issues. The results of their study revealed that individuals do indeed

rely more on the media for national and international issues. Individuals have greater access to local issues through interpersonal discussion and direct observation.

Though the news media may help one to know and understand the world beyond his or her immediate environment, the picture presented is not necessarily accurate or complete. The media provide only so much space and a limited amount of attention to any one subject. As Cohen (1963:98,100) states, distortion of the significance of issues and events may be an inherent component of the press:

> One could argue, for example that heavy concentration on a few news items is undesirable precisely because it pushes other items out of the readers' sight and thus creates a 'distorted' environment of articulated interest and opinion....For those many people who depend substantially on the mass media for their basic and continuing picture of the international environment of foreign policy, even a careful reading of foreign policy news may convey an image of an endless succession of problems having little systematic relationship to each other.

Several contingent conditions that are specifically associated with the media in the agenda-setting process have been identified. Attention devices used in newspaper coverage, and the obtrusiveness and geographic proximity of an event or issue all help to explain the nature and degree to which the media influence public priorities. It is now appropriate to assess the various conditions that interact with the audience to facilitate the agenda-setting process.

1.3.3 Contingent Conditions--The Audience

Traditionally, agenda-setting research has focused on the 'mirror-image' model of media effects. This consists of comparing the rank ordering of issues in the media ·to the public and attempting to evaluate the degree to which media emphasis affects the public salience of these issues (Erbring et al., 1980). However, many have begun to characterize the agenda-setting process as more than simply a stimulus-response model. Many contingent conditions of the audience have been identified which are linked to the process. These include individual motivation for readership, frequency of readership, the medium used, and various demographic characteristics associated with the reader. However, before these conditions can be discussed, it is important to understand exactly what the audience agenda is.

Measuring the audience agenda is a complex procedure. It generally involves questions such as: "what is the most important issue of the day" (Eyal et al., 1983:218). This question can be addressed at different levels of an individual's awareness. McLeod et al. (1974) propose that public salience of issues function on three distinct levels: the intrapersonal agenda--the individual's personal set of concerns and priorities, the interpersonal agenda--what the individual considers his friends and acquaintances regard as important, and the perceived community agenda--what the individual thinks the community regards as important. The me-

dia affect public salience of issues in varying degrees depending at which level the question is being asked. Eyal (1979:1-2) contends that the agenda-setting process functions most effectively at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels:

> According to the agenda-setting formulation; both intrapersonal and interpersonal perceptions are initiated by media stimuli, although it is plausible that other factors in one's social and informational environment could affect perceptions of what is important.

Benton and Frazier (1976) state that the audience retains information at three different levels. The individual acquires either a general awareness of issues, awareness of subissues, or an understanding of specific information about subissues from perusing media content. Their findings indicate that the media have the most pronounced effect at levels two and three of information retention. This appears to suggest that the media not only transfer an agenda, but also the meaning of issues within that agenda to the public.

DeGeorge (1981) outlines three different models that are commonly used to describe the relationship between the media and public agendas. Each model is thought to explain the agenda-setting process when certain audience conditions are met. The awareness model exists when the individual is primarily aware of those issues and topics which are reported by the media. It best explains the agenda-setting process when there is low media exposure and not a great deal of influence from intervening variables. The priorities model is

said to exist when there is evidence of a direct transfer-
ence of topics from the media to the public agenda. It best
explains the agenda-setting process when there is a high de-
gree of media emphasis and public exposure, and a great deal
of influence from intervening variables. The salience model
exists when the public assigns a set of weights, similar to
the media, to certain topics. It best explains the agenda-
setting process when there is either a high-low or low-high
level of influence between the media and intervening varia-
bles.

As the aforementioned models suggest, there is much dif-
ference of opinion as to what constitutes the public agenda,
and how it is defined. However, a common theme throughout
all these models is the notion that intervening variables,
or contingent conditions of the audience, have an effect on
the degree to which the agenda-setting process functions.
Consequently certain attributes of the audience; their media
behavior, or way they read newspapers, and their demographic
breakdown, are worthy of review.

Many have investigated why people read the newspaper.
For example, McCombs and Einsiedel (1980:16), discovered
that readership behavior is based on an individual's motiva-
tion, attitudes and content preferences:

> In sum, the act of newspaper reading is not an
> isolated act but a behavior that has to be viewed
> in the context of an individual's motivation for
> reading a newspaper, his or her attitudes toward a
> particular newspaper, and the individual's inter-
> est in reading specific types of information. All
> three stages help explain why a person reads a
> newspaper.

Their results reveal that two of the most common reasons given for reading a newspaper are to keep up with the latest events and to find out what is important. Individuals who gave these responses tended to read the newspaper more often than others. Individuals who responded that they read the newspaper for specific contents, comic strips for example, read less frequently. Evidently, individuals who read more are most influenced by what the newspaper decides is a "latest event" and what it determines is important. These individuals are most affected by the media agenda and most prone to the agenda-setting influence of the press (McCombs and Einsiedel, 1980).

McCombs (1981a) suggests that it is interest in what is happening in the world as well as need for information useful for your daily life that determines the quality and quantity of newspaper readership. Burgoon, Burgoon and Wilkinson (1981) further elaborate this point by stating that interest in topics and the frequency of readership appear to be synonymous. The level of readership, and therefore susceptibility to the agenda-setting influence, is equal to the level of interest in specific newspaper content. In other words, evaluating level of interest in newspaper content indicates the public's salience of the media agenda.

Lynn and Bennett (1980), in their study of newspaper readership patterns in non-metropolitan communities, review several recognized theories of readership behavior that help

to explain an individual's motivation for reading a newspaper. These theories include: market segmentation or demographics; the media environment or media exposure; the social structure of one's environment or community orientation; uses and gratifications or motivation and need fulfillment; and content preferences or readership of specific newspaper items. The theories most often corroborated by other researchers as being contingent conditions of the agenda-setting process are the level of media exposure and the demographic characteristics of the individual.

Glavin (1976), for one, states that the frequency of readership contributes to the agenda-setting process. He discovered that a person who reads more often is most likely to adopt the agenda of the press. Shaw and McCombs (1977) also support the idea that individuals who are more frequently exposed to media content are most influenced by the agenda-setting process.

Eyal (1979) is perhaps one of the few who debates this proposition. In his study comparing the differences between high and low media users, he discovered that the level of media exposure did not influence the public's perception of what was important. Instead, the agenda-setting influence was more contingent on the type of issue. However, though there is evidence that supports his view that the influence of the press is contingent on the type of issue, this does not negate the possibility that the level of media exposure

also contributes to the public's salience of the media agenda. A great deal more research, as has been noted, seems to support this view.

Finally, various demographic characteristics have been found to have an effect on the agenda-setting process. Burgoon and Burgoon (1980) discovered that age, income, and to a lesser extent, education, bore a significant relationship to readership of a newspaper. The relationship between readership and these three demographic variables is direct and linear: the older, wealthier and more educated one is, the more he or she reads. Wright (1975) also contends that demographic characteristics such as sex, age, education and income help explain newspaper readership.

Though many researchers have supported the view that the demographic characteristics of the audience contribute to the agenda-setting process, some have qualified this proposition. For example, Genova and Greenberg (1979) suggest that it is erroneous to assume that the interest and readership levels among high or low educated groups of people is the same. There are many individual differences of media consumption within these two groups. Gollin and Salisbury (1980) state that demographic characteristics of the audience only explain a relatively small proportion of the total variance in newspaper readership frequency.

These arguments suggesting that the influence of demographic characteristics on the agenda-setting process is

limited are justified to a certain extent. However, they
tend to begin with the premise that it is demographic char-
acteristics alone that determine the receptiveness of the
individual to the press. As other research has pointed out,
these are just one cf many factors that contribute to the
agenda-setting process. Demographic characteristics of the
audience are just one of several other contingent conditions
that enhance the transference of a media agenda to the publ-
ic. Both an individual's motivation for perusing the media
and an individual's frequency of exposure to the media are
also audience attributes that appear to reinforce the agen-
da-setting process.

1.3.4 Models of the Agenda-Setting Process

Several models that describe the agenda-setting process have
been formulated that include the aforementioned contingent
conditions in their design. Other models have been con-
structed to investigate alternate media and audience attri-
butes of the agenda-setting process. For example, the ques-
tion of what medium to use in evaluating the agenda-setting
process has often been raised. Glavin (1975:5) points out
that there appears to be greater evidence of agenda trans-
ference from newspapers as opposed to television:

> some of the characteristics of television news
> make it less efficient as a teacher of the rela-
> tive importance of issues. While a newspaper
> reader can proceed at his own pace, rereading and
> thinking again about information if he desires;
> the television viewer must follow a series of sto-
> ries presented in rapid succession.

McLeod et al. (1974) conducted a study to assess the influence of agenda-setting from specific media. The results from their study indicate that the medium which respondents considered to be their most important source of information was the medium that most influenced their salience of issues. Newspapers by far were found to have the most prominent agenda-setting influence. McCombs (1981a:12), elaborating on Glavin's idea, suggests that this is due to the fact that newspapers provide more and better coverage of issues than does television:

> With their larger newshole, newspapers can feature articles in the back pages early in an issue's life cycle. Television coverage is more like the front pages. Over time the newspaper reader is likely to be exposed to mentions of most issues many more times than is his counterpart in the TV news audience.

Many studies also have compared the agenda of two newspapers to their corresponding reader subgroups. Traditionally, results have shown that the content of newspapers competing in the same market area, does not vary significantly. One of the first studies to compare the content of two rival newspapers revealed a similarity of content devoted to specific subject areas (Bigman, 1948). Weaver and Mullins (1975) discovered few differences in content, but many differences in newspaper format and attention devices existed between competing daily newspapers. Hicks and Feathersons' (1978) study of competing daily newspapers found similar results to Weaver and Mullins; no differences in content, but differences in format and layout of the newspapers.

Clearly, one expects to find a diversity of news content in a two newspaper community. It seems reasonable to assume that competition would exist to scoop one's rival in such a competitive market. However, media abundance does not necessarily imply media diversity. As Donohue and Glasser (1978:596) discovered in their study of two competing newspapers, standardization and homogenity of news content is a current reality:

> We have uncovered consolidation in news sources, the demise of independent news sources, and an increasing standardization in story orientation. If one of the major functions of a newspaper is to interpret distant events in a local context, then the evidence we have put forth suggests that there is little chance for this function to survive in smaller newspaper markets.

However, it is possible to find varying media agendas in a competing newspaper community, though most research has provided evidence to the contrary. Newspapers function on various critical dimensions. Burgoon and Burgoon (1981) outline these as being: immediacy and thoroughness, local awareness, redundancy and entertainment, and social extension and gossip. A study they conducted found immediacy and thoroughness, and local awareness to be the most important functions for a successful newspaper, in terms of readership levels. They suggest that if each of these functions is performed by a different newspaper in the same community, there will be a substantial difference in the media agendas of both newspapers. In other words, if two newspapers in the same community each satisfy a separate function, they

will be found to have different agendas. This would result
in a segmented audience; individuals who read one newspaper
as opposed to the other. A test of agenda-setting influence
would be to compare the media agendas of each newspaper to
the public agendas of each respective reader subgroup.

Tipton, Haney and Baseheart (1975) were perhaps the first
to test this cross lag media-public relationship.   Essen-
tially, evaluation consists of comparing the relationship
between Media-1 and Public-1, and Media-2 and Public-2.   If
the results show stronger agenda relationships than between
Media-1 and Public-2, and Media-2 and Public-1, then there
is substantial evidence that the agenda-setting process does
exist.   In order to obtain successful results, the two media
agendas must be dissimilar (McLeod et al., 1974).   As Bur-
goon and Burgoon (1981:37) point out, media agenda differ-
ences can exist:

> In multiple newspaper markets, ⁻ one may find that
> the various papers can and have segmented their
> audiences by each focusing on a different func-
> tion... one may satisfy the need for thoroughness
> while another may satiate the public's appetite
> for local awareness.

Other agenda-setting models have been constructed combin-
ing some of the contingent conditions previously discussed.
For example, Erbring et al.   (1980) propose a model linking
the audience's pre-existing sensitivities with media cover-
age, to cause agenda-setting influence.   They hypothesize
that the audience would react differently to media content,
depending upon changes in the amount of coverage, their ex-

posure to the coverage, and the degree to which they were dependent on news media 'coverage for information. Their findings indicate that these conditions do enhance the influence of the agenda-setting process:

> Our results indicate Walter Lippman's point that
> the media help shape our notions of what is most
> important beyond the reach of our direct experi-
> ence. But the effect is not automatic. People
> have different notions of what is important to
> them, and they tune in and out according-
> ly...Exposure to media content is a necessary but
> not a sufficient condition. Nor are the audience
> effects limited to individual mechanisms of selec-
> tive perception. Rather, social processes of sec-
> ondary diffusion and reality testing ultimately
> control the impact of the media (Erbring et al.,
> 1980:46).

Zucker (1978:1) proposes an agenda-setting model based on the obtrusiveness of issues, and the duration that those issues are exposed to the public. The Variable News Media Influence model posits:

> the less obtrusive an issue is, and the less time
> the issue has been prominent in the media, the
> greater is the news media's influence on opinion
> about that issue.

The condition of obtrusiveness has already been defined. The concept of duration is also regarded as a contingent condition of the agenda-setting process. Briefly, to digress, this element has a great deal of significance for the agenda-setting process. Limited research has been conducted on the time frame component of agenda-setting. It refers to the duration of the media agenda, the duration of the public agenda, and the time lag between the last day of the media agenda and the first day of the public agenda. It is by

measuring the effect span of public salience of issues that
one determines the temporal effect of agenda-setting. The
question asked is whether the agenda-setting process is lim-
ited to short-term effects, or does it have long-term cumu-
lative influence?

McCombs et al. (1975) suggest that the optimum time lag
is a two to six month period. Winter and Eyal (1981) found
that the agenda-setting process was more evident when a
shorter time lag of approxiametly four to six weeks was
used. The most recent findings indicate that the ideal time
lag period is between one to three months depending on the
issue (Eyal et al., 1983; Winter, 1981). This supports the
notion that the media have more influence in a shorter time
frame.

Zucker's study specifically evaluated the duration of the
media agenda, or, the length of time the issue received cov-
erage in the newspaper. His results show that both the du-
ration of media coverage and the obtrusiveness of an issue
have some bearing on the extent of public salience of issues
in the media agenda. The model of Variable News Influence
that he proposes appears to have some validity. Zucker's
agenda-setting model substantiates the claim that contingent
conditions do exist, which enhance the influence of the
press:

> An individual who pays little attention to the me-
> dia world is nonetheless affected by it, because
> the only information he has about the world beyond
> his small, direct experience, real world is
> through people who do pay attention to the media

> world. The direct influence of the mass media on
> public opinion is not the properly discredited
> "injecting" of ideas into each individual mind,
> but is instead the creation of the media world.
> The inclusion or exclusion, · prominence or incon-
> spicuousness, and favourable or unfavourable·
> slants of items of information in that world·form
> a large part of the information environment on
> which the public bases its opinions and attitudes.
> (Zucker, 1978:239).

As these aforementioned studies indicate, research has begun to expand beyond the notion of agenda-setting as simply a process by which media priorities become public priorities. Models have begun to incorporate other factors into their design. The role played by various contingent conditions has been investigated. It is now appropriate to construct a model that addresses how these variables either limit or reinforce the agenda-setting process. The current investigation proposes to begin to do just that.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

A great deal of review has been presented on the various conceptualizations of the agenda-setting process. It is now appropriate to describe the design of the agenda-setting model to be used in the current research.

This study consists of the comparison of selected general topic categories from the media and public agendas in a two-newspaper community, as outlined in the Introduction (see 1.2: Parameters of the Investigation). The data collected from the survey and subsequent content analysis provide ample information to evaluate the effect of various contingent conditions on the agenda-setting process.

The current investigation intends to assess what characteristics of the media influence the level of interest by the public, and what characteristics of the individual enhance the influence of the media on the public. It is the author's contention that several contingent conditions will be found which enhance the influence of the media on public salience of news and information. The comparison of two different newspapers' agendas and their respective reader subgroup agendas will be used to test the agenda-setting premise. The use of attention devices, the obtrusiveness of

the topic, and the geographic proximity of newspaper content are hypothesized to be conditions that facilitate the transfer of the agenda from the media to the public. The frequency of exposure, the medium preferred, and demographic characteristics are hypothesized to be conditions that are linked with the audience to determine their salience and acceptance of the media agenda.

The author also contends that how broadly the media agenda is defined has much bearing on what agenda-setting effects will be found. It is hypothesized that agenda-setting transference will also take place when newspaper content is broken down into general topic categories. In sum, it is argued that the agenda-setting model is best described as an interactive process rather than a function or an effect, limited by the time element.

As the literature review indicates, most of the previous research has constructed an agenda for analysis that consists of specific issues or event-related content. An agenda also can be constructed using general content and broad topic categories. The evaluation of such an agenda would allow more general comparison of news and information transference between the media and public.

Generally, newspapers establish a philosophy or a set of guiding principles for their operation (Donohew, 1967; Sigelman, 1973). This implies that they will have a specific formula or quota for coverage of general topic areas. For

example, some newspapers tend to concentrate on local af-
fairs while others tend to focus on national and interna-
tional issues. The _Toronto_ _Sun_ and the _Globe_ _and_ _Mail_ are
two such examples. Therefore, there should be a great deal
of consistency in terms of the amount of coverage devoted to
general topic categories, over time. Of course, exceptions
do occur, particularly when specific event-related news
comes to the forefront of the media agenda. However, news-
papers in general, over time, will be consistent with their
format and provide more coverage of certain broad topics as
opposed to others.

Consequently, in this regard, the agenda-setting process
can be considered to function when the agenda is defined as
broad topic categories. Since coverage of general topic ar-
eas in a newspaper should generally be consistent over time,
it is hypothesized that there will be no difference in the
amount of coverage over the three content analysis periods
in this study: before, during and after the survey:

1. The newspaper agenda, when defined as general topic
   categories, will be found to be consistent over time.

If the findings support this hypothesis, it is then pos-
sible to combine the data from the three periods to form one
aggregate measure of the media agenda. Otherwise, only the
periods before and during the survey can be used to repre-
sent the media agenda, for the rest of this investigation.

This study involves the comparison of selected general topic categories from two newspaper agendas with their respective reader subgroup agendas, in one community. In general, the agenda-setting model posits that there will be much similarity between the media and the public agendas. By comparing the assumed agenda transference between two different newspapers and their respective readers, one is able to make a stronger argument for the existence of the agenda-setting process.

There will be substantial support for the agenda-setting influence if the relationship between Media-1 and Public-1, and Media-2 and Public-2, is found to be stronger than the relationship between Media-1 and Public-2, and Media-2 and Public-1.

MEDIA-1　(A) ------------------> PUBLIC-1
　　　　　(C)
　　　　　(D)
MEDIA-2　(B) ------------------> PUBLIC-2
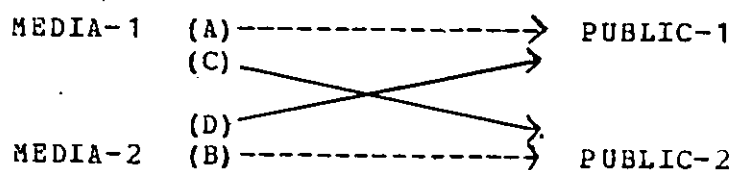
Relationship of "A" and "B" will be stronger than "C" and "D".

Figure 1:　Cross Media-Public Relationship

Since a reader of one newspaper is subjected more to its content than to the content of the other newspaper, it is hypothesized that there will be greater similarity between the newspapers and their respective reader subgroup agendas than in the cross newspaper-reader subgroup relationships:

2. The agenda of each newspaper will more closely resem-
    ble the public agenda of its respective reader sub-
    group, than the public agenda of the competing news-
    paper's reader subgroup.

Attention devices such as the use of headlines and photo-
graphs, page placement and the use of colour, direct a read-
er's attention to specific topics in a newspaper. They
function to give prominence to certain content that the
newspaper deems worthy of emphasis. Along with accumulative
space, attention devices are a measure of how the media
prioritizes its agenda. Together, they represent a contin-
gent condition of the agenda-setting process.

Agenda-setting asserts that the public learns these pri-
orities from the amount and prominence of coverage in the
media. The audience establishes a similar set of weights as
the media regarding the importance of topics. Evidently,
attention devices in newspapers assist in transforming the
media agenda into the public agenda.

Since attention devices give prominence to specific con-
tent which establishes the priorities of the media agenda,
and agenda-setting posits that the public incorporates a si-
milar set of weights to content as the media, it is hypoth-
esized that there will be more attention devices used for
the topics that the readers are most interested in;

3. The rank-ordering of general topics in the public
    agenda will closely resemble the rank-ordering of

general topics in the newspaper agenda; rank-ordered
by the amount of attention devices used.

The obtrusiveness and geographic proximity of a topic are
synonymous contingent conditions of the agenda-setting pro-
cess. Since the public has direct exposure to their local
environment, local topics are considered to be obtrusive in-
formation. Since generally, the public does not have first
hand knowledge of national and interational topics, they are
considered to be unobtrusive information.' Therefore, news-
paper content that is local is more obtrusive and newspaper
content that is national or international is less obtrusive.

The obtrusiveness and geographic proximity of a topic are
related to one's need for orientation. The more distant and
unobtrusive the topic is, the more uncertain about the topic
the individual is, and the more in need of cues to help ord-
er his or her environment. It is the news media that pro-
vide these cues; cues that establish the importance of in-
formation coming from beyond the individual's immediate
environment.

Since the news media are the only source of the public's
knowledge about information that is unobtrusive and beyond
his or her immediate environment, it is hypothesized that
the public will express greatest interest in national and
international topics, as opposed to local topics, in the me-
dia agenda. It also will be found that coverage of these
topics as opposed to local topics will be more greatly em-
phasized, enhanced by the use of attention devices:

4. Unobtrusive content such as national and international news as opposed to obtrusive content such as local news will receive more prominent display in the newspapers. Subsequently, the public will express the most interest in these topics.

As the _Review_ _of_ _the_ _Literature_ indicates (see: Chapter 1.3), frequency of exposure to the media is generally regarded as a contingent condition of the agenda-setting process. The more one reads a newspaper, the more likely one is to incorporate the set of priorities established by the media, into his or her own personal agenda. The agenda-setting influence is greatest for those who are most frequently exposed to mass communication.

Since individuals who are more exposed to the mass media are most likely to be influenced by the media's set of priorities, it is hypothesized that there will be greater similarity between the public and media agendas of those who read the newspaper more often than between the public and media agendas of those who read the newspaper less often:

5. The public agenda of frequent newspaper users will more closely resemble their medium's agenda than the public agenda of less frequent users, supporting the proposition that the agenda-setting influence is strongest for those who are most exposed to a medium.

The literature review also indicates that demographic characteristics of the audience bear a significant relation-

ship to the frequency of readership of a newspaper (see

1.3.3: Contingent Conditions--The Audience). It has been

shown that an individual's age, amount of income, and level

of education help to explain how often newspaper content is

perused.   If Hypothesis 5 is supported--that the frequency

of readership contributes to public salience of the media

agenda, it can be proposed that demographic characteristics,

which affect the level of readership, also enhance the agen-

da-setting influence. Consequently, the demographic charac-

teristics of the audience can be interpreted as a contingent

condition for the agenda-setting process.

Since the demographic characteristics of the audience;

age, income and education, bear a significant relationship

with newspaper readership, it is hypothesized that these de-

mographic characteristics also help to explain the public's

rank-ordering of newspaper topics, according to their level

of interest in the topics:

   6. Age, Income and Education will bear a significant re-

       lationship with the public agenda: the public's

       rank-ordering of their interest in newspaper content.

       The higher one's socioeconomic status, the more one

       will be interested in the newspaper agenda.

The source of the public's news and information, whether

it be from television or newspapers, affects the individu-

al's salience of issues and content. A newspaper is thought

to be a much more efficient and effective teacher of the im-

portance of certain topics. It provides a far greater amount of coverage as well as opportunity for the individual to go over the content as many times as he or she wishes. Television is restricted by time. Once the news has been broadcast it departs from the public's frame of reference. Newspapers remain in the public's frame of reference over time, reinforcing salience of the content it presents.

The medium of mass communication used is a contingent condition of the agenda-setting process. Individuals who claim to rely on one medium as opposed to another for their main source of news are likely to possess an agenda more closely approximating the agenda of that medium. This is particularly true for national and international news, since the media are the public's only sources of information. One may speculate that since the newspaper agenda has more depth, it is more likely to influence public salience of content than is the television agenda. However, for the purposes of the current investigation, it is more important to distinguish between the individual's perceived dependence for news and information from one medium, as opposed to the other.

Since an individual who claims to depend on newspapers as opposed to television for National and International news and information is more likely to be influenced by the newspaper's content, it is hypothesized that the public agenda of these individuals will more closely resemble the media

agenda of the newspapers, than the public agenda of individuals who claim to rely on television for National and International news:

7. The public agenda of individuals who claim to rely on the newspaper as opposed to television for National and International news, will be more similar to the newspaper agenda.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

The data for this investigation come from two confidential marketing research reports (Winter & Zamaria, 1982; Winter & Zamaria, 1983). The studies were commissioned by the News-paper-X Newspaper Company of City-A, in an attempt to discern its market penetration and potential for growth in a two-newspaper, competitive market. The survey report provides substantial information on the readership behavior and content preferences of the people in the community. The results also provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic breakdown of the community, as well as valuable consumer information on the various reader subgroups; those who read Newspaper-X as opposed to those who read its competitor, Newspaper-Y. Essentially, the survey report evaluates readers' content preferences, and their relative ranking of the two newspapers in certain areas of performance.

The content analysis was conducted to ascertain whether the public's perception of the newspapers' performance was correct. The report extensively compared format and content differences between the two newspapers in such areas as the number of items and space devoted to particular topics, the use of attention devices, and the source and type of report-

inq. Comparison of the results from the survey to the content analysis enabled the author to suggest possible alternatives of presentation and coverage in Newspaper-X, to increase readership and improve its market penetration in the community.

The survey was designed and executed by the staff of Newspaper-X, under the direction of the Research Centre in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. This author conducted secondary analysis on the results from the survey. However, this author had full control of the design, implementation and reporting of the results from the content analysis.

The studies were conducted for the purpose of marketing research, and are therefore limited in depth and scope. However, the research was performed with exacting academic scrutiny rendering sufficient and appropirate data for the current investigation. It is indeed possible to construct a media and public agenda, as well as compare other variables as specified in the Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses, from the information that is available.

What follows is a brief description of the methodology employed in both studies, as well as an overview of the idiosyncrasies and problems inherent in the research designs, due to their original intent. For more thorough details on the methodology, consult Appendix A and Appendix B, which exhaustively describe the research procedures.

3.1 THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted by the staff of _Newspaper-X_, over a four week period; from May 10 to June 5, 1982. A stratified random sample of telephone numbers was selected to assure proper geographic representation of all potential newspaper readers in and around City-A. Telephone interviews for each group of three-digit prefixes were proportioned to the number of households in six geographic areas. The results consist of 1,950 telephone interviews, which constitutes a response rate of 68 percent.

In total, there were more than seventy questions posed to the consumer, ranging from what were the strengths and weaknesses of both newspapers, to how much more one would pay for delivery of a newspaper. _Appendix A_ represents a condensed version of the survey, consisting of sixteen questions that are used in to the current investigation. Briefly, these include: readership subgroups, level of readership, readers' interest in certain newspaper content, the medium preferred by readers for particular content, and readers' demographic characteristics.

Readership subgroups refers to which newspaper(s) the individual reads. The survey distinguishes among four different groups of the sample population, pertaining to newspaper subscription behavior. Of the total 1,950 respondents in the survey, 729 or 37 percent subscribed to _Newspaper-Y_ only, 502 or 26 percent subscribed to _Newspaper-X_ only, 133

or 7 percent subscribed to both newspapers, and 586 or 30 percent are non-subscribers or non-readers. A different version of the survey was used for individuals in each of these subgroups. However, similar questions that are pertinent to this study were asked of members of all four subgroups. It is possible to compare these data across the various subgroups.

However, the purpose of this investigation is not to compare subscriber subgroups, but rather those who read one newspaper as opposed to the other. Only through this is it possible to test the agenda-setting effect as formulated in Research Hypothesis 2. Therefore, a new dichotomous variable was constructed from the data, consisting of those individuals who only read Newspaper-X, and those individuals who only read Newspaper-Y. Responses from the rest of the individuals, those who read both or neither of the newspapers, were not used in this study. The final sample used in this investigation consists of a total of 1,191 individuals; 433 or 36 percent who read Newspaper-X, and 758 or 64 percent who read Newspaper-Y.

Readership level is an indication of the amount of time individuals spend reading each newspaper. The survey specifically asks the survey respondents in Question 2, "...please tell me how many times in the past seven days you read or looked into each... Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y?" The results constitute a scale of readership that allows

comparisons between those who read a lot with those who read less. These data are of particular importance to Research Hypothesis 5, which proposes to test the varying agenda-setting influence between frequent and less-frequent readers.

The topic and newspaper content ratings are perhaps the most important source of information from the survey, for the current investigation. It is a measure of the readers' level of interest in specific newspaper topics. It represents the public agenda. Individuals were asked to rate their interest in twenty-eight different types of information and news found in the newspapers, on a scale of one to five; with one signifying, "not at all interested" and five signifying, "very interested." They were also asked to assess the performance of Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y in each of these topics, by indicating which newspaper they felt provided better coverage.

As Burgoon, Burgoon and Wilkinson (1981) point out, interest in and readership of newspaper content are strongly correlated. It is possible to equate interest in topics with readership of those topics. Therefore, it is possible to use these interest ratings as a measure of attentiveness and salience of topics by the public. They represent the public agenda, in the current investigation.

Some of the topic categories constructed for the marketing study are superfluous for the current study. The purpose of this investigation is to compare general topic areas

of news and information, rather than consumer information such as Help Wanted-Classified Ads or Real Estate Listings. Therefore, in order to compare the media and public agendas of news and information only, the original list of twenty-eight topics has been reduced to 15 categories. This will facilitate the evaluation of the agenda-setting process, of news and information only.

The list of the original twenty-eight topic categories used in the survey is found in Question 4 of Appendix A. The general topic categories to be used in this study are topics that are expected to be prone to the agenda-setting influence. Other content, such as Comics, TV Listings and Crossword Puzzles are of particular interest to the reader, regardless of the amount of space they occupy or their placement in the newspaper. The following list represents the topic categories that will be compared between the public and media agendas, in the current research:

1. Local Sports News

2. National Sports News

3. National and World News

4. Coverage of Borough and Township Meetings and Activities

~ 5. Local School Board News

6. Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements

7. National Opinion Columnists

8. Letters to the Editor

9. Editorials

10. Financial and Business News

11. Food Articles, News and Recipes

12. Fashion Articles and News

13. Entertainment News

14. Local Political News

15. Weddings, Engagements, Births and Graduation News

The medium preferred for particular content refers to what medium, television or newspapers, the respondents use for specific types of news and information. This information is of particular importance to Research Hypothesis 7, which proposes to test whether there exists varying agenda-setting influence for those individuals who rely on newspapers as opposed to television for national and international news and information. The data to support or fail to support this hypothesis come from Question 1 of the survey, in Appendix A.

Two separate public agendas will be constructed consisting of those individuals who rely on television and those who rely on newsapers as their source of national and international news. These two public agendas will be compared to see which one more closely approximates the media agenda found in the newspapers.

Finally, the survey results provide information on the demographic characteristics of the readers, which are compiled from responses to Questions 6 to 16 in Appendix A.
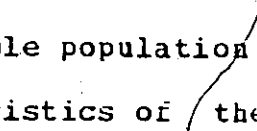
These results represent the necessary information to test
Research Hypothesis 6: whether Age, Income and Education
will bear a significant relationship with the public's in-
terest in newspaper content and help to explain the public's
rank-ordering of their interest in newspaper content.

However, the response rate for these categories differed
significantly. Many individuals are predisposed to keep in-
formation pertaining to their demographic background confi-
dential. For example, whereas 1,788 individuals reported
their Age, and 1,891 individuals reported their level of
Education, only 928 of a total of 1,950 respondents revealed
their level of Income. This sort of discrepancy is to be
expected in survey research, since many individuals do not
wish to disclose personal data.

It does represent a problem for the current investiga-
tion. There are not enough individuals who reported their
Income to employ valid statistical tests for Research Hy-
pothesis 6. Therefore, Occupation, also an ordinal varia-
ble, will be substituted for level of Income in this study.
The number of responses to Occupation was high enough,
(1,374 respondents) and its similarity to level of Income
strong enough, to include it in the analysis.

Reviewing the demographic characteristics of the public
also provides some indication of how valid or representative
the sample population is. By comparing the demographic
characteristics of the sample population to the population

in general, one is able to discern any sampling error or problems that could exist. Table 1 illustrates such discrepancies, by comparing the demographic characteristics of the sample population to the results of the 1980 County-G Census.

There are five demographic variables where discrepancies between the results from the sample population and the Census information are apparent. These include: Town or City lived in, Persons per Household, Mean Age, Marital Status, and the Gender of the individual.

For geographic area of the respondents, the only problem exists in the Region-F area, which is under-represented; a difference of 1.7 percentage points, between the survey results and the Census information. However, the actual quota for telephone calls to this area was exceeded. There was also a a total of 91 individuals who reported the City or Town lived in as "other" or was listed by the coders as "missing." Therefore, this discrepancy is more likely attributed to respondent and interview errors, rather than a problem with the sample.

Other minor discrepancies are apparent between the survey results and the Census information in Persons per Household (.49 'person' difference), Mean Age (3.7 'year' difference), and Marital Status (Single; 6.6 percentage point difference; Married; 11 percentage point difference). This indicates that not enough single, younger individuals were included in

TABLE 1

Demographic Characteristics Comparison Between The Census And The Survey

VARIABLE	CENSUS	SURVEY	DIFFERENCE
Town or City Lived In			
Region-A........................33.6%	33.9%	+0.3
Region-B........................18.5	17.9	-0.6
Region-C........................19.9	19.7	-0.2
Region-D........................9.6	8.8	-0.8
Region-E........................8.2	7.6	-0.6
* Region-F........................10.2	8.5	-1.7
TOTAL:	100	** 96.4 ***	
Persons per Household........ 2.68	3.17	-0.49
Mean Age; 18 and over........47.4	43.7	-3.7
Marital Status			
* Single........................26.6%	20%	-6.6
* Married........................56.0	67	+11.0
Separated.................... 1.7	NA	---
Widowed........................11.9	11	-0.9
Divorced........................3.8	3	-0.8
TOTAL:	100	100	
Gender			
* Female........................53%	69%	+16.0
* Male........................47	31	-16.0
TOTAL:	100	100	

"*"   Indicates problematic differences

"**"   There were 91 people, or 4.6 percent of the survey sample population, whose geographic area was reported as "other" or "missing".

"***"   Does not equal 100 due to rounding.

the survey.   This   is understandable since it is much more
difficult to reach single young people by telephone, even
with numerous callbacks.

However,   this discrepancy is not very important when one
compares Marital Status across the subscriber subgroup cate-
gories originally used in the marketing survey.   As can be
seen in Table 2, there is a fairly even distribution of sin-
gle and married people across the four subscriber type cate-
gories.   This suggests that single and married people do not
tend towards one single subscriber group.

TABLE 2

Marital Status Distribution

SUBSCRIBER SUBGROUP	MARITAL STATUS	
	SINGLE	MARRIED
Newspaper-X only...........18%		68%
Newspaper-Y only...........20		66
Both Newspapers...........23		65
Neither Newspaper.........19		64
OVERALL BREAKDOWN:	20%	67%

Though there exist differences between the sample population
and the actual population in these three demographic catego-
ries, when compared across the subscriber subgroups, the
differences are not that important.   In other words, these
discrepancies will not be problematic for the current inves-
tigation; that is for comparing readers of one newspaper to
the other.   It is possible to leave the survey results as

they are, without applying numerical weights to make the re-
sults more closely parallel the Census information.

However, there exists a serious discrepancy between the
survey results and the Census information with regard to the
Gender representation. As Table 1 indicates, there are more
Females in the sample population as opposed to the actual
population (Survey; 69 percent; Census; 53 percent). There-
fore, males are naturally under-represented (Survey; 31 per-
cent, Census; 47 percent).

The survey questionaire specifically asks to speak to
"...the person...responsible for selecting the newspapers,
if any, which are read." Random sampling of individuals ac-
cording to their Gender was not undertaken. However, it is
very unlikely that so many women make this decision by them-
selves. It is probably more correct to assume that the de-
cision of what newspaper to read is made jointly between a
husband and wife.

Unfortunately it seems not enough males were interviewed
in this survey. This can be problematic, particularly when
constructing the public agenda from the interest topic rat-
ings. One is likely to find substantial differences in con-
tent preferences between males and females. Therefore, it
is necessary to correct the data numerically according to
Gender, by using a weighting factor in the analysis. The
weighting factors of 1.504 and .701 have been used for males
and females, respectively, to ensure the survey results more

closely reflect the Census information. All analysis and
evaluation of the, survey results will use this correction
weighting factor.

3.2 THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

As previously mentioned, content analysis research was un-
dertaken to compare the coverage of news and information in
Newspaper-X to Newspaper-Y, as well as to compare both to
the public's perception of each newspaper's performance. In
order to provide the appropriate data and to facilitate the
process of coding content, there are several idiosyncrasies
inherent in this research design, which also reflect the or-
iginal intent of the project; a marketing study. To evalu-
ate the results properly, it is essential to understand how
the content was coded and analysed. For an elaboration of
the research techniques employed, consult with Appendix B:
Coding Sheet and Definitions.

The coding sheet and defintions were created after a tho-
rough review of the literature, and on the basis of both the
requirements of marketing research and preliminary hypothes-
es created for the current study. The original coding sheet
consists of forty-five different categories, as well as num-
erous other variables constructed from the data. Not all
are of use in the current study. What follows is a brief
overview of the research procedures and information of use
to the current investigation.

The "population" for this study represents all the issues of Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y over a five month period. The sample frame consists of three separate periods: the period of time during which the Telephone Survey took place (May 10 to June 5, 1982), and two periods of randomly con-structed weeks, from a one month period preceeding the sur-vey (April 1 to May 8, 1982), and a three month period after the survey (June 7 to August 31, 1982). Newspaper coverage before, during and after the survey period was selected for analysis due to the interest of the employer, Newspaper-X, in comparing newspaper content over time. The three periods also were used to address the idea proposed in Research Hy-pothesis 1: that there will be no difference in newspaper coverage of general topic categories, over time. The total period of time covered by this study, then, is the five months from April 1 to August 31, 1982.

The sample is a four week period, or twenty-four publica-tion days. It is composed of a constructed two week period during the survey and a constructed two week period from the other four months. The end result: twenty-four issues of both Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y were extensively coded.

The individual item; story, picture, caption, headline or combination thereof was deemed to be the most appropriate unit of analysis for comparison purposes in the marketing study. It facilitates the analysis and comparison of the content between each newspaper, and between the newspaper

and public agendas. However, for the current investigation, the newspaper issue is being used as the unit of analysis. 24 issues of both Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y will be used for comparison purposes.

The sampling of stories follows the same principles as sampling people for the survey. The final content analysis sample size of 6,449 items is large enough to make one very confident in making general statements about the media agenda over this five month period.

It is important to note that some of the topics originally used in the marketing research project are not of use to the current investigation. As mentioned earlier, fifteen of the original twenty-eight topics will be isolated for the current study. Therefore, the total number of items used for analysis consists of 4,834, not 6,449.

There were three people employed to undertake the actual coding of the newspapers. Out of a total of 6,449 individual items coded, Coder 1 completed 3,543, Coder 2 completed 1,374, and Coder 3 completed 1,532. Holsti's intercoder-reliability test was employed to determine how consistently the content was coded. Fifty-two items, representing the diversity of newspaper content, were randomly selected and coded by each coder. The results indicate that between Coder 1 and Coder 2, there was a 97 percent rate of agreement, between Coder 1 and Coder 3, there was a 91 percent rate of agreement, and between Coder 2 and Coder 3, there was a 90

percent rate of agreement. Overall, among all three coders, the reliability coefficient is 92 percent, a very acceptable level of concurrence.

Conceptually, two levels of analysis were used in this study. The primary intent was to compare exhaustively the coverage and presentation of content between the two newspapers. This includes the evaluation of coverage in terms of quantity, prominence, topicality and newsform, within both newspapers. The second level of analysis is a comparison of the Media Agenda, represented by the actual content in each of the newspapers, to the Public Agenda, composed of the readers' content preferences: information provided from the survey. The data from the content analysis provides the relevant information required to test the Research Hypotheses. However, it is important to describe briefly how the four elements of content: quantity, prominence, topicality and newsform, were compared.

Quantity refers to the amount of content actually presented, in terms of the number of items and space measured in column inches. Measurement of content in both newspapers was based on a six- column page format. There is an obvious difference in the total size of the pages of each newspaper: Newspaper-X uses a broadsheet format whereas Newspaper-Y uses a tabloid format. The broadsheet format allows for more space per page.

However, comparison of the typesetting generally used for news content in the two newspapers demonstrates that Newspaper-X's typeface is actually smaller than the typeface in Newspaper-Y. There is more news in a column inch of content in Newspaper-X than in a column inch of content in Newspaper-Y.

After a series of tests using Newspaper-X's facilities to transpose Newspaper-Y content into their broadsheet format, it was determined that a correction factor of .9 should be applied to the content in the Newspaper-Y, to make it equal in size to the content in Newspaper-X. Therefore, it was necessary to multiply all the news content in Newspaper-Y by a factor of .9 to make one column inch of news in each newspaper the same. With this correction factor in place, it is possible to compare news content directly between the two newspaper.

These calculations provide a measure of the newspace in Newspaper-Y, relative to the newspace in Newspaper-X. Though these figures do not represent the actual amount of space used by certain content in Newspaper-Y, they do accurately reflect relative space measurements in order to make direct comparisons to Newspaper-X. In other words, these measurements illustrate how much newspace Newspaper-Y would occupy if it had the same broadsheet format as Newspaper-X. It is therefore possible to accurately compare the relative space measurements of one newspaper to the other.

Prominence refers to the emphasis in presentation given to the various types of content. These include attention devices used by a newspaper; the stylistic variations that attract the readers' attention and subsequent interest in the content. The measures employed in this study include the use of headlines, pictures and colour. Another prominence indicator is whether the content appears on the front page of the newspaper. Generally, attention devices provide one with a much more qualitative assessment of the newspapers as opposed to simply measuring the 'space and counting the items of particular content.

Certain limitations were imposed on the coding of prominence indicators, due to the original intent of this study. For example, the condition of mutual exclusivity was not satisfied for the coding of headlines. Some topics were measured for their total space only, and not broken down into separate article and headline measurements. This was done to facilitate the coding of the content and because such extensive analysis was not required in the original marketing study. However, since topics that were aggregately measured are not used for all the tests of the Research Hypotheses, this idiosyncrasy will not interfere with the current investigation. Analysis and evaluation of attention devices will be used only in Research Hypothesis 3 and 4. This problem will result in the topic categories; Editorials, Letters to the Editor, and National Columnists, being excluded when testing Hypothesis 3.

Topicality refers to what type of content is actually being presented in each of the newspapers. Comparing the differences in coverage between the two newspapers to the readers' topic interest ratings from the survey will allow the evaluation of the agenda-setting influence; the question addressed in Research Hypothesis 2.

In the original marketing study, sixty different categories comprised the Topic variable (see: Appendix B). These have been re-categorized into 15 distinct groupings to match as closely as possible, the Public Agenda constructed from the survey results. The other general topic categories will not be used in the current investigation. From this it is possible to compare the public's interest with the amount of actual content of news and information in the newspapers; or, in other words, compare the Media Agenda to the Public Agenda. It is through this procedure that it is possible to ascertain the existence of the agenda-setting process.

Finally, newsform refers to the various news attributes of the article being coded. These include comparisons of:

1. Proximity: whether the content is local, national or world news,

2. Newstype; whether the news is hard, interpretive, soft, editorial or a general listing, such as Advertisement, and

3. Source: who supplied the content.

For the current investigation, only the proximity of the content will be compared. This aspect of the research is addressed in Research Hypothesis 4.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the data from the survey and the content analysis were
entered into a computer and appropriate statistical proce-
dures performed, the answers to the research questions of
this investigation were obtained. This Chapter applies the
results to tests of the seven hypotheses presented in Chap-
ter Two-- Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses.

4.1   HYPOTHESIS ONE

The first research hypothesis addresses the notion that the
agenda-setting process functions when the agenda is defined
as broad topic categories as well as when it is defined as
specific issues. It was proposed that there is not likely
to be any significant variance in newspaper content through-
out the three periods of analysis, when the content is de-
fined as general topic categories. The three periods are
represented by issues of both newspapers coded before (N=3),
during (N=12) and after (N=9) the time when the survey was
conducted. Fifteen general topic categories were used in
this analysis.

A statistical procedure known as Oneway Analysis of Vari-
ance was used to compare the mean total space of the fifteen

topic categories across the three periods. Oneway Analysis
of Variance is an extension of the difference-of-means test
appropriately used when testing the relationship between a
continuous dependent variable, the total space, and a nomi-
nal independent variable, the three periods. The signifi-
cant level was set at .05 using the Scheffe Range Test,
which is considered to be a more conservative test of signi-
ficance. The breakdown of the mean total space of the fif-
teen topic categories in Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y can be
seen in Tables 3 and 4, respectively.

The Tables show that there are no significant differences
for fourteen of the fifteen topic categories across the
three periods of content analysis. The figures presented
are based on the average column inch space that the topics
occupy in a newspaper issue from each of the three periods
of analysis. For example, in an average edition of Newspa-
per-X, Local Sports News occupies 160 column inches in Per-
iod One, 185 column inches in Period Two, and 186 column
inches in Period Three. There are no significant differenc-
es that exist in the mean total space of topics among the
three periods. For comparison purposes, it should be noted
that 120 column inches equals one full page of the newspa-
per.

The only significant mean difference at the .05 level oc-
curs in National and World News in both newspapers. As Ta-
ble 3 indicates, there is a significant difference between

Period One (before the survey) and Period Three (after the survey) in Newspaper-X; 227 versus 428 column inches of space, respectively. As Table 4 indicates, there is a significant difference for National and World News in Newspaper-Y, between Period Two (during the survey) and Period Three (after the survey); 164 versus 236 column inches of space, respectively. For both newspapers, there is more National and World News in Period Three (after the survey) than in the other two periods. .

What this seems to suggest is that there was an abundance of National and World News in both newspapers in Period Three. After perusing the nine issues of each newspaper coded during this period, it becomes clear why this is apparent. During Period Three; June 7 -- August 31, 1982, three major international events were taking place. International attention focused on the catastrophy of war on three fronts; Israel's invasion of Lebanon, the Iran-Iraq struggle, and the Falklands Island crisis.

It is not surprising that there would be a great deal more news coverage of these events, hence inflating the measurement of National and World News in Period Three. This explains why there exists significantly more National and World News in this period compared to the other periods, in both newspapers.

As was pointed out in the Theoretical Framework (see: Chapter 2), it can be expected that specific events will

TABLE 3

Period Space Comparison Of Topics In Newspaper-X

AVERAGE SPACE PER NEWSPAPER ISSUE

TOPIC	PERIOD 1 (Before) (N=3)	PERIOD 2 (During) (N=12)	PERIOD 3 (After) (N=9)	TOTAL SAMPLE (N=24)
Local Sports News................160	185	186	182
National Sports News.........377	442	355	401
National and World News.......227*	348	428*	363
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....376	415	399	404
Local School Board News...... 13	19	17	17
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....152	110	110	115
National Opinion Columnists.. 60	76	66	70
Letters to the Editor........ 42	22	22	25
Editorials................... 23	30	23	26
Financial and Business News..308	341	409	362
Food Articles, News, Recipes. 51	49	48	49
Fashion News.................---	22	---	11
Entertainment News...........204	255	251	247
Local Political News......... 22	92	51	68
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........108	141	118	129
TOTAL:	2,123	2,547	2,483	2,469

---Figures are based on column inch measurement; 120 column inches per newspaper page.

"*"Indicates significant mean difference between groups (Periods) at the .05 level.

---No two groups (Periods) are significantly different at the .01 level.

cause an abundance of news coverage for any topic at a given point in time. Such is the case for National and World News in Period Three. However, the fact that there are no significant differences for the other fourteen topic categories

TABLE 4

Period Space Comparison Of Topics In Newspaper-Y.

AVERAGE SPACE PER NEWSPAPER ISSUE

TOPIC	PERIOD 1 (Before) (N=3)	PERIOD 2 (During) (N=12)	PERIOD 3 (After) (N=9)	TOTAL SAMPLE (N=24)
Local Sports News............317	288	195	257
National Sports News.........262	246	257	252
National and World News......230	164*	236*	199
Coverage of Borough/Township			
Meetings and Activities....432	361	367	372
Local School Board News...... 16	22	29	24
Obituaries and Funeral			
News and Announcements.....158	120	113	122
National Opinion Columnists..108	53	60	63
Letters to the Editor........ 29	52	57	51
Editorials................... 14	24	19	21
Financial and Business News..110	107	150	124
Food Articles, News, Recipes.113	61	42	61
Fashion News................. 7	11	4	8
Entertainment News...........209	140	172	161
Local Political News......... 23	90	95	83
Weddings, Engagements, Birth			
and Graduation News........107	140	145	138
TOTAL:	2,135	1,879	1,941	1,936

---Figures are based on column inch measurement; 120 column inches per newspaper page.

"*"Indicates significant mean difference between groups (Periods) at the .05 level.

across the three periods in both newspapers, supports the contention that a newspaper's agenda, when defined as general topic categories, remains consistent over time. Regardless of when one might peruse an issue of a newspaper, he or she would be influenced by the proportion of general news topics in that newspaper, over time.

Therefore, it would appear that the agenda-setting process is likely to be found whether the agenda is defined as broad topic categories or as specific issues. Whether one analyzes newspaper content from one period or another has no bearing on the emphasis or prominence the newspaper consistently grants certain topics over time. Though differences may occur due to the importance of specific events, as is the case with National and World News in this study, generally speaking, the formula the newspaper uses with regard to space devoted to topic areas will remain consistent. As agenda-setting theory posits, one would expect to find a strong correlation between the newspaper's emphasis of certain topics and the public's interest in these topics. It is clear from the results just presented that this relationship should be apparent for broad topic categories, over time.

Since the average space measurements in fourteen of the fifteen categories are not significantly different across the three periods and since the significant difference of space in two of the three periods for National and World News can be explained by an abundance of event-related news coverage in Period Three, there is general support for Hypothesis One. Therefore, it is possible to accumulate the data from the three periods during which content analysis was conducted, to represent the media agenda for the rest of this investigation.

4.2   HYPOTHESIS TWO

This study was conducted to compare two different subgroups of the sample population: Newspaper-X readers and Newspaper-Y readers, with the media agenda of both newspapers. A primary test of the agenda-setting process is to evaluate the relationship between the media and public agendas. If the relationship bears a strong correlation, there is support for the agenda-setting hypothesis.

The second hypothesis of this study takes this test one step further and proposes that there should be a stronger correlation between the media-public agenda relationship of each newspaper and its respective reader subgroup, than between one newspaper and the reader subgroup of the other newspaper. If this hypothesis can be supported, it will provide substantial evidence for the existence of the agenda-setting process. If it is found that a relationship does exist between the media and public agenda generally, there will also be support for the agenda-setting process, albeit at less a conclusive level.

The statistical procedure used to test this hypothesis was Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation. Rank-order correlation coefficients express the extent to which the rank-ordering of one variable is related to another. This investigation intends to compare the rank-ordering of topics according to newspace in the newspapers to the rank-ordering of topics according to the interest ratings of the public.

In order to make this comparison, it was necessary to rank-order the fifteen topics according to the total column inch space they occupied in an average issue of each newspaper. Table 5 provides these results. At the same time, it was necessary to rank-order the same topics according to the mean interest ratings from the survey, for each reader subgroup. Table 6 reveals this information. As can be seen in Table 6, the mean interest ratings were converted to a general "rating" figure, based on a score out of 100, to facilitate comparison between the topic categories.

Preliminary comparisons of the media and public agendas using Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients provided insignificant results at the .05 level. Extreme variation of rank existed for two specific topic categories, the total space and the interest ratings were compared. These topics are Local Sports News and National Sports News.

As can be seen in Table 5, these topics ranked highly in each newspaper; sixth and second respectively in Newspaper-X and second and third respectively in Newspaper-Y. However, as can be seen in Table 6, these topics were ranked extremely low by each reader subgroup; fourteenth and thirteenth respectively by Newspaper-X readers and twelfth and thirteenth respectively by Newspaper-Y readers. This variation was enough to cause the correlation results to be insignificant.

TABLE 5

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To Column Inch Space

	NEWSPAPER-X		NEWSPAPER-Y	
TOPIC	AVERAGE SPACE (N=24)	RANK ORDER (1-15)	AVERAGE SPACE (N=24)	RANK ORDER (1-15)
Local Sports News............182		6	257	2
National Sports News.........401		2	252	3
National and World News......363		3	199	4
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....404		1-E	372	1
Local School Board News...... 17		14	24	13
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....115		8	122	8
National Opinion Columnists.. 70		9	63	10
Letters to the Editor........ 25		13	51	12
Editorials................... 26		12	21	14
Financial and Business News..362		4	124	7
Food Articles, News, Recipes. 49		11	61	11
Fashion News................. 11		15	8	15
Entertainment News...........247		5	161	5
Local Political News......... 68		10	83	9
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........129		7	138	6
TOTAL:	2,469		1,936	

---Figures are based on mean column inch measurement per
   issue; 120 column inches per newspaper page.

The interest ratings of both Local and National Sports
News also were considered problematic in the original market-
ing study.   It is generally recognized by the newspaper
industry that Sports News is rated highly in terms of inter-
est by the public. It was felt that the inherent sample er-
ror of the survey, the oversampling of females, would be
sufficient to cause Sports News to be underrated by the

TABLE 6

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To The Public Interest
Ratings

TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X READERS (N=433)			NEWSPAPER-Y READERS (N=758)		
	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER
Local Sports News................	2.7?--54		14	2.754-55		12
National Sports News............	2.?4--55		13	2.751-55		13
National and World News........	4.?3--83		1	3.93--79		1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....	3.13--63		3	3.27--65		2
Local School Board News........	2.82--56		9	2.90--58		10
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements......	2.94--59		7	3.16--63		4
National Opinion Columnists..	2.76--55		12	2.78--56		11
Letters to the Editor.........	2.79--56		11	3.00--60		9
Editorials.....................	2.85--57		8	3.05--61		7
Financial and Business News..	2.80--56		10	2.46--49		15
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	3.03--61		5	3.03--61		8
Fashion News...................	2.58--52		15	2.49--50		14
Entertainment News............	3.17--63		2	3.13--63		5
Local Political News..........	3.06--61		4	3.12--62		6
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........	3.02--60		6	3.23--65		3

---Mean scores based on a one to five scale with one
    signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying
    "very interested".

---Mean figures are rounded to two decimal places, except
    where there is a "tie". Then, they are rounded to
    three decimal places.

---"Rating" figures are based on the mean scores on a
    scale to 100.

public.   Unfortunately, even after correcting for this sample error,   the results indicate low interest `ratings for both topics.

Another possible explanation for this difference is that Sports News generally is the type of topic that is not subject to the agenda-setting process. Individuals either have a high or low interest in Sports events and activities regardless of how much attention they receive in the media. Perception of the importance of Sports News is based more on interest in Sports than on how much Sports content there is in a newspaper.

Since the topics Local and National Sports News tend to be outlier topic categories, and since there are reasonable arguments for the exclusion of these topics from the study of the agenda-setting process, they will not be used for the remainder of this investigation. Rank-ordering of topics and correlation coefficients in this study have been calculated ignoring both Local and National Sports News.   However, the average interest scores and space measurements will be cited in the Tables to follow, for the reader's interest only.   Where appropriate, the rank-ordering of topics has been adjusted.

Once the topics Local and National Sports News were removed from the study, many of the results became significant at the .05 level.   This is particularly true for the media and public agenda relationships. As can be seen in Table 7,

a high correlation exists between both Media-1 and Public-1 (r=.6429) and Media-2 and Public-2 (r=.5879). Though it is not possible to infer causation in this relationship, these findings provide strong evidence that a similar set of priorities exists among the media and public agendas.

When comparing each newspaper's agenda to the cross-reader subgroup's agenda, the correlation coefficients of these relationships is also high. As Table 7 indicates, the coefficient between Media-1 and Public-2 is .5879. The Media-2 and Public-1 relationship is also strong (r=.7308).

TABLE 7

Relationship Between Media And Public Agendas According To
Total Space

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Media-1 with Public-1...................	13	.6429
Media-1 with Public-2...................	13	.5879
Media-2 with Public-2...................	13	.6868
Media-2 with Public-1...................	13	.7308
Media-1 with Media-2...................	13	.9615
Public-1 with Public-2...................	13	.8407

----All results are significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
    Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda

. Unfortunately, due to the fact that only 13 cases (topic categories) have been used in this analysis, it is difficult to compare coefficients that are so close to one another. The only conclusison that can be made from these findings is____ that there is a strong relationship between the media and public agendas, which is borne out by the strong correlation coefficents in all four media-public agenda relationships.

Perhaps the reason why a more conclusive distinction cannot be made between the similar-agenda and cross-agenda relationships, is because of the high correlations that exist in the media and public relationships themselves. As Table 7 shows, the relationship between both Media-1 and Media-2 and Public-1 and Public-2 is extremely high (correlation coefficients of .9615 and .8407 respectively). There appears to be little difference between the two media and public agendas. Since both media and public agendas are so similar, it is difficult to distinquish between the similar-agenda and cross-agenda relationships.

Therefore, it is not possible to support the original hypothesis; that the agenda of each newspaper will more closely resemble the public agenda of its respective reader subgroup, than the public agenda of the competing newspaper's reader subgroup. However, as these results indicate, there is evidence to support the notion that generally, the agenda-setting process does exist. This is borne out by the high correlation coefficients in all four media-public agenda relationships.

4.3   HYPOTHESIS THREE

The third research hypothesis posits that there should be a strong relationship between the media agenda when the topics are rank-ordered according to various attention devices, and the public agenda: topics rank-ordered by the reader's interest. In any newspaper, there are certain features and devices which give a certain prominence to the information being presented. As pointed out in both the Review of the Literature and the Theoretical Framework (see: Chapters 1.3 and 2), these devices have a lot to do with maintaining readers' interest and preference for specific content in the media.

Subsequently, it is hypothesized that these attention devices, along with the total space of newspaper topics, help to establish the public's agenda. They function as contingent conditions in the agenda-setting process, enhancing the media-to-public transference of news priorities. The attention devices that have been analyzed in this investigation include: Use of Colour, Front Page Content, Headline Space, Headline Prominence and Picture Space.

Unfortunately, there were not enough articles in either newspaper that used colour, to make valid comparisons. Only 61 of a total of 4,834 items coded had either colour headlines or photographs. Since this figure is so small, it is difficult to discuss with any confidence the use of colour in giving certain topics emphasis or prominence.

Content presented on the front page of a newspaper is like a special showcase of the entire publication. Front Page Content represents one of the most important features that a reader evaluates his interest in the rest of the newspaper by. It is hypothesized that there should be a strong correlation between Front Page Content and the reader's interest in these topics.

Table 8 outlines the total space of the topics on the front page of both newspapers, as well as their subsequent rank-ordering. The total space of the sample as well as the average space per issue is provided due to the small average amount of Front Page Content. Several topics did not appear on the front page of either newspaper during the time which content analysis was performed.

Comparing the rank-ordering of topics in Table 8 with Table 6 (rank-ordering of topics according to the reader interest ratings), the correlation coefficients in Table 9 were obtained. Unfortunately, as can be seen in Table 9, all but one of the relationships is not significant at the ..05 level. The only relationship that is significantly correlated is between Newspaper-X Front Page Content agenda and the Newspaper-X media agenda ($r=.6167$). This suggests that there is a similarity between what Newspaper-X displays on its front page and the the content in the rest of the newspaper.

TABLE 8

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To Front Page Content

TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X		NEWSPAPER-Y	
	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-11)	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-8)
Local Sports News..............149/ 6.2		4	270/11.3	3
National Sports News......... 58/ 2.4*		9	137/ 5.7	4
National and World News....1,384/57.7		1	1,040/43.3	1
Coverage of Borough/Township				
Meetings and Activities.... 88/ 3.7		5	9/ .4	8
Local School Board News...... 58/ 2.4*		8	49/ 2.0	7
Obituaries and Funeral				
News and Announcements.....---/----		--	---/----	--
National Opinion Columnists..---/----		--	---/----	--
Letters to the Editor.........---/----		--	---/----	--
Editorials................... 6/ .3		11	---/----	--
Financial and Business News..528/22.0		2	74/ 3.1*	6
Food Articles, News, Recipes.---/----		--	---/----	--
Fashion News................. 73/ 3.0		7	---/----	--
Entertainment News.......... 20/ .8		10	74/ 3.1*	5
Local Political News......... 81/ 3.4		6	---/----	--
Weddings, Engagements, Birth				
and Graduation News........419/17.5		3	310/12.9	2
TOTAL:	2,864/119.1		1,963/81.8	

"*"Indicates "tied" rank. Ranked on basis on average length
of article.

---Figures are based on column inch measurement; 120 column
inches per newspaper page.

However, this reveals nothing about the relationship bet-
ween the media and the public. Since the rest of the re-
sults are not significant, it appears that the attention
device, Front Page Content, has no influence in setting the
public's agenda. .The results indicate that Front Page Con-
tent does not facilitate the agenda-setting process.

TABLE 9

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas According To Front Page Content

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Front-1 with Public-1..................	9	.2000*
Front-1 with Public-2..................	9	.3167*
Front-2 with Public-2..................	6	.3714*
Front-2 with Public-1..................	6	.4857*
Front-1 with Front-2..................	6	.4857*
Front-1 with Media-1..................	9	.6167
Front-1 with Media-2..................	9	.5333*
Front-2 with Media-2..................	6	.0857*
Front-2 with Media-1..................	6	-.0857*

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
    Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
Front-1 = Newspaper-X Front Page Agenda
Front-2 = Newspaper-Y Front Page Agenda

Headlines are another very significant attention device.
Their use in a newspaper can attribute much importance and
prominence to the content presented. Table 10 shows the
breakdown of total Headline Space used by the various top-
ics, for both newspapers. They have been rank-ordered ac-
cordingly. Again, several of the topics' headlines were not
coded. The rationale for this is explained in the Methodol-
ogy (see: Chapter 3).

TABLE 10

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To Total Headline Space

TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X		NEWSPAPER-Y	
	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-12)	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-12)
Local Sports News................281/11.7		6	317/13.2	4
National Sports News.........586/24.4		2	609/25.4	2
National and World News.....1,032/43.0		1	860/35.8	1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities.... 95/ 4.0		8	242/10.1	6
Local School Board News...... 56/ 2.3		10	84/ 3.5	10
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements..... 16/ .7		12	9/ .4	12
National Opinion Columnists..---/----		--	---/----	--
Letters to the Editor........---/----		--	---/----	--
Editorials.................---/----		--	---/----	--
Financial and Business News..435/18.1		3	250/10.4	5
Food Articles, News, Recipes. 79/ 3.3		9	134/ 5.6	9
Fashion News.................191/ .8		11	12/ .5	11
Entertainment News...........289/12.0		5	208/ 8.7	7
Local Political News.........105/ 4.4		7	142/ 5.9.	8
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News.......421/17.5		4	437/18.2	3
TOTAL:	3,414/142.2		3,304/137.7	

---Figures are based on column inch-measurement; 120 column
  inches per newspaper page.

Table 11 presents the relationships between the rank-ord-
ering of topics according to Headline Space (Table 10) and
the rank-ordering of topics according to the public interest
ratings (Table 6). Here again, as with Table 9 (media-publ-
ic relationship according to Front Page Content), there are
no significant relationships at the .05 level between the
Headline Space agendas, topics rank-ordered by headline

space, and the public agendas, topics rank-ordered by reader
interest. The media agenda, when defined in terms of the
total Headline Space of topics, is not related to the public
agenda. There is no support for the claim that total Head-
line Space, as an attention device, contributes to the agen-
da-setting process.

TABLE 11

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas According
To Total Headline Space

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Head-1 with Public-1...................	10	.4788*
Head-1 with Public-2...................	10	.2848*
Head-2 with Public-2...................	10	.4545*
Head-2 with Public-1...................	10	.5152*
Head-1 with Head-2....................	10	.9515
Head-1 with Media-1...................	10	.6727
Head-1 with Media-2...................	10	.6364
Head-2 with Media-2...................	10	.7455
Head-2 with Media-1...................	10	.7576
Head-1 with Front-1..................	8	.7143
Head-1 with Front-2..................	6	.7714
Head-2 with Front-2..................	6	.7143*
Head-2 with Front-1..................	8	.8095

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
    Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
Front-1 = Newspaper-X Front Page Agenda
Front-2 = Newspaper-Y Front Page Agenda
Head-1 = Newspaper-X Headline Space Agenda
Head-2 = Newspaper-Y Headline Space Agenda

Surprisingly, as the results in Table 11 indicate, there exist strong relationships between the rank-ordering of topics according to total Headline Space and both newspapers' media agendas, based on total space (r range=.6364 to .7576). As well, there appear to be strong correlations between most of the Headline Space and Front Page Content agenda relationships (r range=.7143 to .8095). This is interesting due to the fact that a strong correlation exists between the media agendas and public agendas (see Table 7), yet no significant relationships exist between the Headline Space or Front Page Content agendas and the public agendas.

Unfortunately, the use of a maximum of only 13 cases in the rank-ordering comparisons may indeed cause certain relationships that might have been significant, to not be significant. If more "cases" or topic categories were used in this investigation, it is probable that more results would be significant, and that more distinctions regarding the primary hypothesis: differences between similar and cross-agenda relationships, could have been made.

As pointed out by Winter and Eyal (1981), this problem appears to be generic in most agenda-setting studies. The fewer cases that are used requires a very high correlation coefficient to obtain statistically significant results. Perhaps it is time that agenda-setting research began to concentrate on improving its methodology, to increase its sample size in order to increase statistical significance.

However, the limitations of this study did not permit more extensive analysis of newspaper content and the public agenda.

The results from this study must be reported consistently, albeit with qualified explanation for not getting the findings that were expected. Therefore, in terms of the role Headline Space plays as an attention device, there is no support for the claim that it facilitates the agenda-setting process. It is interesting to note that the Headline Space agenda of both newspapers is highly correlated (r=.9515). This seems to indicate further the strong similarity between the media agendas of both newspapers.

The Headline Prominence Rating is another device that can also be used to assess the ability of headlines in a newspaper to attract readers' attention. This rating was part of the newspaper coder's assessment of the strength and emphasis of a given headline on a particular page (see: Appendix B). Each headline of an article was rated as being either: "Strongest", "Medium-Strength" or "Weakest" for its relative strength on a given page. Only one "Strongest" and one "Weakest" rating could be given on each page of the newspaper, though one of these ratings did not have to necessarily be given.

Therefore, comparing the breakdown of topics with the "Strongest" headline rating will reveal which topics received more emphasis than others, in an average page of the

newspaper. For this procedure, it is necessary to change temporarily the unit of analysis back to the one used in the original study; the individual article. This makes it possible to compare the topics on the basis of the number of articles with the "Strongest" headline rating. These results are apparent in Table 12 .

As was the case with the Headline Space comparison (see: Table 10), not all the topics were coded for the appearance of a headline. As well, not all topic categories, for example Obituaries and Funeral News and Annoucements in Newspaper-X, had an article with a headline rated as "Strongest". However, for those topics with headlines rated as "Strongest", Table 12 reveals the numeric and percentage breakdown, as well as the rank-ordering of topics, according to Headline Prominence for each newspaper.

Table 13 provides the correlation coefficients for the various relationships between the public and media agendas, when the topics are rank-ordered according to Headline Prominence. The relationship between Newspaper-X's Headline Prominence agenda and its respective reader subgroup's agenda is strong and significant at the .05 level (r=.6000). However, this same relationship for Newspaper-Y's agendas is not significant.

There is also a very strong correlation that exists between both newspaper's Headline Prominence agendas (r=.9000). As well, all the relationships between the media agendas

TABLE 12

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To Articles With STRONGEST Headline Prominence Ratings

TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X		NEWSPAPER-Y	
	TOTAL ARTICLES (N=342)	RANK ORDER (1-11)	TOTAL ARTICLES (N=603)	RANK ORDER (1-12)
Local Sports News...............	22--- 6%	6	64---11%	4
National Sports News...........	56---16	2	114---19	2
National and World News........	113---33	1	128---21	1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....	11--- 3*	7	39--- 7	7
Local School Board News.......	3--- 1	11	17--- 3	10
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....	-- --	--	5--- 1	11
National Opinion Columnists..	-- --	--	-- --	--
Letters to the Editor........	-- --	--	-- --	--
Editorials...................	-- --	--	-- --	--
Financial and Business News..	37---11	4	56--- 9	5
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	11--- 3*	8	23--- 4	9*
Fashion News.................	4--- 1	10	1--- -	12
Entertainment News...........	44---13	3	52--- 9	6
Local Political News.........	10--- 3	9	23--- 4	8*
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........	31---10	5	81---13	3
TOTAL:	342--100%		603--101% **	

---Figures are based on the number of Headlines rated as
  "3-Strongest" for the Headline Prominence Score.

"*"Indicates tie. Ranking based on number of articles
  with "2-Medium Strength" rating score.

"**"Does not equal 100 due to rounding.

(based on total space, see: Table 5) and the Headline Promi-
nence agendas are strongly correlated and significant at the
.05 level (r range=.7697 to .8833). This indicates a high
degree of similarity between the total space of topics and
the emphasis they receive from prominent headlines.

TABLE 13

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas According To The Headline Prominence Ratings

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Prom-1 with Public-1......................	9	.6000
Prom-1 with Public-2......................	9	.5167*
Prom-2 with Public-2......................	10	.4788*
Prom-2 with Public-1......................	10	.5636
Prom-1 with Prom-2........................	9	.9000
Prom-1 with Media-1......................	9	.7833
Prom-1 with Media-2......................	9	.7833
Prom-2 with Media-2......................	10	.7697
Prom-2 with Media-1......................	10	.7697
Prom-1 with Front-1......................	8	.5000*
Prom-1 with Front-2......................	6	.7714
Prom-1 with Head-1.......................	9	.8833
Prom-1 with Head-2.......................	9	.8500
Prom-2 with Front-2......................	6	.8857
Prom-2 with Front-1......................	8	.7143
Prom-2 with Head-2.......................	10	.9758
Prom-2 with Head-1.......................	10	.9636

---Headline Prominence Rank-Order based on the number
   of Headlines rated as "3-Strongest" for the
   Headline Prominence Score.

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
   Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
Front-1 = Newspaper-X Front Page Agenda
Front-2 = Newspaper-Y Front Page Agenda
Head-1 = Newspaper-X Headline Space Agenda
Head-2 = Newspaper-Y Headline Space Agenda
Prom-1 = Newspaper-X Headline Prominence Rating Agenda
Prom-2 = Newspaper-Y Headline Prominence Rating Agenda

An interesting serendipitous finding is the strong and significant correlations that exist between topics rank-ordered according to the Headline Prominence Rating and topics rank-ordered by the other attention devices; Front Page Content and Headline Space (r range=.7143 to .9636). The only relationship among the attention devices that is not significant at the .05 level is between Newspaper-X's Headline Prominence agenda and its Front Page Content agenda. Overall, these findings indicate that when a given topic is granted prominence, it is emphasized equally by the various attention devices.

These results combined with the similarity between the media agendas and the Headline Prominence agendas suggest that there is a great deal of consistency in terms of those topics emphasized in the media. Whether or not the media-to-public agenda transference is taking place, the media are indeed setting priorities consistently.

In terms of the attention given to topics via the use of prominent headlines, and this agendas subsequent transference to the public, the results provide partial support. This relationship in one of the two newspapers is strongly correlated and significant. Though the relationship between the public and Headline Prominence agendas in Newspaper-Y is not significant, this relationship in Newspaper-X is strongly correlated. Therefore, it is possible to support the notion that prominent headlines facilitate the agenda-setting process.

The final attention device evaluated in this investigation is Picture Space. Pictures in a newspaper have an obvious ability to emphasize content. Their use gives certain topics prominence over others, and establishes a set of priorities which is subsequently picked up by the reader. Table 14 provides a breakdown of the Picture Space for the various topics in both newspapers, as well as the rank-ordering of the topics according to the use of this attention device.

Table 15 provides the results of the correlations that exist among the various relationships. The Picture Space agenda and public agenda relationships are similar to what was found for the Headline Prominence-public agenda comparisons (see: Table 12). A moderately-strong correlation exists between the rank-ordering of topics according to Picture Space and the public's interest ratings in Newspaper-X ($r=.5879$). However, there is not a significant relationship between the same agendas in Newspaper-Y. Again, this appears to indicate partial support for the hypothesis. Attention devices used in the media facilitate the transference of agendas, and aid the agenda-setting process..

As can be seen by the rest of the results in Table 14, there is a strong difference between the relationships in Newspaper-X and the relationships in Newspaper-Y. Most of the comparisons using the rank-ordering of Picture Space from Newspaper-X are significant (r range=.7939 to .8667),

TABLE 14

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To Total Picture Space

TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X		NEWSPAPER-Y	
	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-12)	TOTAL/AV. SPACE (N=1/24)	RANK ORDER (1-12)
Local Sports News............	1,480/ 61.7	3	1,148/ 47.9	2
National Sports News........	1,807/ 75.3	2	811/ 33.8	3
National and World News....	1,262/ 52.6	4	460/ 19.2	7
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities..	2,803/116.8	1	2,400/100.0	1
Local School Board News......	64/ 2.7	11	93/ 3.9	11
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements......	38/ 1.6	12	19/ .8	12
National Opinion Columnists..	---/-----	--	---/-----	--
Letters to the Editor........	---/-----	--	---/-----	--
Editorials...................	---/-----	--	---/-----	--
Financial and Business News..	772/ 32.2	5	419/ 17.5	8
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	280/ 11.7	9	505/ 21.0	6
Fashion News.................	110/ 4.6	10	98/ 4.1	10
Entertainment News..........	685/ 28.5	6	546/ 22.8	5
Local Political News........	431/ 18.0	8	710/ 29.6	4
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News......	459/ 19.1	7	275/ 11.4	9
TOTAL:	10,191/424.8		7,484/312.0	

---Figures are based on column inch measurement; 120 column inches per newspaper page.

whereas the opposite is true for these relationships in Newspaper-Y. This seems to indicate that in general, Newspaper-X is more consistent in prioritizing its content. Most of its media agendas, rank-ordered according to total space and the attention devices, are strongly related in Newspaper-X. The opposite is the case for the relationships in Newpaper-Y.

TABLE 15

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas According
To Total Picture Space

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Pix-1 with Public-1.....................	10	.5879
Pix-1 with Public-2.....................	10	.4303*
Pix-2 with Public-2.....................	10	.2970*
Pix-2 with Public-1.....................	10	.6970
Pix-1 with Pix-2.......................	10	.7091
Pix-1 with Media-1.....................	10	.8667
Pix-1 with Media-2.....................	10	.8303
Pix-2 with Media-2.....................	10	.5152*
Pix-2 with Media-1.....................	10	.4909*
Pix-1 with Front-1.....................	8	.5952*
Pix-1 with Front-2.....................	6	-.0857*
Pix-1 with Head-1.....................	10	.7939
Pix-1 with Head-2.....................	10	.8667
Pix-1 with Prom-1.....................	9	.8000
Pix-1 with Prom-2.....................	10	.8061
Pix-2 with Front-2.....................	6	-.1429*
Pix-2 with Front-1.....................	8	.1429*
Pix-2 with Head-2.....................	10	.4545*
Pix-2 with Head-1.....................	10	.4303*
Pix-2 with Prom-2.....................	10	.4061*
Pix-2 with Prom-1.....................	9	.3333*

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
Front-1 = Newspaper-X Front Page Agenda
Front-2 = Newspaper-Y Front Page Agenda
Head-1 = Newspaper-X Headline Space Agenda
Head-2 = Newspaper-Y Headline Space Agenda
Prom-1 = Newspaper-X Headline Prominence Rating Agenda
Prom-2 = Newspaper-Y Headline Prominence Rating Agenda
Pix-1   = Newspaper-X Picture Space Agenda
Pix-2   = Newspaper-Y Picture Space Agenda

In sum, there appears to exist qualified support for the premise of Hypothesis Three. For some of the attention devices such as Headline Prominence and Picture Space, there is some evidence of a strong relationship existing between the media and public agendas. However, for Front Page and Headline Space prominence indicators, most relationships are weak, albeit not even significant at the .05 level.

Attention devices are a measure of how the media prioritize their content. To some degree, in some instances, the public appears to establish a similar set of weights as do the media regarding the importance of topics.

In general, the results seem to indicate concurrence with Budd's (1964) contention, that there exists a high correlation between the use of attention devices and the media agenda measured by total space. Though this investigation does not have an adequate case number nor the relevant data to go beyond this assertion, the notion that attention devices do enhance the agenda-setting process can be partially supported.

4.4 HYPOTHESIS FOUR

Hypothesis Four asserts that one should find a definite emphasis on National and World News as opposed to Local News in the media agenda. Subsequently, the public will react to these cues and rank their interest in National and World News the highest.

The contention is not that there will be more space in a newspaper devoted to this topic. This argument has been refuted many times in prior research. Essentially, newspapers serve a local audience and are innundated with local content. What Hypothesis Four posits is that since the media are the public's only source of National and World News, the newspapers will draw attention to news and events concerning this topic, by the use of attention devices. Since the public relies on the media for information outside their immediate environment, they will be prone to the influence of the media and regard National and World News as very important. Stronger interest ratings by the public for this topic as opposed to local news topics should bear this out.

Table 16 shows the breakdown of attention devices used for both National-World News and Local News in Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y. In all cases except for Headline Prominence, T-tests were performed to compare the difference of means between the two groups. Chi-square was used to compare the differences in the number of articles rated "Strongest" in the Headline Prominence rating between the two groups. As the results indicate, all differences are significant at the .05 level of significance.

The results for Newspaper-X tend to support the hypothesis. For three of the four attention devices, there are more used for National and World News as opposed to Local News. These include Front Page Content (75 versus 36 column

TABLE 16

Comparison Of National-World And Local News Topics: Attention Device Breakdown From The Media Agendas

ATTENTION DEVICE	NATIONAL-WORLD NEWS	LOCAL NEWS
NEWSPAPER-X		
Front Page Content.........79		36
Headline Space..............66		41
Picture Space...............91		198
** Headline Prominence........173		86
NEWSPAPER-Y		
Front Page Content.........46		19
Headline Space..............43		56
Picture Space...............28		200
** Headline Prominence........167		235

---All figures except for Headline Prominence (see "**") based on mean column inch space measurements, of 13 topic categories (excluding National and Local Sports).

---Number of cases in all comparisons except for Headline Prominence (See "**") is 24.

---All differences between groups (National-World and Local News) are significant at the .05 level.

"**"Headline Prominence based on the number of articles rated as "3-Strongest" for the Headline Prominence rating.

inches), Headline Space (66 versus 41 column inches), and Headline Prominence (173 versus 86 articles rated as "Strongest"). The only attention device that is used more for Local News is Picture Space (198 versus 91 column inches). This is understandable due to the difficulties and expense involved in procuring pictures from national wire services. It is much easier to garnish one's newspaper with

local photographs.   Considering that Picture Space is the only outlier, there is indeed support for the assertion that the media emphasizes National and World News, in the case of Newspaper-X.

However, the results of this breakdown for Newspaper-Y are quite different.   Only one of the attention devices, Front Page Content, favours National and World News as opposed to Local News (46   versus 19 column inches respectively). All other attention devices: Headline Space (56 versus 43 column inches), Picture Space (200 versus 28 column inches), and Headline Prominence (235 versus 167 articles rated as "Strongest") are used more for Local News.   This appears to indicate that Newspaper-Y tends to focus its attention on local news and events as opposed to national and world news and events.   These results contradict the hypothesis.

It is not so surprising that one of the newspapers emphasizes National and World News and the other does not.   Much research has been conducted in competitive newspaper markets that suggests that polarization of these two types of news is likely to occur (see 1.3:   Review of the Literature). One newspaper is likely to be a "National-oriented" publication while the other becomes a "Local-oriented" tabloid. This seems to be the case regarding Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y.   In order to support or nullify the test of this hypothesis, it is necessary to go on to the next step of analysis; to compare the public's interest ratings of national versus local topics.

This next step involves the comparison of the mean interest rating from the reader subgroups, of National and World News, to several extensively local topic categories. T-tests were performed to ascertain significant differences existed between the mean scores of the seven comparisons. As Table 17 indicates, all the mean comparisons between National and World News and the local topics are significantly different at the .05 level.

As can be seen in Table 17, for both reader subgroups, National and World News was ranked the highest (mean rating: Newspaper-X reader subgroup=4.13, Newspaper-Y reader subgroup=3.93). For Newspaper-X, the local topic mean interest ratings range from 2.82 for Local School Board News to 3.13 for Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities. In Newspaper-Y, the local topic mean interest ratings range from 2.90 for Local School Board News, to 3.27 for Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities. All local mean interest ratings for the local topics are significantly less than those for National and World News (Newspaper-X= 4.13, Newspaper-Y= 3.93). This appears to support the contention that the public is most interested in National and World News as opposed to local news topics.

One might argue that the high interest rating given to National and World News is due to the social desirability of being concerned with this topic area, by the public. However, the consistency of a high interest rating for this topic

TABLE 17

Comparison Of National-World And Local News Topics: Interest Rating Breakdown From The Public Agendas

LOCAL TOPIC	NEWSPAPER-X (N=433) MEAN RATING	NATIONAL-WORLD NEWS MEAN RATING
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities......	3.13	4.13
Local School Board News......	2.82	4.13
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements......	2.94	4.13
Letters to the Editor......	2.79	4.13
Editorials......	2.85	4.13
Local Political News......	3.06	4.13
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News......	3.02	4.13

	NEWSPAPER-Y (N=759)	
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities......	3.27	3.93
Local School Board News......	2.90	3.93
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements......	3.16	3.93
Letters to the Editor......	3.00	3.93
Editorials......	3.05	3.93
Local Political News......	3.12	3.93
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News......	3.23	3.93

---T-test procedure was performed on all groups (Local versus National and World News).

---All groups (Local versus National and World News) are significantly different at the .05 level.

by the reader subgroups of both newspapers, seems to reject this notion. The public does appear to be genuinely more interested in National and World News as opposed to local news and information from the media.

The results indicate, in the case of Newspaper-X, that the prominence given National and World News is being passed on to the public. However, in the case of Newspaper-Y, the public's interest is strongest for National and World News, contrary to the newspaper's emphasis of local news topics. Perhaps this latter anomaly can be explained by the fact that regardless of the emphasis given to this topic, the public is still dependent on the media for information outside their immediate environment; the "world outside and the pictures inside their heads". Since there is some evidence that the newspaper media emphasize national and world content, and there is conclusive evidence that the public is most interested in this content, the assertion of this hypothesis can be supported. The obtrusiveness and geographic proximity of a topic are contingent conditions of the agenda-setting process.

4.5   HYPOTHESIS FIVE

The contention of Hypothesis Five is that the frequency of newspaper readership is a contingent condition in the agenda-setting process. It is proposed that people who read the newspapers more frequently, will be more exposed to the media's set of priorities. Therefore, these individuals will have an agenda more closely resembling the media agenda than less-frequent readers.

In order to make this comparison it was necessary to distinguish between frequent and less-frequent readers. A method of doing this that is practised in much survey research is to use the mean of readership as the criterion that distinguishes the two groups. This was deemed to be an appropriate measure for the current investigation.

Readership in this study was measured on a scale of one to six. As can be seen in Tables 18 and 19 (the rank-ordering of topics by frequent and less-frequent readers in Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y), the mean of readership is 5.5 and 5.7 respectively.

This is an extremely high mean. As the number of cases indicates, there are not many individuals or much variation within the less-frequent reader category. The majority of readers of both newspapers, 368 compared to 65 of Newspaper-X readers, and 666 compared to 92 of Newspaper-Y readers, read their newspaper six days of the week. Still, these differences do allow the comparison of those individuals who are constantly exposed to the media to those who are less exposed to the media, albeit with not a great deal of difference between the two categories.

Table 20 shows the correlation coefficients among the various relationships when the readers are divided into frequent and less-frequent categories. As the results indicate, a strong correlation exists between frequent readers of Newspaper-X and its media agenda (r=.7473). The rela-

TABLE 18

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To The Public Interest
Ratings--Frequent Versus Less-Frequent Readers

NEWSPAPER-X READERS

TOPIC	FREQUENT (6/Week) (N=368)		LESS-FREQUENT (1-5/Week) (N=65)	
	MEAN RAT-ING	RANK ORDER	MEAN RAT-ING	RANK ORDER
Local Sports News.............2.78--56		14	2.18--44	12
National Sports News..........2.82--56		13	2.30--46	8
National and World News.......4.20--84		1	3.72--74	1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....3.20--64		2	2.71--54	4
Local School Board News......2.905-58		10	2.33--47	7
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....3.085-62		6	2.08--42	15
National Opinion Columnists..2.85--57		12	2.21--44	10
Letters to the Editor........2.89--58		11	2.25--45	9
Editorials...................2.97--59		8	2.10--42	14
Financial and Business News..2.914-58		9	2.12--42	13
Food Articles, News, Recipes.3.08--62		7	2.77--55	3
Fashion News.................2.65--53		15	2.20--44	11
Entertainment News...........3.19--64		3	3.10--62	2
Local Political News.........3.13--63		4	2.64--53	5
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........3.087-62		5	2.62--52	6

---Mean of newspapers read per week = 5.5.

---Mean scores based on a one to five scale with one
   signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying
   "very interested".

---Mean figures are rounded to two decimal places, except
   where there is a "tie". Then, they are rounded to
   three decimal places.

---"Rating" figures are based on the mean scores on a
   scale to 100.

TABLE 19

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To The Public Interest Ratings--Frequent Versus Less-Frequent Readers

NEWSPAPER-Y READERS

TOPIC	FREQUENT (6/Week) (N=666)			LESS-FREQUENT (1-5/Week) (N=92)		
	RAT-ING MEAN		RANK ORDER	RAT-ING MEAN		RANK ORDER
Local Sports News................	2.75--55		13	2.77--55		5
National Sports News...........	2.76--55		12	2.69--54		6
National and World News.......	3.96--79		1	3.68--74		1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....	3.33--67		2	2.90--58		3
Local School Board News.......	2.96--59		10	2.48--50		11
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....	3.28--66		4	2.26--45		14
National Opinion Columnists..	2.84--57		11	2.39--48		12
Letters to the Editor.........	3.07--61		9	2.52--50		9
Editorials....................	3.12--62		7	2.49--50		10
Financial and Business News..	2.48--50		15	2.30--46		13
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	3.08--62		8	2.68--54		7
Fashion News..................	2.56--51		14	1.97--39		15
Entertainment News...........	3.13--63		6	3.12--62		2
Local Political News.........	3.20--64		5	2.60--52		8
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........	3.29--66		3	2.79--56		4

---Mean of newspapers read per week = 5.7.

---Mean scores based on a one to five scale with one signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying "very interested".

---Mean figures are rounded to two decimal places, except where there is a "tie". Then, they are rounded to three decimal places.

---"Rating" figures are based on the mean scores on a scale to 100.

tionship between less-frequent readers of _Newspaper-X_ and its media agenda is not even significant. These results appear to support the hypothesis that differences exist between these two subgroups.

However, both the frequent and less-frequent reader categories of _Newspaper-Y_ are significantly correlated to its media agenda (r=.6648 and .6484 respectively). When level of readership is used to distinguish _Newspaper-Y_ readers, there appears to be no difference in how they are influenced by the newspaper media.

The agendas of both reader subgroup categories are strongly related to the media agenda. This is also borne out by the fact that a strong correlation exists between frequent and less-frequent readers of _Newspaper-Y_ (r=.7143). This also exists for the two reader subgroups of _Newspaper-X_ (r=.6484). However, the fact that there is a strong relationship between frequent readers of _Newspaper-X_ and its media agenda provides partial support for this hypothesis. The notion that level of readership increases the media-to-public agenda transference, can be supported.

The cross-agenda relationships also are significantly correlated. The correlation coefficients range from .5330 for the frequent readers of _Newspaper-X_ agenda with the media agenda of _Newspaper-Y_, to r=.8187 for the less-frequent readers of _Newspaper-X_ agenda with the media agenda of _Newspaper-Y_. In all cases the relationships among the media

TABLE 20

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas: Frequent Versus Less-Frequent Readers

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
Freq-1 with Media-1................13	13	.7473
LessFreq-1 with Media-1.............13	13	.3846*
Freq-1 with Media-2................13	13	.8187
LessFreq-1 with Media-2.............13	13	.5330
Freq-1 with LessFreq-1.............13	13	.6484
Freq-2 with Media-2................13	13	.6648
LessFreq-2 with Media-2.............13	13	.6484
Freq-2 with Media-1................13	13	.5659
LessFreq-2 with Media-1.............13	13	.5385
Freq-2 with LessFreq-2.............13	13	.7143
Freq-1 with Freq-2................13	13	.8846
LessFreq-1 with LessFreq-2..........13	13	.8846
Freq-1 with LessFreq-2.............13	13	.8022
LessFreq-1 with Freq-2.............13	13	.5000
Freq-1 with Public-1...............13	13	.9725
LessFreq-1 with Public-1............13	13	.7527
Freq-1 with Public-2...............13	13	.8901
LessFreq-1 with Public-2............13	13	.5165
Freq-2 with Public-2...............13	13	.9945
LessFreq-2 with Public-2............13	13	.7363
Freq-2 with Public-1...............13	13	.8297
LessFreq-2 with Public-1............13	13	.8516

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
Freq-1 = Newspaper-X Frequent Readers Agenda
Freq-2 = Newspaper-Y Frequent Readers Agenda
LessFreq-1=Newspaper-X Less-Frequent Readers Agenda
LessFreq-2=Newspaper-Y Less-Frequent Readers Agenda

agenda of _Newspaper-Y_ with the public agendas of _Newspaper-X_ is stronger than the opposite cross-agenda relationships.

The significant results of the other relationships seems to suggest that there is not a great deal of difference among all the reader subgroup agendas (r range=.5000 to .9945).

Again, as is the case with most of the findings in this investigation, there are not enough cases (topic categories) to accurately compare and distinguish the various reader and media agendas. However, the results show partial support for Hypothesis Five. The differences between frequent and less-frequent readers' agenda with the media agenda of _News-paper-X_, supports the idea that the level of readership enhances the agenda-setting process. However, there were no differences found in the same relationships for _Newspaper-Y_. Therefore, it is only possible to offer qualified support for the amount of readership being a contingent condition in the agenda-setting process. Much more research, particularly with improved methodological practises, must be done before this contention can be conclusively supported.

4.6   HYPOTHESIS SIX

The premise of Hypothesis Six is that a person's socioeconomic disposition will account for his or her interest in the newspaper agenda. It is hypothesized that the older, more educated and wealthier one is, the more one will be in-

terested in media content. In other words, demographic variables will help to explain the level of interest in newspaper topics.

To test this hypothesis, a statistical procedure known as Multiple Regression was used. The use of this procedure is appropriate when testing the relationship between a continuous level dependent variable with several continuous level independent variables. In the case of this investigation, the accumulative public interest ratings from all the reader subgroups, are the dependent variables. As previously mentioned, the fifteen topic categories were measured on a scale of one to five in the survey, with one signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying "very interested".

The demographic variables; Age (18 to 82 scale), Education (1 to 6 scale) and Occupation (1 to 7 scale) are the independent variables. Multiple Regression procedures provides statistical measures of how accurately the independent variables predict the dependent variables, the interest ratings. It also expresses how much of the variation in the interest ratings is accounted for by the joint influences of Age, Education and Occupation.

Two important measures that will be provided in the results to follow include the "R-square" and the "F-value". The R-square refers to the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable(s). The F-value is a measure of the statistical signi-

ficance and relative strength of the relationship. These measures will be used to ascertain whether relationships exist between the demographic variables and the interest ratings.

A variation of Multiple Regression known as Stepwise Multiple Regression was perfcrmed to see how much the three demographic variables together account for the variation of the interest ratings. Stepwise Multiple Regression takes each of the independent variables separately (Age, Education and Occupation), and enters them into a linear equation with the dependent variable (interest ratings of the topics). The independent variables are entered into the equation on the basis of the strength of their relationship with the dependent variable. In other words, each of the three independent variables is entered in such an order as to obtain the best explanation for the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 21 provides the results to this procedure. This includes the total R-square, or proportion of variance explained by whatever combination of the three demographic variables contribute to an overall significant relationship. It also includes the F-value of each of the demographic variables, or there relative contribution to the entire linear equation.

As can be seen in Table 21, great differences exist in how much the demographic variables together, explain the in-

TABLE 21

The Degree To Which The Combination Of ---AGE, EDUCATION And OCCUPATION--- Predicts The Public's Interest Ratings Of Newspaper Topics

TOPIC	TOTAL R-SQ.	TOTAL	AGE	EDUC	OCCUP
		(------F-VALUES-------)			
Local Sports News............	.013	3.09	-1.03*	6.68	-0.52*
National Sports News.........	.023	5.47	-1.80*	11.77	-0.81*
National and World News.....	.048	11.64	20.60	15.35	0.96*
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities..	.009	3.21	4.78	-0.61*	----
Local School Board News.....	.005	3.67	----	----	-3.67*
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements...	.126	33.54	70.36	-12.67*	1.23*
National Opinion Columnists	.000	0.40*	0.40*	----	----
Letters to the Editor.......	.002	1.49*	1.49*	----	----
Editorials..................	.022	5.14	14.56	0.02*	-0.27*
Financial and Business News	.028	6.59	0.01*	12.91	1.36*
Food Articles, News, Recipes	.015	3.57	1.47*	-4.88	-0.64*
Fashion News...............	.012	2.69	-0.32*	-1.37*	-4.17
Entertainment News.........	.053	13.08	-34.75	0.41*	-1.45*
Local Political News.......	.009	3.04	3.18*	----	3.12*
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News......	.017	3.99	-0.00*	-8.38	-0.49*

---"N" ranges from 701 -- 703 cases.

"-"Indicates an inverse relationship.

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"TOTAL R-SQ."-Refers to the proportion of variance explained by Age, Education and Occupation.

terest ratings of the various topics. It is apparent from the results that only one or two of the demographic varia- bles have a significant relationship with the interest rat- ings. In most cases, the linear equation that is used to predict the interest ratings only has one or two demographic characteristics that are significant at the .05 level.

For example, the highest proportion of variance in the interest ratings explained by the demographics is for the topic Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements (R-square=12.6). In this equation, Age is the only significant variable (F-value=70.36) to explain changes in the interest rating of this topic. Both Education and Occupation are not significant at the .05 level. This indicates that the older one is, the more interested he or she will be in this topic area. Age explains 13 percent of the variance in the interest ratings for Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.

Independently, Age also explains over five percent of the variance of interest in Entertainment News, two percent of the variance of interest in Editorials, and one percent of the variance of interest in Coverage of Borough and Township Meetings and Activities. For all these relationships, except for Entertainment News, the direction of the relationships are positive. For Entertainment News, the results indicate that the older one is, the less likely he or she is interested in this topic.

Independently, Education appears to influence interest in three of the topic categories. It alone explains three percent of the variance of interest in Financial and Business News, two percent of the variance of interest in Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News, and two percent of the variance of interest in Food Articles, News and Recipes.

These two latter relationships are both in an inverse direction. In other words, the more educated one is, the less interested he or she is in these topics.

Occupation by itself only explains the variance of interest in one of the topics, Fashion News. The R-square of .012 indicates that Occupation accounts for just over one percent of the variance of interest in this topic. The relationship is in an inverse direction suggesting that the better one's economic disposition, the less likely one is to be interested in Fashion News.

The only case where more than one demographic variable explains the variance of interest in a topic is for National and World News. Both Age and Education together explain five percent of the variance of interest in this topic (R-square=.048). The results indicate that Age, moreso than Education, strongly explains the variance cf interest in this topic (F-value=20.08 and 15.35, respectively). The relationship is positive, implying that the older and more educated one is, the more interested one is in National and World News.

In sum, there appears to be some evidence to support the notion that one's demographic disposition helps to explain interest in newspaper content. The total R-square ranges from less than one percent for Coverage of Borough and Township Meetings and Activities to over 13 percent for Obituaries and Funeral Announcements.

However, most of these relationships consist of one sig-
nificant demographic predictor. There is only one relation-
ship where more than one demographic variable explains the
variance of interest in a topic. This is the case for Na-
tional and World News. Both Age and Education predict in-
terest in this topic. Together; Age, Education and Occupa-
tion do not appear to explain much of the variance that
exists in the interest ratings of the topics.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that the demographic va-
riables by themselves, significantly predict the variance of
interest in many of the topics. Age appears to be the
strongest predictor of interest in the topic categories.
Therefore, the results provide partial support for the hy-
pothesis that socio-economic status helps to determine in-
terest in newspaper content. To some extent, demographic
variables appear to be contingent conditions in the agenda-
setting process.

4.7   HYPOTHESIS SEVEN

The central premise of Hypothesis Seven is that individuals
who claim to rely on the newspaper as opposed to television
for National and International News, are more likely to have
a set of news priorities more akin to the newspaper medium.
In other words, individuals who are more dependent on one
medium as opposed to the other for specific content, are
more likely to accept the agenda of that medium, and be more

prone to the agenda-setting influence. If the findings in this investigation support this hypothesis, there will exist substantial support for the notion that the medium used is a contingent condition in the agenda-setting process.

. As can be seen in Tables 22 and 23, the reader subgroups of Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y respectively, have been broken down into two groups; those who rely on television versus newspapers for National and International News. The mean interest ratings and subsequent ranking of the topics are provided for each of the two subgroups for each newspaper's readers.

Unfortunately, the number of individuals who comprise the "Newspaper" category for both newspaper reader subgroups is very small. There are only 99 as opposed to 315 Newspaper-X readers who claim to rely on the newspaper for National and International News. Only 27 as opposed to 582 Newspaper-Y readers claim to rely on the newspaper for National and International News. A surprisingly large majority of the newspaper readers do indeed depend on television for National and International News.

As can be seen in Table 24, which shows the relationships among the various subgroup agendas, there is no great difference between the "Newspaper" and "Television" reader subgroup agendas for both newspapers (Newspaper-X r=.5750, Newspaper-Y r=.5110). As well, all of the public subgroup agendas are correlated with their respective media agendas

TABLE 22

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To The Public Interest Ratings—Television Versus Newspapers As The Main Source Of National And International News

NEWSPAPER-X READERS

TOPIC	TELEVISION (N=315)			NEWSPAPERS (N=99)		
	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER
Local Sports News................	2.724	-55	11	2.68	--54	15
National Sports News...........	2.76	--55	9	2.69	--54	14
National and World News.......	4.09	--82	1	4.20	--84	1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....	3.08	--62	4	3.40	--68	2
Local School Board News.......	2.79	--56	8	3.08	--62	9
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements.....	2.98	--60	7	3.04	--61	11
National Opinion Columnists..	2.64	--53	13	3.09	--62	8
Letters to the Editor.........	2.717	-54	12	3.06	--61	10
Editorials....................	2.73	--55	10	3.228	-65	6
Financial and Business News..	2.68	--54	14	3.13	--63	7
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	3.02	--60	5	3.235	-65	5
Fashion News..................	2.59	--52	15	2.77	--55	13
Entertainment News...........	3.18	--64	2	3.26	--65	4
Local Political News..........	3.00	--60	6	3.33	--67	3
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........	3.10	--62	3	2.91	--58	12

---Mean scores based on a one to five scale with one signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying "very interested".

---Mean figures are rounded to two decimal places, except where there is a "tie". Then, they are rounded to three decimal places.

---"Rating" figures are based on the mean scores on a scale to 100.

TABLE 23

Rank-Ordering Of Topics According To The Public Interest
Ratings--Television Versus Newspapers As The Main Source Of
National And International News

NEWSPAPER-Y READERS

TOPIC	TELEVISION (N=582)			NEWSPAPERS (N=27)		
	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER	MEAN	RAT-ING	RANK ORDER
Local Sports News................	2.79--56		11	2.70--54		13
National Sports News.............	2.758-55		13	3.02--60		5
National and World News..........	3.91--78		1	4.16--83		1
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities....	3.31--66		2	3.25--65		2
Local School Board News.........	2.91--58		10	2.90--58		7
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements......	3.21--64		4	2.44--49		14
National Opinion Columnists..	2.760-55		12	2.73--55		12
Letters to the Editor.........	2.97--59		9	2.98--60		6
Editorials....................	3.020-60		8	3.11--62		4
Financial and Business News..	2.38--48		15	2.84--57		9
Food Articles, News, Recipes.	3.022-60		7	2.823-57		10
Fashion News.................	2.50--50		14	2.18--44		15
Entertainment News...........	3.16--63		5	3.22--64		3
Local Political News.........	3.09--62		6	2.820-56		11
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News........	3.26--65		3	2.85--57		8

---Mean scores based on a one to five scale with one
signifying "not at all interested" and five signifying
"very interested".

---Mean figures are rounded to two decimal places, except
where there is a "tie". Then, they are rounded to
three decimal places.

---"Rating" figures are based on the mean scores on a
scale to 100.

(r range=.4835 to .7033). As a matter of fact, the "Television" public agenda of Newspaper-Y readers is more strongly correlated with its media agenda than the "Newspaper" public agenda (r=.7033 versus .4835 respectively). This finding does not support Hypothesis Seven.

All the cross-agenda relationships, except for News-2 with Media-1, are also significantly correlated at the .05 level (r range=.5309 to .7088). This would appear to indicate that there is little difference in the cross-agenda comparisons. This is borne out by the remainder of the results which in most cases show relatively strong correlations between the reader subgroups and the media agendas, regardless of the medium relied on for National and International News.

Therefore, the premise of Hypothesis Seven, that individuals who depend on one medium as opposed to another for specific content should have a set of news priorities similar to that medium, cannot be supported. The results indicate no real difference between the reader subgroup agendas of those who rely on television as opposed to newspapers as their source of National and International News. Both subgroup agendas are moderately correlated with the media agendas. Perhaps problems with the method of comparison, in that so few individuals comprised the "Newspaper" reader subgroups, may have distorted any differences. However, from the results that were obtained, it is not possible to

TABLE 24

Relationship Between The Media And Public Agendas:
Television Versus Newspapers As The Main Source Of National
And International News

RELATIONSHIP	N	R*
News-1 with Media-1...................	13	.5475
TV-1 with Media-1....................	13	.5769
News-1 with Media-2..................	13	.5309
TV-1 with Media-2....................	13	.7088
News-1 with TV-1....................	13	.5750
News-2 with Media-2..................	13	.4835
TV-2 with Media-2....................	13	.7033
News-2 with Media-1..................	13	.4615*
TV-2 with Media-1....................	13	.5493
News-2 with TV-2....................	13	.5110
News-1 with News-2..................	13	.6300
TV-1 with TV-2.....................	13	.9066
News-1 with TV-2...................	13	.4649*
TV-1 with News-2...................	13	.5934
News-1 with Public-1................	13	.7675
TV-1 with Public-1.................	13	.9396
News-1 with Public-2...............	13	.4594*
TV-1 with Public-2.................	13	.8846
News-2 with Public-2...............	13	.5385
TV-2 with Public-2.................	13	.9945
News-2 with Public-1...............	13	.5989
TV-2 with Public-1.................	13	.8571

"*"Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R*"Represents Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation
    Coefficients.

Media-1 = Newspaper-X Media Agenda
Media-2 = Newspaper-Y Media Agenda
Public-1= Newspaper-X Readers Agenda
Public-2= Newspaper-Y Readers Agenda
News-1 = Newspaper-X (Newspaper Dependence) Agenda
News-2 = Newspaper-Y (Newspaper Dependence) Agenda
TV-1   = Newspaper-X (Television Dependence) Agenda
TV-2   = Newspaper-Y (Television Dependence) Agenda

support the notion that the medium relied upon most is a contingent condition in the agenda-setting process. Hypothesis Seven is not supported.

4.8 A CUMULATIVE INDEX OF THE CONTINGENT CONDITIONS

Aside from the tests of the hypotheses just discussed, another statistical procedure was performed to further elaborate on the contingent conditions in the agenda-setting process.   It was proposed in the beginning of this investigation that the various contingent conditions function together, enhancing or improving on the agenda-setting process.   It was found that several of the conditions investigated, independently, aid the functioning of the process.   The question now posed is whether the combination of these conditions, influence the agenda-setting process?

Clearly, the results from this study support the notion that the agenda-setting process exists, and that various conditions enhance the effect.   It has been shown that the public's interest in newspaper content is partially due to their demographic disposition, their frequency of readership, and their preferred medium for National and International News.   However, do these factors together help explain one's interest in the newspaper agenda?

To test this, an index was constructed using these three conditions.   A single variable was created comprised of the sum of Age (re-coded to represent a one to six scale), Edu-

cation (one to six scale), Occupation (re-coded to represent
a one to six scale), amount of readership (one to six sca-
le), and the medium preferred for National and International
News (newspaper=one; television=zero). Consequently, a new
measure of the contingent conditions was created, using all
the variables together. This index ranges from zero to 25.
It is hypothesized that this index of the contingent condi-
tions will help to explain the public's interest in newspa-
per content.

The Multiple Regression procedure used in testing Hy-
pothesis Six was used to test this hypothesis. It will pro-
vide information on the degree to which the index variable
predicts the public's interest in the topic categories. As
can be seen in Table 25, great differences exist in the re-
sults.

The index appears to best predict the variance in the
topic; National and World News (R-Square=.034). The index
explains approximately three percent of the public's inter-
est in two other topics; Editorials and Obituaries and Fun-
eral News and Announcements. Two percent of the variance of
the interest in Financial and Business News and Local Poli-
tical News is accounted for by the cumulative measure of the
contingent conditions. The index also accounts for two per-
cent of the variance of interest in Entertainment News, but
in an inverse direction. For the four remaining topics that
have a significant relationship with the index; Letters to

TABLE 25

The Degree To Which The Combination Of The Contingent
Conditions Predict The Public's Interest Ratings Of
Newspaper Topics

TOPIC	R-SQUARE	F-VALUE	
Local Sports News......................	.001*	0.70	
National Sports News..................	.002*	2.46	
National and World News..............	.034	42.03	
Coverage of Borough/Township Meetings and Activities..........	.008	9.68	
Local School Board News.............	.006	6.97	
Obituaries and Funeral News and Announcements...........	.027	32.37	
National Opinion Columnists........	.010	11.54	
Letters to the Editor...............	.013	15.72	
Editorials...........................	.029	34.97	
Financial and Business News........	.019	22.45	
Food Articles, News, Recipes.......	.000*	0.17	
Fashion News........................	.000*	0.00	
Entertainment News..................	.013	15.45	(-)
Local Political News................	.019	22.45	
Weddings, Engagements, Birth and Graduation News.............	.000*	0.19	(-)

---"N" ranges from 1,185 -- 1,191 cases.

(-) Indicates an inverse relationship.

"*" Indicates not significant at the .05 level.

"R-SQUARE"-Refers to the proportion of variance explained
by Age.

the Editor, National Opinion Columnists, Coverage of Borough
and Township Meetings and Activities, and Local School Board
News, the index of the cumulative contingent conditions ex-
plains approximately one percent of the public's interest in
these topics.

A prediction factor ranging from one to four percent is
not very high. However, the fact that most of the topics

are significantly explained by the index, albeit at a low

level, is encouraging.   This implies that the cumulative

measure of the contingent conditions does play a role in the

agenda-setting process.   Perhaps one of the reasons that

their ability to predict the public's interest in newspaper

topics is so low, is due to the fact that the media's abili-

ty to set the public's priorities is so great.   Still, there

would appear to be support for the contention that they do,

indeed, aid the media-to-public agenda transference.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER
RESEARCH

The abundance of information that is apparent from the tests of the seven hypotheses is overwhelming, to say the least. The question now posed is what can be said about the underlying premise of this investigation; about the contingent conditions of the agenda-setting process? Perhaps a brief summary of the results along with a discussion of their implications will enhance an understanding of what was found.

To begin with, it was found that an agenda can be defined as broad topic categories when testing the agenda-setting process. With the exception of National and World News, newspaper coverage of generic topics was found to be consistent over the three periods during which content analysis was conducted. It does not appear to matter when the media are analyzed, when comparing the rank-ordering of general topic areas in the media with the subsequent rank-ordering of public interest. The set of priorities established by both newspapers was found to be consistent over time.

The findings of this investigation support the idea that the media establish a consistent set of weights for their coverage of general topic areas. It appears that the only time the media stray from their established order is when

specific event-related news becomes prevalent. Such is the case for National and World News in this analysis. Still, how broadly the media agenda is defined has much bearing on how long the topics will receive public attention. Since the amount of coverage devoted to general topic categories is consistent over time, it is reasonable to assume that the public will establish a similar set of priorities, over time.

These findings have implications for future agenda-setting studies. Researchers must ask themselves what is the appropriate level of analysis for their investigation? Is it the individual issue, as is the case in most previous studies, or is it the general topic breakdown of the media? Much would appear to depend on what assumptions are made about the agenda-setting process, and the purpose of the inquiry.

This investigation is based on the premise that agenda-setting functions at a macro level. It is the author's contention that the media-to-public transference of a set of priorities takes place for more general categories of news and information, just as it does for individual issues. The public attends to the overall "menu" of the media, just as much as they do to the individual ingredients that comprise the "meal." The fact that the agenda-setting process functions when broad topic categories as opposed to specific issues are used, provides support for this contention.

Agenda-setting on a macro level implies that the public will be greatly influenced by the overall structure of the medium. For example, if the medium has a format that strongly emphasizes national as opposed to local news, the importance of national news will be passed on to the public. The public will incorporate a similar set of news priorities and concerns as the media that they peruse.

Consequently, a divergent press system-- diverse in the attention granted to general topic areas-- creates a divergent public--subgroups of the population with varying sensibilities and sets of priorities. These saliences vary according to the reliability of the media source. The media create the general framework of the public's agenda. Therefore, it is possible to assert that the ability of the media to shape public awareness and cognitions, perhaps even general beliefs and attitudes, is insurmountable!

This investigation has provided ample evidence to support the existence of the agenda-setting process. Strong correlations were found to exist for most of the media-public agenda relationships. The rank-ordering of topic's prominence in the media appears to be passed on to the public. The similarity between what the media and public regard as the most important topics is beyond mere coincidence. There does appear to be a definite transference of agendas. Media priorities do indeed become public priorities.

However, the intent of this investigation was to go one step further. Two newspapers and their respective reader's agendas were compared in this study. It was hypothesized that there would be a stronger relationship between one newspaper and its respective reader's agenda than in the cross-agenda relationship. Unfortunately, this contention was not borne out by the findings. There appears to be just as strong correlations for the cross-agenda relationships, as for the similar-agenda relationships.

There are a number of possible explanations for why the results do not support this hypothesis. First of all, the most important rule for cross media-public comparisons was not respected. As was pointed out in the Review of the Literature (see: Chapter 1.3), in order to make this type of comparison it is first necessary to ascertain that differences exist between the two media agendas. Otherwise, differences in media agenda transference to the public are difficult to observe.

Unfortunately, the results indicate that there exists an extremely high correlation between both media agendas. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are no differences among the similar-agenda and cross-agenda relationships.

Perhaps an improved methodology could have produced supportive findings. As was discussed in Chapter 4, the limited number of topics or "cases" that comprise the agendas, and are used in statistical analysis is very problematic.

It becomes difficult to discern any differences in the agen-
das due to the high correlation or differences between cor-
relations, that are required for a relationship to be sta-
tistically significant.

This investigation used only 13 topic categories to con-
struct the media and public agendas. This limits the abili-
ty of the comparison-tests to provide results that support
the hypotheses made. The small number of cases means that
any extreme outlier relationships, such as was the case for
National and Local Sports News, will preclude the discovery
of any probable relationships.

The reason for using so few cases in this investigation
is partially due to the problems inherent in transposing
data sets originally designed for marketing research into an
acceptable academic format. Many topics or "cases" had to
be ignored since they were inappropriate for the current in-
vestigation. However, this methodological problem is preva-
lent in many other agenda-setting studies. Generally, an
insufficient number of cases is being used to make valid
agenda comparisons. As has been suggested in previous re-
search (Winter et al., 1981), perhaps it is time that agen-
da-setting research focus on improving the manner by which
media and public agendas are constructed and compared. It
is strongly recommended that research continues to be per-
formed in this area.

In sum, though differences between the similar and cross-agenda relationships were not found, the results show strong support for the agenda-setting process in general. It is possible that the lack of difference between the agendas was due to the poor methodological practices of some agenda-setting research, not improved upon in the present study. However, it is just as possible that there is a trend towards media consolidation which makes it difficult to find two media agendas that are different enough to make these comparisons. Perhaps it is only the larger cities that can support different media. It would appear to be economically unfeasible for a smaller community to have various media sources. Whatever the case may be, further research should concentrate on improving the methodology for agenda-setting research, and determining whether media consolidation is increasing.

The central premise of this investigation is that there are certain characteristics of the media and the public that enhance and/or facilitate the agenda setting process. A number of these contingent conditions were investigated to determine whether they improved the media-to-public transference of priorities. The results varied substantially.

The use of attention devices in the media does assist the media in setting their priorities. The results indicate that two of the four attention devices, Headline Prominence and Picture Space, possess strong relationships with the

public's agendas.   As well,   the strong relationships that exist between topics rank-ordered according to total space and the use of attention devices indicates that the media consistently use .all their   resources to emphasize certain topics as opposed to others.   The prominence that the media give to certain content does appear to influence the public's notion of what is important.

However, the findings of this investigation cannot support the assertion that attention devices are necessary for the agenda-setting process to occur.   Again, unfortunately, the methodology was problematic in that it did not permit the testing of the public's dependence on these features in a newspaper.   Though the prominence the media grant certain topics by the use of attention devices certainly enhances the agenda transference, there is no evidence to suggest that these characteristics are necessary for the process to occur.   However, due to the strong relationships that do exist between total space and attention devices used for certain topics, it would appear that it is probable that they perform an important role in setting the public's agenda.

The findings indicate support for the hypothesis that the geographic proximity and obtrusiveness of topics are contingent conditions in the agenda-setting process.   While only one of the two media agendas gives more prominence to National and World News, the findings from both reader subgroup's interest ratings indicate that the public is most interested in this topic.

There is partial support for the contention that the
media are more likely to emphasize this content than news
and information for which the public is less dependent on
the media. However, the fact that the public is more inter-
ested in this topic as opposed to any other topic supports
the notion that the public is influenced by what the media
present. Since, in many cases the media represent the publ-
ic's only source of National and International News, it is
understandable that they claim to be so interested in this
topic.

The comparison of frequent and less-frequent readers'
agendas is problematic because of the small number of indi-
viduals who comprise the "less-frequent" category, and the
high median used to distinguish between the two groups.
Even so, for one of the newspapers, there is evidence to
support the hypothesis that the level of readership is a
contingent condition in the agenda-setting process. It ap-
pears that the more the public is exposed to the content,
the more likely they are to establish a similar set of pri-
orities.

Again, shortcomings in the data interfered with obtaining
conclusively supportive results. The small number of cases
that were used to construct the separate "agendas", as well
as the small number of "less-frequent" readers, most cer-
tainly had some influence on the lack of difference between
the these two agendas. This author cannot emphasize enough

the need to investigate ways to improve the practices of agenda-setting research. Further research into the role that the level of readership has on the agenda-setting process must ensure that sufficient distinctions exist before comparisons are made.

The role that demographic characteristics have on the public's susceptibility tc media influence is variable. The findings provide partial support for the hypothesis that socioeconomic status is a contingent condition in the agenda-setting process. Together, Age, Education, and Occupation do not greatly predict interest in broad topic categories. However, independently, these three demographic variables explain a significant proportion of an individual's interest in newspaper content.

Whether one depends on television or the newspaper for National and International News appears to have little influence on the agenda-setting process. There were no differences found between the agendas of individuals who relied on the newspaper as opposed to television for news and information of this topic. There is no support for the idea that the transference of media priorities is contingent on media preference. The influence of the media in setting the public's priorities was found to be the same regardless of the medium preferred.

Finally, the index constructed representing the sum of several contingent conditions, has a role in predicting the

public's interest in newspaper topics, albeit at a low level. The proportion of variance in the interest ratings explained by the cumulative measure of the contingent conditions ranges from four to less than one percent. Though the ability of the index to predict the public's interest in newspaper content is not that substantial, it is still important to note that it is a significant factor. There exists support for the contention that the contingent conditions together, aid the agenda-setting process.

To sum up, this investigation provides support for the ability of the media to set the public's priorities. The agenda-setting process functions to various degrees, depending on certain conditions. Attention devices that are used to emphasize media content influence the public's perception of what is important. Evidence has been provided to support the hypothesis that the geographic proximity and obtrusiveness of newspaper coverage affects the public salience of its content. The less direct experience that the public has with an issue or topic, the more the public relies on the media for information. Subsequently, the media have much responsibility in determining what the public considers to be important. It also was found that the level of media exposure has some bearing on the media-to-public agenda transference.

The above findings provide support for the contention that agenda-setting is a process enhanced by several condi-

tions.   Further research should concentrate on attempts to evaluate concurrently the different influence these conditions have on the agenda-setting process.   While it is valuble to assess their independent contributions to the agenda-setting process, future investigations should take a look at the total functioning of the process.   The time is at hand to construct a complete and accurate model that describes the process.

The results indicate that there exists very little difference between tne agendas of the two newspapers under study.   This could be the result of inadequate techniques for evaluating the agenda-setting process or a general trend towards media consolidation. Whatever the case may be, further research should concentrate on both these areas.   First, it is important to determine whether media diversity still exists.   Second, research and further investigations must focus on finding ways tc improve agenda-setting research techniques.

It also is recommended that research in the future concentrate on viewing agenda-setting more as a process as opposed to a cause-etfect equation.   It is important, to investigate not only what the media set as their agenda, but why it is comprised of such topics.   Further research should focus on whether the media are correctly mirroring reality, or only providing a vague impression of reality to the public.

And finally, future investigations of the agenda-setting process must look more closely at pre-existing audience sensitivities. It is recommended that research assess the various audience attributes that contribute to the public's receptivity of media priorities. The psychological dimensions of information gain should be investigated. More studies must be conducted to determine not only what the public's interests are, or, what they attend to in the media, but also why the public behaves this way.

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Appendix A

NEWSPAPER RESEARCH SURVEY

The following is a condensed version of the newspaper re-
search survey. The questions listed are those that are of
use to the current research:

Hello. My name is _____ and I'm calling from
Company-X Research Associates, a marketing research firm.
We're conducting a survey in this area on where people get
their news and information and your phone number has been
selected at random for inclusion in our study. We are not
selling anything and all of your answers would be completely
confidential.

Actually, the person in your household that we need to
speak with is the one who is responsible for choosing the
news you read in your household--that is, the person in your
home responsible for selecting the newspapers, if any, which
are read. (IF NO NEWSPAPER IN HOME, ADD): Well, then I
would like to speak with the person who would decide.

(IF PERSON ON PHONE IS RIGHT PERSON, CONTINUE WITH
INTRODUCTION BELOW. IF NOT, ASK TO SPEAK WITH THIS PERSON
AND, WHEN ON THE PHONE, RE-READ INTRODUCTION AND CONTINUE
BELOW. IF PERSON NOT AVAILABLE, FIND OUT BEST TIME TO CALL
BACK AND RECORD THIS ON DISPOSITION SHEET.)

1. Now I am going to read you a list of types of news
   you may read or see or hear. As I read each type,
   please tell me if you rely mainly on television, ra-
   dio, newspapers (NEWSPAPER-X, NEWSPAPER-Y, OTHER
   PAPER) or some other source for each type of news.
   The first type of information is...

   - World and National news

   - State news

   - News of your community (LOCAL)

   - Information on local stores and sales

   - Local sports news.

2. As I read you a list of daily newspapers available in
   your area, please tell me how many times in the past
   seven days you read or looked into each, Monday
   through Saturday only. The paper is...

   - Newspaper-X

   - Newspaper-Y.

3. (FOR EACH READ 1 DAY OR MORE IN QUESTION 2 ABOVE,
   ASK): And how do you receive the copies of the (NAME
   THE PAPER) you usually read--do you pay to have them
   delivered to your home, do you buy them at a newstand
   or coinbox, are they delivered to your home for free,
   or do you borrow them or get them from some other
   source?

   Method of Receipt:

   - Home delivered/paid

- Newstand/coinbox

- Delivered/free

- Borrowed/other

4. Changing the subject a bit, I'm going to read you a list of some things which you might find in a daily newspaper. Please tell me how _interested_ you are in each of these types of news or information; reply using a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning you are not at all interested in it and 5 meaning you are very interested in reading each type of information. The first item is... (READ LIST; ROTATE STARTING POINT BUT CONTINUE UNTIL ALL ITEMS ASKED; IF RESPONDENT NOT SURE, RECORD AS DON'T KNOW.)

- Local sports news

- National sports news

- National & world news

- Coverage of borough and township meetings & activities

- Local school board news

- Help-wanted classified ads

- Obituaries & funeral announcements

- National opinion columnists

- Local shopping or store ads

- Letters to the editor

- Editorials

- Political cartoons

- Comic strips

- Crossword puzzles or word games

- Advice columns such as Dear Abby or Ann Landers

- Financial and business news

, - Food coupons

- Real estate listings

- Food articles & recipes

- Fashion articles & news

- Special sections or supplements

- Automotive articles & news

- Entertainment news & movie listings

- TV listings

- Radio listings

- Photos of local people & events

- Local political news

- Weddings, engagements, births & graduation news

5. (FOR EACH ITEM SCORED 3, 4, OR 5 IN QUESTION 4 ABOVE, ASK): Which of the two local newspapers-- Newspaper-X or Newspaper-Y-- do you think provides the best coverage of _____ (NAME OF ITEM RATED 3, 4, OR 5)?

6. Now, just a few questions so that we can compare groups of people. First, what town or city do you live in?

   - Region-A

   - Region-B

   - Region-C

- Region-D

- Region-E

- Region-F

- Other (SPECIFY)

7. What was the last grade or year of school you completed?

     - Grade School or less

     - Some High School

     - High School Grad

     - Some College/Technical training

     - College Grad

     - Some Grad School plus

     - Refused

8. How many people are there living in your household?

9. And how many of these people are under 18, if any?

10. Do you own or rent your house or apartment?

     - Own

     - Rent

     - Refused

11. And is that a house or apartment or what?

     - House

     - Apartment

     - Other (SPECIFY)

12. How would you describe your marital status?

     - Single

     - Married

- Widowed

- Divorced

- Other (SPECIFY)

13. What year were you born?

14. What would you describe your occupation as? (NOTE: IF HOUSEWIFE, ASK WHAT HUSBAND DOES, IF RETIRED, ASK WHAT THEY USE TO DO. TRY TO GET A SPECIFIC ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS.)

15. And finally, in which of the following categories is your total family income before taxes?

- $10,000 or less

- $11 to 15,000

- $16 to 20,000

- $21 to 25,000

- $26 to 30,000

- $31 to 35,000

- $36 to 40,000

- $41 to 50,000

- $51,000 or more

- Don't know, refused

16. (INTERVIEWER: CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE SEX):

- male

- female

Appendix B

NEWSPAPER CODING SHEET AND DEFINITIONS

The following are the general instructions of coding proce-
dures provided to the coders. The Newspaper Coding Sheet
follows these definitions:

1. Coder Number- Each coder has an identification num-
   ber. Every Newspaper Coding Sheet should be coded
   with your number.

2. Sample Number- This is the specific issue of the
   newspaper being coded. There are a total of forty-
   eight different publications; 24 editions of each
   Newspaper-X and Newspaper-Y. Each issue has a num-
   ber. Code all items in each newspaper with the same
   sample number.

3. Item Number- This refers to the number you will give
   each item you code. Code consecutively and begin
   with '001' for each publication. For example, the
   first item you code in your first newspaper will be
   '001', then '002' for the next item, and so on. When
   you begin the second newspaper, begin again at '001'.

4. Section- What section of the newspaper is the item
   found in? By section we mean a detachable single
   part of the newspaper, not a generic content division

within the paper. _Newspaper-X_ usually has four sections; 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' which would be coded '1', '2', '3' and '4' respectively. _Newspaper-Y_ generally has only one section, the main tabloid. However, every Tuesday there is an additional 'Food' section; this would be coded as '2'.

5. _Section Page Number_- Please code the _section page_, not the _cumulative page_ or consecutive page count that the item is found on. A section page number could have an alphabetic character. For example, 'B2' might refer to the second page in the second section. Please ensure that only numbers are coded. In this case, 'B2' would equal '02'.

6. _Source of Content_- The _byline_ or a small insert in the item; for example AP, UPI, etc., usually indicates where the item came from. If the _source_ is not indicated on the first page content appears and the item _jumps_ to another page (see no. 8 for definition), make sure you check the jump page for the source first, before coding the source as 'Unknown'.

The following represents all _Source_ categories:

1. _Unknown_- If no source is given.

2. _Staff Correspondent_

3. _Staff Writer or Staff Columnist_- A writer for the newspaper, excluding the Editor. This is usually indicated by a byline like: _'By Writer-X, Staff Writer'_.

4. _National_ _or_ _Syndicated_ _Writer/Columnist-_ Usually indicated by the byline. Include all writers from other newspapers.

5. _AP-_ Associated Press; a wire service.

6. _UPI-_ United Press International; a wire service.

7. _Reuters-_ A wire service.

8. _Several_ _Wire_ _Services-_ When the item comes from several different wire services.

9. _Editorial,_ _Letter-to-the-Editor,_ _Advertisement,_ _Listing-_ Any of the above content. For example, Advertisement refers to _Food_ _Coupons_ and _Classi-_ _fieds,_ Listings refers to _Sport_ _Scores_ and _Stock_ _Market_ _Quotations._

10. _Knight_ _Ridder_ _News_ _Service_

7. _Content_ _Form-_ This is the form that the content takes, on the _first_ _page_ _that_ _the_ _content_ _appears._ There is a separate category you will come to for coding the form the 'jump' part of the item takes.

There are several idiosyncrasies that you will become aware of after reading all of the definitions. Some of these will affect the 'Content Form' category that you code the item in. Some of these idiosyncrasies are as follows:

a) If the item has a _Headline_ and it is less than 10/16 of an inch high or less than two columns wide in _Newspaper-X,_ and less than 7/16 of an

inch high or less than two columns wide in Newspaper-Y, code the item as '01-Article Only' or the equivalent. In other words, a headline that takes up less space than these criteria should be aggregated in the 'Article' measurement, and not be measured separately.

b) All Editorials, Letters-to-the-Editor and Columnists should be coded as '01-Article Only' regardless of how large a headline these items might have.

c) Make sure that all Advertisement and Listings, are coded as '13-Advertisement and Listing'.

d) Community News 'Section-A' in Newspaper-X, and 'Section-B' in Newspaper-Y, should be coded as '11-Article, Headline, Picture, and Caption' even though you will not be measuring the Headline or Caption space separately.

e) An item that is in the form of a Picture and Caption with a small Headline between the two should still be coded as '07-Picture and Caption'. Only code '08-Headline, Picture and Caption' if the Headline meets the space measurement criteria for being a Headline, and it is located above the Picture in a Headline, Picture and Caption format.

f) A _Teaser_ (_12_), refers to little boxes of information, usually on the front page of a section, which indicate what is coming up in the newspaper. Make sure that you distinguish this from a 'jump' story, which is an item that begins cn one page, and continues on another.

The following represent all _Content Form_ categories:

1. _Article_ _Only_

2. _Headline_ _Only_

3. _Picture_ _Only_

4. _Article_ _and_ _Headline_

5. _Article_ _and_ _Picture_

6. _Headline_ _and_ _Picture_

7. _Picture_ _and_ _Caption_

8. _Headline_, _Picture_ _and_ _Caption_

9. _Article_, _Picture_ _and_ _Caption_

10. _Article_, _Headline_ _and_ _Picture_

11. _Article_, _Headline_, _Picture_ _and_ _Caption_

12. _Teaser_

13. _Advertisement_ _or_ _Listing_

8. _Content_ _Location_- This refers to where the item is located. Code the following:

1. _All_ _on_ _the_ _same_ _page_- If the item is all on the same page and does not jump to another page, and is not considered to be _Aggregate_ _Content_ (Listings or Advertisement).

2. <u>Jumps to another page-</u> If the item begins on one page and an indication is given that the story continues on another page. Exclude <u>Teasers</u> and <u>Aggregate Content</u> but include items where only a <u>Headline</u> might appear on the first page of the content, and an indication is given that the story continues on another page.

3. <u>Aggregate Content-</u> If the content is measured as an aggregate whole, for example, Listings and Advertisement, code it as such, and as one item even though it may actually stretch over a number of pages.

9. <u>Use of Colour-</u> This refers to the appearance of colour in an item, whether it be in a picture, headline, or simply used in the frame-line; any use of it to emphasize the content should be coded '1-Yes'. Code all else as '0-No'.

10. <u>Strike Attitude-</u> Code as <u>1-Unfavourable, 2-Neutral</u> or <u>3-Favourable</u> for the overall attitude of the content regarding 'Strikes'. Make sure that there is a definite bias in favour of either '1' or '3' before coding one of these. Your code should be based on your overall impression of the item. If the content is balanced with both Unfavourable and Favourable information, code it as <u>2-Neutral</u>. If there is no mention or inference about 'Strikes' in the item, code it as <u>0-Not Applicable</u>.

11. <u>Union Attitude</u>- same as above but look for a <u>'Union Attitude'</u> instead of a <u>'Strike Attitude'</u> in the item.

12. <u>Type of News</u>- The seven categories provided distinguish various types of news that are found in newspaper content. Both <u>'6-Continuing Series'</u> and <u>'7-Letter-to-the-Editor'</u> are exceptions to the general types of news in categories 1-5. Code these two types of content as such when they appear in the newspaper.

   1. <u>Hard News</u>- Content that we generally regard as 'News'. Any item that consists of the reporting of a recent event or occurence would be considered <u>Hard News</u>. Michael Ryan (1979:499), an author who has done much research on newspaper content, defines hard news as event-oriented stories:

      > (Hard News) articles must take as their starting points timely events-definite happenings pinpointed in space and time-and they must convey important details about those events.

      Note that <u>Sports</u> content could also be considered to be 'Hard News' if the item consists of reporting of a Sports activity that happened the day before.

   2. <u>Interpretive, Backgrounder</u>- Content that consists mainly of the discussion or analysis of an event or an occurence that has already taken place.

The major focus of this type of news is the ana-
lysis of the event or occurence, rather than a
description or report of what happened. Ryan
(1979:499) defines _Interpretive News_ as issue-o-
riented stories:

> Articles must provide an overview of or
> background for a timeless social prob-
> lem or issue, or one aspect of a larger
> social problem or issue. The issue is
> the starting point of the article, not
> a specific event pinpointed in time and
> space.

3. _Soft News-_ Content that does not really have
'News Value' in the sense of being an event or
occurence, but rather, a story or feature provid-
ing general information. For example, Community
News would be classified as _Soft News_ (_Newspa-
per-X_ ='Section-A', _Newspaper-Y_ ='Section-B').

4. _Editorial, Opinion-_ Content that is in the form
of an _Editorial_ or _Opinion Columnist_.

5. _Advertisement, Listing-_ Mostly all aggregate con-
tent.

6. _Continuing Series-_ Any item that indicates that
it is '1 of a series of 7 articles', for example.

7. _Letter-to-the-Editor_

13. _Proximity-_ This refers to where the event, occurence
or whatever information is in the item, takes place.
Code in one of the following five categories:

1. _World_

2. **World** **and** **National-** Content that concerns the United States and another country.

3. **National**

4. **State**

5. **Local**

.14. **Topic-** This is perhaps the most important category to be coded. It is essential that 'Topic' be coded accurately and exhaustively with due consideration of the <u>sixty</u> different categories. Some of the items may have content that could belong to· more than one category. However, only code the item in the most appropriate Topic category.

Most categories are self-expanatory. If you are confused, do not hesitate to consult with Mr. Zamaria. The sixty are as follows:

1. Political-Meetings

2. Political-Financial

3. Political-Legislation

4. Political-Election

5. Political-Cartoons

6. Political-General

7. Authorities (Commissioners, etc.)

8. Military

9. International Relations

10. War

11. Terrorism

12. Racism

13. Inflation, Unemployment

14. Business, Industry

15. Labour Unions

16. Welfare

17. Economy-General

18. Crime-Police

19. Courts-Legal

20. Accident, Disaster (Man-Made)

21. Accident, Disaster (Natural)

22. Communication

23. Transportation

24. Energy

25. Environment (weather, pollution, etc.)

26. Health, Science, Medicine

27. Agriculture

28. Religion

29. Education-General

30. Education-School Board

31. Education-Graduation

32. Social Meetings and Activities

33. Lifestyle

34. Consumer Information

35. Human Interest

36. Personal Profile

37. Food

38. Travel

39. Fashion

40. Automotive

41. Obituaries-Funeral Announcements

42. Weddings, Engagements, Births

43. Community News (Newspaper-X ='Section-A', News-
    paper-Y ='Section-B')

44. Food Coupons

45. Entertainment-Advice

46. Entertainment-Humour

47. Entertainment-Movies

48. Entertainment-Television

49. Entertainment-Music

50. Entertainment-Radio

51. Entertainment-Books

52. Entertainment-Comics

53. Entertainment-Crossword Puzzles, Word Games

54. Entertainment-Horoscopes

55. Entertainment-General

56. Sports-General

57. Sports-Box Scores

58. Entertainment-Theatre

59. Classifieds

60. Stock Market Quotations

There are a few general criteria to be aware of before cod-
ing the space measurements:

a) Every page in the newspaper should be equated to a <u>six-column format</u>. That is, before measuring the column inches of an item, be aware of what column-format is being used on the page. You must multiply the column inch total of an item by a correction factor if there are not six columns on the page.

For example, if there are only two columns on a page, you would multiply the total column inches of the item by a factor of 3. This would equate the actual content to a six-column page format; you would record this figure in the appropriate space measurement category. Some pages in the newspapers have a variety of widths of columns. Before calculating what column format the page is, make sure all columns are equal. If they are not, you will have to <u>weigh</u> and correct the different columns to make up a six-column standard page. This goes for Headlines, Pictures, Captions and Listings as well as Articles.

b) As mentioned earlier, <u>Headlines</u> are coded separately if they are not less than 10/16 of an inch high or two columns wide in <u>Newspaper-X</u>, and not less than 7/16 of an inch or 2 columns wide in <u>Newspaper-Y</u>. Do not measure Headline

space if the item is an _Editorial_, _Letter-to-the-Editor_, _Columnist_ or _Listing_.

c) _Political Cartoons_ should be coded as a Picture.

d) _Community News_ content (_Newspaper-X_ ='Section-A', _Newspaper-Y_ ='Section-B') is coded by first counting and measuring the pictures and placing the total in the _Picture-Total Space_ space measurement category, then measuring the rest of the space placing the total in the _Article or Listing_ space measurement category. Do not measure headlines or captions separately for this content.

e) When recording the space measurement, round-off the column inches to the nearest inch, except when otherwise specified.

15. _Article or Listing-_ Measured from the top of the first line of content to the last, rounded-off to the nearest inch. Don't forget to multiply the total by a _correction factor_ to equal a six-column page format, if necessary.

16. _Headline, Cumulative Height-_ The total height of the headline in 1/16 inch units; measured from the top of the first line of headline to the bottom or last line. This includes all the different kinds of headline that go along with an item. Report the total in

1/16 inch units. For example, if the cumulative height measures 42 1/16 inch units, you would enter '42' on the coding sheet.

17. <u>Headline, Primary Height-</u> This is a measure of the most prominent headline, if there is more than one, in 1/16 inch units. If there is only one line, this measure would be the same as in <u>Headline, Cumulative Height</u>. However, if there is only one type of headline that extends for more than one line, this measure would be from the top to the bottom of <u>one</u> of these lines only.

18. <u>Headline, Number of Lines-</u> This measure is the total number of lines of headline, regardless of the type.

19. <u>Headline, Number of Columns-</u> This is a measure of how many columns the headline stretches across, based on the six-column page format. If there are a number of different headline lengths in an item, use the length of the headline that is the longest. If the headline is only two or three columns in actual length but there is nothing directly beside it, record this as '6'.

20. <u>Headline, Prominence Rating-</u> This has you judge the strength or weakness of the headline, relative to all the other headlines on the same page. Note that you can only code one <u>'1-Weakest'</u> and only one <u>'3-Strongest'</u> code for all the items on one page of

the newspaper. Regardless of how many headlines may be on a given page, only one can be the weakest and only one the strongest. However, this does not mean you must code a 'Weakest' and 'Strongest' headline on each page. If there are no headlines that are particularly weak or strong on a given page, don't code any as such. Code all other headlines as <u>'2-Medium Strength'</u>.

21. <u>Headline</u>, <u>Different</u> <u>Kinds</u>- Enter the different number of types of headline used, for a given item.

22. <u>Number</u> <u>of</u> <u>Pictures</u>- Enter the total number of pictures included in the item.

23. <u>Pictures</u>, <u>Total</u> <u>Space</u>- Measure the total column inches, based on a six-column page format, of picture space in the item. Measure from the top to the bottom; aggregate the amount if there is more than one picture.

24. <u>Use</u> <u>of</u> <u>Graphic</u>- Indicate if the picture in the item is a graphic; <u>'0'-No</u>, <u>'1'-Yes</u>.

25. <u>Caption</u>, <u>Cumulative</u> <u>Height</u>- Measure the caption, from the top of the caption headline (if one exists) to the bottom of the last line, and report in 1/16 inch units.

26. <u>Caption</u>, <u>Number</u> <u>of</u> <u>Lines</u>- Count the total number of lines of content in the caption, excluding the caption headline, if one exists. If the caption is bro-

ken into two or more separate columns of information beneath a picture, count only the number of caption lines in the first column of content.

27. <u>Caption</u>, <u>Headline-</u> Indicate whether there is a head-line between the picture and the caption: <u>'0'-No</u>, <u>'1'-Yes</u>.

28. <u>Caption</u>, <u>Number of Columns-</u> Measure the number of co-lumns, based on a six-column page format, that the caption stretches across.

The rest of the categories: <u>'29. Jump Page Location'</u> to <u>'45. Jump Page, Number of Columns'</u> are based on the same criteria as the categories already mentioned, except these categories are for all content in an item that <u>'jumps'</u> to another page. Measure and code the items that jump in the appropriate categories using the same criteria already provided.

NEWSPAPER CODING SHEET

1. CODER NUMBER...................................____

2. SAMPLE NUMBER..................................____ ____

3. ITEM NUMBER....................................____ ___ ___

4. SECTION..____

5. SECTION PAGE NUMBER............................____ ___

6. SOURCE OF CONTENT
   1=Unknown
   2=Staff Correspondent
   3=Staff Writer or Columnist
   4=National or Syndicated Columnist
   5=AP
   6=UPI
   7=Reuters
   8=Several Wire Services
   9=Editorial/Letter-to-the-Editor/
     Advertisement/Listing
   10=Knight Ridder Newspaper..............____ ___

7. CONTENT FORM
   1=Article only
   2=Headline only
   3=Picture only
   4=Article and Headline
   5=Article and Picture
   6=Headline and Picture
   7=Picture and Caption
   8=Headline, Picture an Caption
   9=Article, Picture and Caption
   10=Article, Headline and Picture
   11=Article, Headline, Picture and Caption
   12=Teaser
   13=Advertisement or Listing.............____ ___

8. CONTENT LOCATION
   1=All on same page
   2=Jumps to another page
   3=Aggregate content....................____

9. COLOUR USED?
   0=No
   1=Yes..................................____

10. STRIKE ATTITUDE
    0=Not Applicable
    1=Unfavourable
    2=Neutral

3=Favourable.............................____

11. UNION ATTITUDE
      (same scale as in number 10) ....____

12. TYPE OF NEWS
      1=Hard News
      2=Interpretive/Backgrounder
      3=Soft News
      4=Editorial/Opinion
      5=Advertisement/Listing
      6=Continuing Series
      7=Letter-to-the-Editor...................____

13. PROXIMITY
      1=World
      2=World and National
      3=National
      4=State
      5=Local.................................____

14. TOPIC
      (see; Newspaper Coding Sheet
      Definitions) ....____ ____

SPACE MEASUREMENT

15. ARTICLE OR LISTING
      (column inches) ....____ ____ ____

16. HEADLINE, CUMULATIVE HEIGHT
      (1/16 inch units)..................____ ____

17. HEADLINE, PRIMARY HEIGHT
      (1/16 inch units)..................____ ____

18. HEADLINE, NUMBER OF LINES...............____

19. HEADLINE, NUMBER CF COLUMNS............____

20. HEADLINE, PROMINENCE RATING
      0=No Headline
      1=Weakest
      2=Medium-Strength/Average
      3=Strongest.........................____

21. HEADLINES, DIFFERENT KINDS..............____

22. NUMBER OF PICTURES.....................____ ____

23. PICTURES, TOTAL SPACE..................____ ____

24. USE OF GRAPHIC
      0=No

1=Yes................................____

25. CAPTION, CUMULATIVE HEIGHT
    (1/16 inch units, including
    headlines)............................____ ____

26. CAPTION, NUMBER OF LINES
    (excluding headline)..................____ ____

27. CAPTION HEADLINE
    0=No
    1=Yes................................____

28. CAPTION, NUMBER OF COLUMNS..............____

JUMP PAGE

29. JUMP PAGE LOCATION......................____ ____

30. JUMP PAGE SECTION.......................____

31. CONTENT FORM
    (code according to categories
    in number 7)..........................____ ____

32. USE OF COLOUR
    0=No
    1=Yes................................____

JUMP PAGE SPACE MEASUREMENT

33. ARTICLE OR LISTING
    (column inches).......................____ ____ ____

34. HEADLINE, CUMULATIVE HEIGHT
    (1/16 inch units).....................____ ____

35. HEADLINE, PRIMARY HEIGHT
    (1/16 inch units).....................____ ____

36. HEADLINE, NUMBER OF LINES...............____

37. HEADLINE, NUMBER OF COLUMNS.............____

38. HEADLINE, PROMINENCE RATING
    0=No Headline
    1=Weakest
    2=Medium-Strength/Average
    3=Strongest...........................____

39. HEADLINE, DIFFERENT KINDS...............____

40. NUMBER OF PICTURES......................____ ____

41. PICTURES, TOTAL SPACE.......................___ ___

42. CAPTIONS, CUMULATIVE HEIGHT
       (1/16 inch units, including
        headlines)...........................___ ___

43. CAPTION, NUMBER OF LINES................___ ___

44. CAPTION, HEADLINE
       0=No
       1=Yes...............................___

45. CAPTION, NUMBER OF CCLUMNS..............___

Chapter VI

VITA AUCTORIS

Charles E. Zamaria was born in Toronto, Ontario on November 4, 1957. He received an International Baccalaureate Degree from the Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific in 1976, and went on to study Film Theory and Production at York University, completing his Bachelor of Fine Arts, Honours Degree in 1979.

Mr. Zamaria has produced, directed and edited several short documentary and fictional films. He has worked as a film editor for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation from 1979--1984. As well, he has authored various papers and marketing research studies, concerning newspapers and broadcasting. He was recently employed by the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Windsor as a Sessional Instructor (Course: International Communication Systems).