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## Creating higher education in southern Nevada: A framing study of local newspaper coverage

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CREATING HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN NEVADA:  
A FRAMING STUDY OF LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

**Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies  
Hank Greenspun Department of Journalism and Media Studies  
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs**

**Graduate College  
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**Thesis Approval**  
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Master of Arts in Communication Studies

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## ABSTRACT

### **Creating Higher Education in Southern Nevada: A Framing Study of Local Newspaper Coverage**

by

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This study seeks to analyze and understand how Southern Nevada's two local newspapers framed the creation of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Nevada State College. A brief history of the editorial and political philosophies of the Las Vegas Review Journal and the Las Vegas Sun is presented, followed by a review of the literature on framing theory, and the theory that communities are formed by communication. Dominant frames are identified through text analysis of 486 newspaper articles. Frames are categorized by a central theme, metaphors suggested by the frame, and images, catch phrases and vocabulary used in the frame. Frames are compared across the two newspapers and across different time periods to assess the community's response to the schools.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The United States spends billions of dollars each year to finance public higher education. Total fund revenue of public degree-granting institutions for 2000 to 2001 was just over \$176 billion, up about 86 percent from ten years prior (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Federal, state and local governments contributed more than half of the total funding, with the rest coming from tuition, private gifts and other sources.

In 2006, however, some states are dealing with enormous deficits caused by recent hurricanes. In Louisiana, public colleges have had to cut their budgets by \$71.4 million, while colleges in Missouri face cutbacks of \$100 million (Fischer, 2006). Other states may be forced to limit higher education funds in order to cover increased costs for health care and pensions (Hebel, 2005).

As some states struggle with smaller budgets for their public colleges, other states like California, Nevada, Arizona, Washington, Florida, Georgia and Virginia are experiencing unprecedented population growth that will make college enrollments rise for a decade or more (Gose, 2005; Hebel, 2004). Space at some colleges is at a premium and forces schools to set standards for who gets to go to college and who is turned away. Education officials are searching for ways to ensure greater access to higher education,

such as allowing community colleges to grant four year degrees, allowing states to grant public funds to private colleges or providing less state aid to students who take courses beyond what is needed to graduate (Hebel, 2004).

Some states are taking more drastic action. At least two states have recently managed to create new colleges, while legislation pending in another state would do the same. In 1999, Nevada Regents approved the creation of a new state college in the city of Henderson (Arnone, 2003) and in 2005, the Board of Regents in Georgia approved the creation of a new state college in Gwinnett County, the first new public college or university created in Georgia since 1970 (Augusta State University Report, 2005). In Washington, some legislators sponsored a bill to create a new four year college to serve the thousands of high school seniors and adults seeking a college education, but opponents of a new college are recommending that the state's two-year colleges be converted to four-year schools instead (Cornfield, 2005).

Are new public institutions of higher education worth the cost? Are new institutions readily accepted by the community or is there conflict and controversy during the creation process? This research project will explore these and other questions by analyzing journalistic framing by the Las Vegas Review Journal and the Las Vegas Sun of two major milestones concerning higher education in Southern Nevada: the creation of the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) and the creation of Nevada State College (NSC). This study will identify the relevant articles and frames used by each of the local daily newspapers to portray the establishment of each institution and to examine whether there are substantial differences between how Southern Nevada's two newspapers reported these events. A textual analysis of news articles and editorials in the Review

Journal and the Sun will identify frames, while qualitative analysis will be used for comparison.

This research project will raise questions for local journalism as to the benefit of having more than one local newspaper to provide more than one view. Many cities currently do not have two daily newspapers. This study will also add to local scholarship on the development of higher education in Southern Nevada and may provide guidance and encouragement for states that are creating new institutions of higher education. Finally, this project will advance framing research by examining an issue—higher education—that has not received extensive scrutiny by communication scholars.

Southern Nevada is a unique area of the United States in which to study the issue of higher education because the area depends upon the gaming and tourism industries generated by its major city, Las Vegas. Unlike most major cities, Las Vegas' high-paying occupations such as cocktail waitress, bartender, casino game dealer, valet and entertainer do not require a college degree or even a high school diploma. The state of Nevada is also unique in that it has only two major cities, Las Vegas and Reno, in which public institutions of higher education are primarily located.

Southern Nevada did not have an institution of higher learning until 1957, when what is now UNLV officially opened as a college. The state has since added to the region the Desert Research Institute (1969), the Community College of Southern Nevada (1971), and most recently, NSC (2002). The creation of NSC was met with much controversy by legislators and citizens, who felt, among other reasons, that Nevada did not need another school of higher education. One of the research questions this study will seek to answer

is: Was the creation of UNLV met with similar controversy in the community or was it better received?

What is now UNLV opened its first classroom and administration building in the summer of 1957 on the present campus site, although the first college-level classes in Southern Nevada were offered on an extension basis in 1951 (“UNLV History” n.d.). Twenty-nine students received degrees at the first commencement ceremonies in 1964. Nearly 40 years later, NSC graduated its first class of 13 students (Lake, 2004).

The commencement speaker at NSC’s first graduation ceremony was the Las Vegas Sun’s president and editor, Brian Greenspun. An article appearing in the Sun shortly after the event compared the state college’s first commencement ceremony to a “victory dance,” noting that naysayers had predicted the college would never even open its doors (Littlefield, 2004). The article focused more on the college’s shaky start than on the actual graduation ceremony. By contrast, the Las Vegas Review Journal’s feature article highlighted the personal lives and achievements of each of the 13 graduating students and gave little attention to the controversial history of the college (Lake, 2004). This is just one example of the different ways in which each newspaper framed the same event.

Framing refers to how media discuss a topic or frame an issue, thereby influencing public opinion. Entmann (1993) defined the act of framing as selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, such as a newspaper article, in such a way as “to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (p.52). When journalists select, omit and emphasize certain attributes of news over other attributes, they are “framing the story” (Fleming-Rife & Proffitt, 2004, p. 245). A key factor in how

a journalist might frame a particular issue is the political and editorial philosophy of the newspaper.

The Las Vegas Sun and the Las Vegas Review Journal have had vastly different political and editorial viewpoints, thereby giving Southern Nevada residents two different voices. It is important to note, however, that the period examined by this study narrowly precedes a pivotal time in local journalism. Although Southern Nevada had two independent daily newspapers covering the creation of both UNLV and NSC, the Sun ceased its own daily circulation in 2005 and began publishing as an insert in the Review Journal. The Sun's six to ten page insert is now primarily commentary and simply does not have space to cover as many news stories as the Review Journal. Although Southern Nevada still has two voices, the area now essentially has just one daily newspaper. In the debut combination issue, the Sun's editor, Brian Greenspun, wrote:

It is no secret that the Sun and the R-J don't usually see the world in the same way. In fact, it is safe to say that our two newspapers are hard-pressed to agree on anything... That kind of editorial competition is good for any city, but especially Las Vegas. As the fastest growing city in America, there is a pressing need for everyone who has been here a while, or who just got here, to engage immediately in the process of citizenship. And there is no better or more thorough way to do that than by reading the daily newspapers. (Greenspun, 2005, p. 1).

#### The Review Journal and the Sun

#### During the Creation of UNLV

An examination of the history of journalism in Las Vegas reveals an acrimonious relationship between the two newspapers that dates back to the 1950s. Las Vegas' first

successful newspaper was the Las Vegas Age, created in 1905 (Lingenfelter & Gash, 1984). Longtime Nevada newspaper owner Frank Garside bought the Las Vegas Age and a few other fledgling newspapers in the 1920s and combined them in 1929 to create the Las Vegas Review Journal, originally called the Evening Review Journal (Green, 1988). Albert Edmunds Cahlan, a graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno and a Democrat, was appointed the editor and later became part owner. Cahlan and the Review Journal exerted great influence over the creation of public works measures in the community, including a park, a golf course, an airport and better sewers (Green, 1988). Cahlan also became a politician, serving as an assemblyman, a state party chairman and a national committeeman. Cahlan wrote a regular editorial column called, "From Where I Sit," in which he expressed his opinions about local issues.

On April 1, 1949, Garside and Cahlan sold the newspaper to Donald W. Reynolds, a newspaper and radio station owner, who eventually bought hundreds of newspapers across the nation. Cahlan became managing director and a part-owner of the Review Journal until 1961, but Reynolds' influence changed local journalism dramatically. Reynolds modernized production of the paper by installing typesetting machines. "When the typesetters joined the International Typographical Union, Reynolds refused to negotiate with the organization, and the printers and typists comprising the 'back shop' walked out. They responded on May 3, 1950 by starting the tri-weekly Las Vegas Free Press" (Green, 1988, p. 158). When the paper was in danger of folding, Herman Milton Greenspun, better know as Hank Greenspun, decided to buy it.

Hank Greenspun was born in Brooklyn, New York to Jewish parents, earned a law degree from St. John's University and was a publicist for local resorts when he moved to

Las Vegas (Green, 1988). Greenspun detested the Review Journal, considering it “racist, anti-Semitic and anti-union” (Davies, 1999, p. 80). After buying the Sun, he started his own editorial column, placing it on the front page, and called it, “Where I Stand.” The column routinely attacked Cahlan and the Review Journal, but was also a springboard for advancing his opinions. “He fought for, and used his newspaper in, a variety of causes and crusades, prompting his supporters to celebrate him and his critics to condemn him” (Green, 1999, p. 76).

As historian Michael Green (1988) observed, Greenspun and Cahlan were often “divided over issues affecting the state and city they were trying to build up, and their clashes frequently illustrated the younger Greenspun’s liberalism and the older Cahlan’s conservatism. A onetime school board member and a teacher’s son, Cahlan far more frequently and vocally advocated better education and better-paid teachers” (p. 168). In 1953, Greenspun and Cahlan had differing opinions concerning the controversial firing by University of Nevada (Reno) President Minard Stout of five professors who were critical of his administration (Green, 1988). Greenspun felt that a university instructor shouldn’t be fired because of a disagreement with the president, while Cahlan could not understand why the professors would want to keep their jobs when they were evidently at odds with the president and other faculty.

The Las Vegas community also got vastly different impressions of Senator Patrick McCarran from the two newspapers. Cahlan “praised the senator’s ties to Spanish dictator Francisco Franco and the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, a Cold War law that discriminated against Southern and Eastern Europeans” (Green, 1988, p. 160). Greenspun, however, was so critical of the political powerhouse, that most of Las Vegas’

large hotel and casinos, at the behest of McCarran's cohorts, cancelled their Sun advertising (Edwards, 1981). Greenspun sued McCarran and many gaming executives charging conspiracy. The gaming executives eventually settled the lawsuit with Greenspun and resumed their advertising. "The case proved extremely important to Nevada history and politics, then and later. It ensured that Greenspun's venomous exchanges would go on with the Review Journal..." (Green, 1999, p. 82).

Hank Greenspun was critical of many other public figures and organizations. The Sun was one of the first American newspapers to challenge McCarthyism and it often criticized the influence of organized crime on the state of Nevada (Rothman, 2002). Aside from running the newspaper, Hank Greenspun was deeply involved with local issues in Southern Nevada. "He engineered the first master-planned community, Green Valley, in the mid-1970s" (Rothman, 2002, p. 268).

Cahlan and Greenspun greatly influenced the framing of news during the creation of UNLV. Decades later, during the creation of NSC, the legacies of these two men lived on, although the names of the editors and publishers changed slightly.

#### The Review Journal and the Sun

#### During the Creation of NSC

After Hank Greenspun's death in 1989, the surviving family took over ownership of the Sun. Barbara Greenspun, Hank's wife of 45 years, was involved with the Sun when Hank first bought it and, just before he died, he made her co-publisher. Barbara was born in London and raised in Ireland, where she first met Hank at a wedding (Koch, n.d.). Although she never went to college herself, she has been a huge supporter of higher education. In 1991, she was named a Distinguished Nevadan by the University and



Community College System of Nevada, and in 1998 she was given an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters by UNLV (Norman, 2004). The Greenspun family has made numerous monetary donations to higher education, most notably funding for the Hank Greenspun College of Urban Affairs.

Hank's son Brian Greenspun took over as editor of the Sun and libertarian Thomas Mitchell eventually took over as editor of the Review Journal. The two men continued the great editorial duel started nearly 50 years before them. The September, 2001 issue of the American Journalism Review reported how the rival editors used a national news story, the disappearance of United States Congressman Gary Condit's intern Chandra Levy, to take "personal potshots at one another" (Reagan & Robertson, 2001, p. 11). Thomas Mitchell commented on how he occasionally provokes Sun editor Brian Greenspun. "Every once in a while I will poke a stick through the fence and listen to the little dog yap" (Reagan & Robertson, 2001, p. 11). Mitchell was referring to his July 15, 2001 Sun column in which he argued that Levy and her relationship with Condit was a legitimate news story. He contrasted his position with that of Brian Greenspun's. Greenspun retaliated in his own column the following week, referring to Mitchell as "the R-J's Martha Mitchell, I mean Tom Mitchell" and said he "wouldn't know news if it hit him in the face" (Reagan & Robertson, 2001, p. 11). Greenspun finished his column saying, "Call it what it is, Tom. And don't use words like character and integrity to justify your actions. You haven't a clue what they mean."

Brian Greenspun was a classmate at Georgetown University with former President Bill Clinton and was a major donor to his election campaigns (Fineman & Isikoff, 1997). Brian addressed newer issues that confronted the state of Nevada, such as Yucca

Mountain. A 60 Minutes segment that aired in October, 2003 reported that a “coalition of elected officials, environmentalists and businessmen is waging a guerilla war to kill a project they believe has been shoved down their throats. One of them is Brian Greenspun, the president and editor of the Las Vegas Sun” (60 Minutes transcript). Greenspun wrote many articles in the Sun opposing Yucca Mountain.

Brian and the Greenspun family have been major financial supporters of higher education in Southern Nevada. In addition to large contributions to UNLV, the Greenspun family made a \$2 million grant to Nevada State College in 2004. In his announcement of the grant, Brian Greenspun said, “Whether people see the necessity for Nevada State College today, there is no question it will be there tomorrow” (Gose, 2005, p. B10).

Another person also shaped the Sun’s editorial and political philosophy during and after the 1980s. Mike O’Callaghan became the Sun’s executive editor and chairman of the board in 1979 after completing his second term as governor of Nevada. O’Callaghan was a devout Catholic and ardent Democrat (Searer, 2005). He served in the Korean War and received several medals for heroic service (Geary, 2004). After the War, he moved to Henderson, taught history and economics at Basic High School and helped found and run the Henderson Boys Club. His students included now United States Senator Harry Reid. Along with his wife Carolyn, O’Callaghan was the publisher of the Henderson Home News and the Boulder City News. Elected governor in 1970, he served for eight years and was a popular figure until his death in 2004 (Searer, 2005; Koch, 2004). During his tenure as governor, he helped to establish the Community College of Southern Nevada and Western Nevada Community College in Carson City (Kanigher, 2004).

Although the Sun and the Review Journal were often at odds, both papers had nothing but praise and admiration for Mike O’Callaghan after his death at the age of 74. An article in the Sun reporting on the funeral referred to him as “one of the most beloved public servants in state history” (Geary, 2004). An editorial in the Review Journal carried the title, “Former Governor, Executive Editor of the Las Vegas Sun, was the Class of the Field” (“Former Governor,” 2004). The article called him “the real thing” and “the benchmark against whom others measured themselves” (“Former Governor,” 2004).

At the Review Journal, Donald Reynolds remained the owner until his death in 1993. Reynolds, like the Greenspun’s, also gave some of his wealth to the Southern Nevada area. He founded the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation in 1954, a philanthropic organization that has become one of the 50 largest private foundations in the United States. One of the projects sponsored by the Foundation is the Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup, a business plan competition for universities, colleges and community colleges. The competition encourages college students to develop entrepreneurial skills, like Reynolds himself did.

During the year of his death at the age of 86, Forbes magazine described Reynolds as an eccentric Oklahoma native, curmudgeonly and publicity shy with little affection for his family (Hutheesing, 1993). At the time of his death, Donrey Media Group owned hundreds of newspapers along with the Review Journal in 17 states, a Reno television station, several outdoor advertising operations and had an estimated worth of about a billion dollars. He left little to his family, but willed his ownership control of Donrey to the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation. Within four months of his death the Stephens

Group, a powerful Little Rock investment firm, announced that it had bought controlling interest in Donrey Media Group (Hutheesing, 1993). Stephens chairman, Jackson Stephens was an old friend and business associate of Donald Reynolds. The Review Journal's editorial page listed Donrey Media Group as the owner until 2002, when the Stephens Media Group finally changed the name. The media business is a departure for the Stephens Group, known as one of the largest investment houses outside of Wall Street (Hutheesing, 1993). Most of the company's wealth has been built on municipal bonds and investment in small companies.

Another person deeply involved with the Review Journal during the creation of NSC was Sherman Frederick. Frederick had been a reporter with the Review Journal since 1976, was named city editor in 1979, then left for a few years to work at other papers. He returned to the Review Journal in 1988 as editor and was named publisher in 1992 (Fitzgerald, 1999). In addition to being the current publisher, he is also president and chief executive officer of Stephens Media (Berns, 2005).

Frederick explained in a Las Vegas Business Press article (Cardinal, 1997) that the Review Journal decides on editorial positions by discussing issues. The editorial board, made up of Frederick, three editorial writers, the editor, the city editor and one member of the company at large, talk about what is in the paper that day. The editorial board tries to maintain a coherent philosophy. "We make sure the position we take on a bill in the Legislature is the same position we take on a similar issue in the county" (Cardinal, p. 20). He described the paper's position on most subjects as an "old-line Nevada attitude...almost libertarian" (Cardinal, p. 20).

One controversial decision that Frederick defended in an article in Editor and Publisher (Stein, 1994) was the approval to run a 16 page advertising supplement promoting an anti-gay ballot initiative. The supplement contained articles with headlines such as “Consequences of Sodomy: Ruin of a Nation” and “Medical Consequences of What Homosexuals Do” (Stein, p. 26). The ad resulted in canceled subscriptions, protest from readers, picketers, and a letter to the publisher from editorial staff. Several other Nevada newspapers ran the ad, but the Las Vegas Sun refused it.

The Review Journal has always been the more financially stable of the two newspapers. The Sun's financial struggles led to a major decision just before Hank Greenspun's death. In July, 1990, the two newspapers entered into a joint operating agreement, which combined both newspapers' business and advertising functions, but kept the editorial staffs separate and still highly competitive with each other (Reed, 1998). When interviewed about the agreement in MediaWeek (Burgher, 1997), Review Journal publisher Frederick said, “It's like two cats in a bag, but that's exactly the spirit of a JOA. Both newspapers are very distinct in their editorial voices.”

The joint operating agreement lasted for 15 years, until the decision in 2005 to publish the Sun as an insert in the Review Journal. Although now the Sun's voice is limited to just a few pages, Southern Nevadans still get two different viewpoints. The political philosophy and editorial slant of both newspapers is an important factor in how the newspapers framed issues of higher education in Southern Nevada.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education has been valued in societies for centuries. The development of colleges and universities in the United States began in 1636 in what is now Cambridge, Massachusetts with the founding of Harvard University. Since then, schools of higher learning have been established in many different areas of the country. Whether a college or university is in a rural, urban or suburban area, the presence of the school has a profound impact on a community. Studying the way in which institutions of higher education have been framed by local newspapers provides a way to examine the influence that media have in the development of a community.

A primary goal of this study is to advance an understanding of the influence that media have in shaping communities. Two theories in the field of communication are integral to this study. First, the theory that communities are formed by communication will be examined. Second, framing theory will be presented since it has been used by many communication and social science researchers to examine the cultural and social implications of the relationship between the media and a large social institution like education.

## Communication and Community

Philosophers and social theorists have recognized the role of communication in community processes for over a century, contending that the construction and maintenance of meaningful relationships between individuals and the social orders in which they live is one of the most important functions of communication (Rothenbuhler, 1991).

The idea that communities are welded together by communication goes back to Aristotle's Politics. "Aristotle says that every state is a community, which makes something one and common out of separate households... Aristotle says that it is speech that binds this necessary hierarchy of communities together... Aristotle hypothesized that community, in the rather strong sense that he assigns to that word, rises or falls with discursive interchange" (Depew & Peters, 2001, p. 3-4).

After Aristotle, many theories emerged as to why communication creates community. According to French philosophers such as Rousseau, communication creates community primarily because it ignores, marginalizes, privatizes, or suppresses individuality, while Germans such as Hegel were concerned with how socialization and communication can actually create individuals (Depew & Peters, 2001, p. 10). American theorist John Dewey tried to find a balance between those two views. He believed a fully differentiated society could emerge with the capability to produce fully developed individuals if a free press, free inquiry, free public education, a regulative state apparatus and labor unions could be reinvented (Depew & Peters, 2001). In the late 1890s, Dewey taught at the University of Chicago and created a research community in the department of sociology that was devoted to this view.

The University of Chicago scholars attempted to perpetuate the Aristotelian-Hegelian vision that self and community are created through interaction (Depew & Peters, 2001). Aristotle's community excluded slaves, women and barbarians, while Hegel required that communication extend more widely and deeply. Dewey demanded that the process include all of democratic America, and later the University of Chicago sociologists viewed the mixing of strangers as an education for citizens and a laboratory of social order (Depew & Peters). The city of Chicago, with its immigrant enclaves, allowed the social researcher to cross borders and communicate with other social participants. For the sociologists, communicative participation in these social worlds was a type of reporting. "The revelation of the lives of hidden others aimed to bring about sympathy, reform and ultimately, uplift into the American mainstream" (Depew & Peters, p. 17).

The University of Chicago was not the only place where research on communication and community was being done in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Michigan sociologist Charles Cooley recognized the role that modern means of communication, such as the newspaper, can play in building community. In his classic text of American sociology, Social Organization (1909), Cooley writes:

What a strange practice it is, when you think about it, that a man should sit down to his breakfast table, and, instead of conversing with his wife and children, hold before his face a sort of screen on which is inscribed a world-wide gossip! The essential function of the newspaper is, of course, to serve as a bulletin of important news and a medium for the interchange of ideas, through the printing of interviews, letters, speeches and editorial comment. In this way it is indispensable to the organization of the public mind... it promotes a widespread sociability and sense of community; we



know that people all over the country are laughing at the same jokes or thrilling with the same mild excitement over the football game, and we absorb a conviction that they are good fellows much like ourselves. It also tends powerfully, through the fear of publicity, to enforce a popular, somewhat vulgar, but sound and human standard of morality. (Cooley, 1909, p. 83-85)

Cooley believed that modern mass communication made it possible for a new principle of individuality and community. He perceived two kinds of individuality, one of isolation and one of choice. Modern communication “makes life rational and free instead of local and accidental” (Cooley, 1909, p. 96). Newspapers allow an individual to feel that his own work and life is part of a “large and joyous whole” (p. 97). “He is self-assertive, just because he is conscious of being a thread in the great web of events, of serving effectually as a member of a family, a state, of humanity, and of whatever greater whole his faith may picture” (p. 97). In this way, newspapers create community.

A husband and wife pair of sociologists also examined the role of the newspaper in their landmark social anthropology study of daily life in an American urban community. Robert and Helen Lynd’s book Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture (1929) reflects on the changes that time brings to communities and how communities must work to meet the new conditions. In 1924, the Lynds administered two questionnaires that elicited attitudes of the entire high school population of a city they called Middletown, a city representative of contemporary American life. The attitudes under study concerned religion, international affairs, patriotism, social justice, civil rights and public information sources.

The Lynds' field investigation suggested some "recurrent manifestations of the processes of social change involved in them and largely responsible for what Middletown considers its social problems" (Lynd & Lynd, 1929, p. 496). New tools and inventions such as the automobile, along with the "marked spread of education," have been the main causes of change (p. 501).

The Lynds' study also looked at the role and function of the newspaper in the community. The Lynds wrote, "Although the purpose of newspapers, as far as the individual citizen and the community as a whole are concerned, is ostensibly to give information, Middletown's newspapers have three other uses, for a few individuals or limited groups, that sometimes appear to take precedence over keeping the community adequately informed" (p. 474). According to the study, Middletown's newspapers shape public opinion for the aims of politically ambitious individuals or political parties. The newspapers also make money for the owners through advertising and often, the news that is printed, serves to boost the interests of the advertisers. "It is largely taken for granted in Middletown that the newspapers, while giving information to the reading public as best they may, must not do it in any way as to offend their chief supporters... The leading paper rarely says anything editorially calculated to offend local business men... It is generally recognized in Middletown that adverse news about prominent business class families is frequently treated differently, even to the point of being suppressed entirely, than news about less prominent people" (p. 475-476). This power of the press to control what information is given to readers, indicates that the press has a role in shaping community.

About 30 years after the Lynds' study, the essays of University of Chicago sociologist Louis Wirth were published. Wirth (1964) viewed community as "participation of the individuals in common enterprises, the sharing of common hopes and ideals, and the mechanisms of communication and social interaction which are not built into the organisms, but which exist in language, collective symbols, laws and customs, in short a social heritage" (p. 168). Wirth viewed society as a mass society, "the product of the division of labor, of mass communication and a more or less democratically achieved consensus" (p. 21). In order to communicate effectively in a mass society, one must have common knowledge, and it is through mass communication that this common body of knowledge is obtained. The mass media bring together both organized and unorganized groups, by disseminating ideals and symbols that serve to build consensus. "The instrumentalities of mass communication lend themselves particularly well to the dissemination of these symbols... They are weapons of offense or defense, and they are bonds of union or of discord, depending upon the purposes which those who use them have in mind" (p. 27).

More recent research suggests that the concept of community may be in jeopardy. Putnam (1995) contends that Americans have become politically disengaged and that the sense of community has deteriorated, citing waning participation in civic organizations such as the PTA, Boy Scouts and Elks clubs. During the 1970s through the early '90s, acts of political and community participation, such as serving as an officer of a club or organization, working for a political party, or attending a public meeting on town or school affairs decreased by about 40 percent (p. 45).

Putnam notes that advances in technology in mass media have made news and entertainment more individualized. In the 1890s for example, “music lovers needed to sit with scores of other people at fixed times listening to fixed programs,” but nearly a century later, personal music devices allow the user to listen to what they want, when they want it and where they want it (p. 216). The same is true now of being able to individually select the news one wants to read from web sites and personal newsfeeds. Putnam asserts though, that newspaper readership is the mark of substantial civic engagement. He notes that newspaper readers tend to be older, more educated and more rooted in their communities than the average American citizen. He contends that people who read the news in newspapers are more engaged and knowledgeable about the world than those who only watch the news. “Compared to demographically identical non-readers, regular newspaper readers belong to more organizations, participate more actively in clubs and civic associations, attend local meetings more frequently, vote more regularly, volunteer and work on community projects more often, and even visit with friends more frequently and trust their neighbors more” (p. 218).

Putnam offers social capital as a means of revitalizing citizens. The core idea of social capital is that social networks have value, while social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups. Putnam notes that dozens of studies confirm that education is a significant predictor of engagement in civic life. While in college, “extracurricular activities and involvement in peer social networks are powerful predictors of college dropout rates and college success,” showing that social capital has an effect early on (p.306).

Several studies have extended Putnam's argument that social capital is positively associated with newspaper reading. For example, McLeod, Scheufele and Moy (1999) examined the influence of communication in activating citizens. In their study, they found that newspaper reading had a strong impact on survey respondents' knowledge of local politics and a stronger impact than television news viewing. The authors assert that "through communication, citizens acquire information about issues and problems in the community and learn of opportunities and ways to participate" (p. 316).

Through the years, researchers have attempted to define community. "Community is usually defined as a place, but investigators are often also implicitly concerned with one of a variety of more abstract definitions of community: community as place, or as process, institution, interaction, feeling, cognition, structure, or others" (Rothenbuhler, 1991, p. 65). Shepherd (2001) notes that the word community "arises from the same Latin root of *munia*, where the reciprocal giving and mutual service that takes place in communication works to make a common people, or *communis*, a community which is bound together through gifts of service" (p. 30).

Wirth noted that the mass media disseminate symbols and ideals that build consensus, while the Lynds' research strongly suggested the framing ability of newspapers. The work of Wirth, the Lynds and other researchers suggests that the newspaper's ability to frame the news strongly impacts a community.

### Framing

Framing can be traced back to sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), who is often credited with introducing it. Goffman used the word "frame" (p. 10) to refer to the basic elements that define a situation in accordance with the principles of organization which

govern the situation. Goffman emphasized the classifying ability of frames, noting that frames allow media users to “locate, perceive, identify and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms” (p. 21).

Within the last 20 years, framing analysis has risen to a level of prominence in the fields of communication, political science and sociology, with researchers employing a wide range of theoretical approaches and methods. The ever increasing body of literature reveals, however, that a core theory or basic set of propositions has not yet been settled on. “The range of approaches political scientists, sociologists, media researchers and others bring to the study of frames and framing is both a blessing and a curse” (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 139).

Many scholars have offered definitions of framing. Reese (2001) notes that framing is concerned with the way interests, communicators, sources and culture combine to produce coherent ways of understanding the world, based on all available verbal and visual symbols. He defines frames as “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (p. 11).

Pan and Kosicki (2001) see framing as a means for community building, making the point that frames “define the boundaries of the discourse concerning an issue and categorize the relevant actors based on some established scheme of social taxonomy” (p. 41). These social actors frame political issues by choosing specific cultural and symbolic resources that represent specific ideologies. This particular aspect of framing is significant in the present study as it is this researcher’s suspicion that the issue of higher education and the development of a university and a state college in the area played a

pivotal role in building a sense of community in Southern Nevada. Relevant actors, such as individual proponents or opponents of higher education, will be revealed through the study as well.

Miller and Reichert (2001) see framing in the context of contentious issues where opposing interests and values collide. “In policy debates, for example, different groups of people often stand to be affected in different ways by the decisions that are made. A complex issue usually involves many aspects, some of which are more salient or important to particular groups than to others. What is unimportant to one person may be a key concern to another. Economic, as well as ideological, stakes come into play, and stakeholders engage in policy debates on behalf of the issue aspects that are most salient to them” (p. 107). It is expected that the current study of articles will reveal particular groups within the Southern Nevada community that either strongly supported or strongly opposed the creation of UNLV and/or NSC.

Just as there is presently no core theory for framing, there is also no single methodological approach for conducting framing analysis. In most studies, content or textual analysis is employed in some way, but researchers use a variety of qualitative methods as well. Pan and Kosicki (2001) encourage the case history approach to examining frames, which allows one to “examine either the evolution of an issue or the development of a particular social movement by analyzing the discourse of each political actor in context. This in-depth contextual and historical view cuts across different levels of analysis and is both discursive and sociological” (p. 49).

Haller and Ralph (2001) contend that qualitative analysis is a context-based content analysis that adds richness to the study of news frames. They note that the mission of

qualitative studies is to better understand the interpretations of meaning and values that take place in media texts, and in identifying frames, the informational content of news reports is less important than the interpretive commentary that surrounds it.

Bantimaroudis and Ban (2001) compared framing mechanisms in articles appearing in the Manchester Guardian and the New York Times about the 1991 United States mission to Somalia. "Photographs, quotes, headlines and subheads are all examples of framing mechanisms" (p. 177). They used qualitative analysis to identify important framing devices in the news articles. The researchers then employed quantitative analysis by using the database Lexis/Nexis to precisely measure the occurrence of the terms "warlords" and "factions," which were determined to be important framing mechanisms. By combining "the provocative value of qualitative analysis in identifying frames with the reliability of quantitative measures in assessing their scope," the authors strived for maximum reliability (p. 178).

Hertog and McLeod (2001) outline an approach and offer a method for studying frames and framing as they relate to specific social controversies. Since the issue of higher education is indeed a social controversy in Southern Nevada, this approach and method is appropriate for the present study.

According to Hertog and McLeod's "field guide," the study must first begin by defining the frames for the issue of interest. Like the previous researchers, Hertog and McLeod view frames as "relatively comprehensive structures of meaning made up of a number of concepts and the relations among those concepts. Although each frame provides principles for the organization of social reality, frames are more than just



principles. Frames have their own content, as well as a set of rules for the processing of new content” (p. 140).

A core set of concepts, such as myths, narratives and metaphors, determines much of the meaning assigned to the frame. These concepts have tremendous symbolic power, since they tend to be deeply imbedded within the culture. These myths, narratives and metaphors carry excess meaning. “By mentioning one or more of these powerful concepts, the array of related ideas, social history, policy choices, heroes and villains may be activated. A news story defining a political election as a ‘horse race’ implies a tremendous number of additional ideas, beliefs, experiences and feelings members of society know are related to the term” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 141). Similarly, a “pro-life frame will use terms like baby, abortionist, pro-abortion forces, unborn, mother, murder and so on, whereas the pro-choice frame employs fetus, doctor, woman, freedom, etc.” (p. 143).

Another feature of frames to identify is a master narrative. “Narratives are powerful organizing devices and most frames will have ideal narratives that organize a large amount of disparate ideas” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 148). For example, in a study of articles concerning social protests, a typical narrative in a “riot” frame begins with a relatively calm protest march, degenerating into illegal or aggressive behavior by anarchists (p. 156).

Myths are another significant set of concepts that might be central to a particular frame. Myths may stem from religions, folklore, organizations or institutions. Myths are “widely shared and understood within the culture and are especially prone to drawing in a

wide array of additional beliefs, feelings, expectations and values” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 148).

A source of power for frames is their widespread recognition. The words, icons, ideas and gestures associated with the frame provide shared meaning among society’s members, such as individuals, institutions and organizations. “Frames provide the unexpressed, but shared knowledge of communicators that allows each to engage in discussion that presumes a set of shared assumptions” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 141).

Menashe and Siegel (1998) used this approach in their study of the way the tobacco issue has been framed in newspapers. In this study, they explain that there are two main differences between a frame and an individual argument. A frame is a perspective of looking at an issue that may include several arguments. For example, the argument that tobacco use is a problem because youth are innocent and too young to make an informed decision to smoke is an example of an argument that falls into the broad frame the authors called “kids” (p. 313). A similar argument falling under this frame is that tobacco use is a problem because tobacco companies are manipulating youth to smoke through deceptive advertising.

The second main difference between a frame and an argument is that a frame is not just a series of arguments that share a common perspective of the problem, but a frame “includes a set of symbols, metaphors, catch phrases and visual images that can be readily identified as being a part of that frame” (p. 313). For example, Menashe and Siegel defined the “kids” frame with the following: the symbol of the innocence of youth; the metaphor of illicit drug and alcohol use among youth; the catch phrases “underage smoking” and “minors;” and the image of a merchant selling cigarettes to a young child

(p. 313). In their content analysis of articles, any articles containing these symbols, metaphors, catch phrases or images were coded and assigned to that frame.

Hertog and McLeod (2001) as well as Reese (2001) point out that frames are consistent over time and meaningfully structure the social world in a number of significant ways. One such way is that frames define the roles that various individuals, groups, organizations and institutions play. “Under one frame, a particular group may be seen as an essential actor in resolving a social problem, while in another the same group may be perceived as peripheral to its resolution or even a source of the problem itself” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 143).

In framing analysis, it is important to understand that frames are different to issues. “Issues are fairly narrowly drawn conflicts over social policy. The positions taken on an issue usually share a number of the underlying presumptions provided by a frame... In the absence of a common frame, there is no evidence, no weighing the strength of arguments that can be used to determine which ‘side’ should prevail” (Hertog & McLeod, p. 145). Issues exist within frames and are structured by frames.

Hertog and McLeod assert that the first step in frame analysis is to identify the central concepts that make up varied frames, noting that a common feature at the core of most frames is basic conflict. “The Cold War frame revolved around a perceived conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. All other phenomena reflecting a Cold War frame were interpreted as being the result of the super-power conflict... As radical political change has occurred within the Soviet system and the conflict between Russia and the United States declined, many have declared the Cold War to be over. In the

absence of the basic driving force of superpower conflict, the entire frame has been undermined” (p. 148).

Fleming-Rife and Proffitt (2004) identified conflict as the salient frame in their analysis of newspaper coverage of the Supreme Court case, Brown v. Board of Education. This is one of the few research studies to use framing analysis to examine an education issue. The authors defined the conflict frame as articles that emphasized a struggle between individuals, groups or institutions. “Implicit in a conflict frame is the notion of compliance: one side must win while the opposing side must lose or give in so that social control can be recreated or maintained. This frame also includes protest or resistance, which pits the mainstream against the marginalized and ultimately emphasizes resistance to change and maintenance of the status quo” (p. 247).

Fleming-Rife and Proffitt (2004) also found a “consequences” frame in their study. The “consequences” frame was defined as articles that drew attention to the potential penalties or negative results that would occur if the Court ruled in favor of desegregation. “This frame was used as a way to reassure or brace the audience for what was perceived as short-term and long-term consequences of the impending decision that would severely disrupt the status quo” (p. 247).

The creation of UNLV and NSC involved a variety of parties with different interests. Frames such as those described in the previous research are expected to emerge from this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The method selected for this research project is similar to the methods used by Baysha and Hallahan (2004) in their study of how the Ukrainian news media framed a national political crisis and by Menashe and Siegel (1998) in their study of newspaper coverage of tobacco issues. Both of these studies identify the frames used by news media concerning a specific issue in order to understand the influence of media in society.

Baysha and Hallahan (2004) collected over 800 news stories related to the Ukrainian political crisis of 2000-2001 and randomly selected a sample of 50 to examine for recurrent themes or central organizing ideas in order to identify preliminary frames. These frames were then used to analyze an additional 50 randomly selected stories. Any story that did not fall under one of the existing frames was used to create additional frames. The complete list of frames was then used to analyze the remainder of the 800 plus news stories.

Menashe and Siegel analyzed the content of news articles and editorials from the New York Times and Washington Post for a ten year period. They used an online database to search for tobacco-related newspaper articles and, after excluding some articles that met certain exclusion criteria, ended up with a sample of 179 articles. They randomly selected 80 of these articles for initial review and divided them into two sets of

40 articles. They identified the main frame for each article in one set and then applied those frames to the main arguments identified in the other set to see how well the frames matched those arguments. In some cases new frames had to be created in order to characterize arguments from set one that did not fit into the frames developed in set two. Once a complete list of frames was identified, the researchers then analyzed the rest of the 179 articles to identify the dominant frame in the article.

Menashe and Siegel used the framing matrix presented by Charlotte Ryan in Prime Time Activism (1991) to characterize each frame using several aspects, including: a title for the frame; a core position or concise statement of the frame's primary argument or theme; a metaphor or analogy to some other familiar area suggested by the frame; catch phrases used repeatedly in the frame; and visual images evoked by the frame (Menashe & Siegel, 1998, p. 313). The matrix also included three other aspects that suited the issue of tobacco, but are not suitable to the issue of higher education.

The present study uses methods like those described in the previous research in order to identify as many frames as possible. This study will use a modified version of the framing matrix presented by Ryan (1991) in order to characterize each frame. A preliminary examination of articles was done in order to identify possible frames.

A brief review of articles concerning the establishment and funding of NSC reveals a conflict frame. An editorial in the Sun written by executive editor Mike O'Callaghan states: "If you have been around the town as long as I have, then criticism of the latest move to improve higher education opportunities comes as no surprise. A four-year college in Henderson, soon to be Nevada's second-largest city, is just too difficult for some small thinkers or protectors of the status quo to comprehend" (O'Callaghan, 1998).

This editorial opinion is not surprising, considering O’Callaghan has a personal interest in the city of Henderson as well as a reputation for being a strong advocate of higher education.

Several articles in both the Sun and the Review Journal described a struggle between college officials and residents of the proposed state college site. Among the titles of articles in the Las Vegas Review Journal were, “Tension High at State College Meeting” (Bond, 2001) and “Opponents Speak Out on College Site” (Patton, 2001). “This will ruin our rural neighborhood. I enjoy the quiet and the fact there aren’t any businesses... If it was some kind of factory, it wouldn’t bring 20-year old drunk kids driving down our streets. It wouldn’t be a family community. It wouldn’t be a rural community” (Bond, 2001). Resistance to change is manifested in this story by the residents arguing that the growth of the college in the area would detract from the neighborhood’s “rural” appeal.

Another conflict that emerges from a preliminary look at articles about NSC is about funding. The creation of a state college meant that the existing institutions of higher education in the Southern Nevada area, and even in the state, would get a smaller slice of the budget pie. Supporters of the college, such as regents and legislators, argued and debated with those who did not want the funds of the existing institutions diminished. An example of one such article appearing in the Review Journal was titled, “Henderson State College Still at Top of Regents’ Wish List” (Patton, 2001).

Another conflict emerged over where to locate the state college. Some argued that the Henderson location was too far away from the metropolitan area and amounted to just “pork” for the city of Henderson.

In writing about the social development of Las Vegas, historian Mochring (1989) refers to conflict in the 1950s over establishing Southern Nevada's first university, UNLV:

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1954, at the first ever regents' meeting held in Las Vegas, the board announced its support for a future campus in town, warning residents that most higher education money in the upcoming budget would be channeled to the Reno campus. This announcement only strengthened the resolve of Clark County boosters to push for a school immediately" (p. 224).

Moehring describes an editorial written by Review Journal editor Al Cahlan blasting the northern-dominated board of regents for not committing adequate funds to the Southern Nevada university. "Complaining that Southern Nevada was 'getting a little tired of being treated like the poor relation,' the editor urged Clark County citizens to register to vote in the next state election. Why? Because it was not too early for residents... to start action on ganging up on the Northern Nevada politicians'" (p. 226). From these types of articles, a "North v. South" frame is expected to emerge in this study.

These preliminary frames—consequences, North v. South, and a variety of conflicts—will serve as a starting point for categorizing the many articles about the creation of UNLV and NSC.

The research questions this study will attempt to answer are:

RQ1: What are the dominant frames used by the Sun and the Review Journal to portray the creation of UNLV and NSC?

RQ2: Are there substantial differences between how the Sun and the Review Journal framed the creation of UNLV and NSC?



RQ3: Did new frames emerge when NSC was established?

RQ4: Was the establishment of UNLV in 1957 met with similar opposition in the community as the establishment of NSC in 2002?

For this study, I analyzed the content of news articles in the Las Vegas Review Journal and the Las Vegas Sun related to the creation of UNLV and NSC. I divided the project into two parts: first, I searched for, collected and analyzed articles about NSC and second, I searched for, collected and analyzed articles about UNLV.

### NSC

Using the online web site search engines for the archives of the Las Vegas Review Journal and the Las Vegas Sun, I searched for all articles containing the phrase “state college,” searching each year beginning with 1998, when the idea for the college was first suggested by state assemblyman Richard Perkins, through 2004, when the first class graduated. The online archives for the Las Vegas Sun went back to February 19, 1996, while the archives of the Review Journal went back to September, 1996. Both archives included news articles, editorials and letters to the editor. The online archives did not always include photos that were published with the printed version of the newspaper, so I decided to exclude the analysis of photos from this study. I initially used the broad term “state college” in order to capture all possible articles, since the official name was not yet determined. I went through each result by year, eliminating any articles that were about other state colleges and printed the remainder. The result was 379 articles from the Sun and 155 from the Review Journal.

Of the 534 articles, I then went through and excluded articles that were not primarily about the creation of NSC. I categorized creation articles as any article that was

primarily related to funding the college, the college president, the acquisition of a site, the first courses offered, initial enrollment or the first graduation. After evaluating each story for these inclusion criteria, 175 were eliminated and 232 remained from the Sun, while 128 remained from the Review Journal. The types of articles that were excluded were articles that merely mentioned NSC within the context of another issue. The Sun tended to run more articles than the Review Journal concerning education and the Henderson area in general and often mentioned NSC, even if the article was not primarily about the college. Other types of articles that were excluded were those about a person when it merely mentioned the person's affiliation with the college. For example, there were numerous articles about the Regent's prior dealings with NSC's first president, Richard Moore, but the articles did not focus on the college.

Using the two step procedure employed by Baysha and Hallahan (2004) to derive frames, I randomly selected 20 articles from the Review Journal and 20 from the Sun to read for recurrent themes or central organizing ideas—a “preliminary attempt to present the main ideas comprising the essence of the frames” (Baysha and Hallahan, p. 237). I read each article once to get a feel for the central organizing idea and then I went through the article again, highlighting metaphors, images, catch phrases and vocabulary used to convey that frame.

When identifying metaphors, I focused on language that applied a name, term or phrase to a person, object, action or situation in order to imply some other belief, idea, experience or feeling that members of society know are related to the term (Hertog & McLeod, 2001). Metaphors, such as describing the new state college as a “white elephant,” are imaginative in nature, not literal. The reader is led to believe that the new

college is like the upkeep of a white elephant—excessively expensive. When identifying images, I looked for words that enticed the reader to form a mental picture, such as students arriving at the new college for the first day of classes. When identifying catch phrases, I looked for phrases that are generally known in society because they have often been repeated or used as a slogan. For example, the catch phrase, “read my lips, no new taxes,” is generally known to mean that indeed there were new taxes under President Bush’s leadership. Finally, the vocabulary that I highlighted were those words that were most salient to creating a frame for the reader. The words “oppose” and “protest,” for example, clearly denote a conflict.

Although the perspectives of each newspaper often differed, the preliminary frames identified were: *conflict*, with the sub-frames *funding struggle*, *town v. gown* and *competing state colleges*; *growth process*; and *consequences*. As I identified each frame, I developed a modified version of Ryan’s (1991) framing matrix to model each frame. I used the following characteristics: a name for each frame; the central organizing idea or theme of the frame; metaphors suggested by the frame; images used in the frame; and catch phrases/vocabulary used in the frame. Once these preliminary frames were identified, I randomly selected another 20 from the Review Journal and 20 from the Sun and used the preliminary coding instrument to analyze those articles for the dominant frame. Articles often touched on more than one frame, but by using the models to gauge the occurrence of relevant characteristics, I was able to pinpoint the dominant frame. If articles were extremely close in exhibiting two frames, I used the headline and subhead to determine the dominant frame. I was surprised to find that all of the second set of 40

articles fell into one of the originally identified frames. I used those 40 articles to further develop the frame models and I then coded the remaining 279 articles.

One limitation of this method is that I was the only coder. A future study may involve one or more others in identifying frames to allow for intercoder reliability.

### UNLV

Searching for articles about the creation of UNLV was a more time and labor intensive task than NSC because the newspapers covering the time period under review were available on microfilm only and online searching was not an option. The period under review was 1951, when the University of Nevada, Reno, first offered extension courses in Southern Nevada, to 1958, when it received accreditation. I also examined articles from the year 1964, the year of the first graduation ceremony.

I originally attempted a comprehensive search by examining the pages of every issue by hand, however each issue was averaging approximately 25 minutes to go through and the prospect of examining over 6,000 issues in this manner was impractical for the present study. The way that the Review Journal and Sun were organized in the 1950's and 1960's further compounded searching, since there was really no specific section of the paper dedicated to state or regional news. News articles about the college were sometimes printed near sports or entertainment stories.

I decided to procure a smaller sample by using a print index to the Review Journal. The print index was created by the Nevada Historical Society, and while not entirely comprehensive, it did provide a subject listing of articles covered during the period under review. The index referenced most news articles and editorials, but did not appear to include letters to the editor.

Using the print index, I looked up every entry for UNLV, also indexed as Nevada Southern University, as well as James Dickinson, the founding director. Each entry included the title or an abbreviated title for the article, the date of the issue, the page number and column numbers. Since there were over 150 entries for these two subjects alone, I decided not to look up other people associated with the college.

I then used the entries from the print index and retrieved articles from the microfilm. I excluded articles that were not about the creation of UNLV, based on the same exclusion criteria used for NSC. Also, since the Review Journal often printed a photo and some brief biographical information about new instructors, I excluded these articles since they gave no substantial information about the creation of UNLV. Two limitations of this study are that some of the microfilm was missing entire issues and in a few cases, the film was unreadable. In total, I retrieved 79 articles from the Review Journal that reported on the creation of UNLV.

Finding articles about the creation of UNLV from the Las Vegas Sun was more difficult because there is no index at all for the Sun for the period under review. I relied on the dates of articles found in the Review Journal and then searched issues of the Sun on microfilm for that day, as well as two days prior and after if no article was found on that day. My search resulted in 47 articles from the Sun about the creation of UNLV.

Since both newspapers published substantially fewer pages per issue in the 1950s and 1960s, it was expected that the number of articles for analysis would be fewer for the creation of UNLV than for the creation of NSC. The lack of online searching and the limitation of time also were factors in the number of articles under review. The lack of an index to the Sun resulted in fewer articles for analysis from that newspaper. A future

study might employ research assistants to go through the newspaper microfilm by hand. However, the sample of articles is adequate to explore the research questions posed by this study.

After collecting the 126 articles about the creation of UNLV, I used the same two-step procedure for deriving frames as used for the NSC articles. Since the sample of articles was smaller, I randomly selected 10 articles from the Review Journal and 10 from the Sun to read for recurrent themes or central organizing ideas in order to identify preliminary frames. I read each article once to get a feel for the central organizing idea and then I went through the article again, highlighting metaphors, images, catch phrases and vocabulary used to convey that frame. Definitions of metaphors, images, catch phrases and vocabulary were the same as for the NSC study. The preliminary frames identified were: *growth process*; *conflict*, with the sub-frames *funding struggle* and *town v. gown*; and *consequences*. As I identified each frame, I again developed a modified version of Ryan's (1991) framing matrix to model each frame. I used the same characteristics that I used for the NSC sample: a name for each frame; the central organizing idea or theme of the frame; metaphors suggested by the frame; images used in the frame; and catch phrases/vocabulary used in the frame. Once these preliminary frames were identified, I randomly selected another 10 from the Review Journal and 10 from the Sun and used the preliminary coding instrument to analyze those articles for the dominant frame. Sometimes articles touched on more than one frame, but by using the models to gauge the occurrence of relevant characteristics, I was able to pinpoint the dominant frame. If articles were extremely close in exhibiting two frames, I used the headline and subhead to determine the dominant frame. All of the second set of 20

articles fell into one of the originally identified frames. I used those 20 articles to further develop the frame models and I then coded the remaining 86 articles.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### NSC

Three overarching frames concerning the creation of NSC became apparent in the 360 newspaper articles: *conflict*, *growth process* and *consequences*.

<u>Table 1</u> <u>Local Newspaper Frames for the Creation of NSC</u>	
Frame	Total Percentage of Newspaper Articles
Conflict	55%
Growth Process	41%
Consequences	4%

Within the frame of *conflict*, three salient sub-frames emerged: *funding struggle*, *town v. gown* and *competing state colleges*. *Conflict* was by far the frame most often used by the local papers, with a total of 196 articles (approximately 55%). Of those 196 *conflict* articles, 166 were categorized as the sub-frame *funding struggle*; 18 as the sub-frame *town v. gown*; and 12 as the sub-frame *competing state colleges*. The newspapers used the *growth process* frame in 149 articles (approximately 41%) and the *consequences* frame in 15 articles (approximately 4%).



### *Conflict*

This frame was featured in 123 articles from the Sun (53 % of the Sun's total articles about the creation of NSC) and 73 articles from the Review Journal (57% of the Review Journal's total articles about the creation of NSC). Since *conflict* has been identified in many framing research studies as a frame in news coverage of a variety of social issues, I used an existing definition to initially model the *conflict* frame. The *conflict* frame was defined as articles that emphasized a struggle between individuals, groups or institutions. “Implicit in a conflict frame is the notion of compliance: one side must win while the opposing side must lose or give in so that social control can be recreated and maintained” (Fleming-Rife & Proffitt, 2004, p. 247). I looked for language that conveyed a struggle, fight or argument. As I went through the articles, it became clear that three specific conflicts were being framed, each with their own set of themes, metaphors, images, catch phrases and vocabulary.

#### *Conflict: Funding Struggle*

As the largest group of articles within the frame, this sub-frame focused on a conflict over funding for the state college. This sub-frame was comprised of 96 articles from the Sun and 69 articles from the Review Journal. This frame usually focused on a struggle over funding between the state college and one of the other schools within the state higher education system, but sometimes the frame showed the higher education system as a whole was fighting for funds with other agencies and interests within the state of Nevada.

In many articles, legislators and regents were depicted as opposing or supporting the new college. Opponents argued that the state college would divert funds from the other

colleges and universities within the state system. In the Review Journal, Patton wrote, “The proposed Henderson college is a new player in the quest for state funding, and its inclusion is likely to fuel an already competitive environment” (March 4, 2000), and in the April 10, 2000 issue, wrote, “UNLV officials, including Cloud, have expressed concern that the state’s universities and community colleges already are under funded and may suffer additional setbacks if another campus is added to the state system.” Also in the Review Journal, the headline, “Senator Takes Aim at Nevada State College at Henderson” (Whaley, February 25, 2003) created a visual image of shooting the college down.

The Sun printed some vivid quotes from opponents of the college. Regent Tom Kirkpatrick, heard a “great financial sucking sound” of money being shifted from other schools to support Henderson (Ryan, December 2, 1999). Regent Steve Sisolak said, “How can you say it is not going to take a bite out of other institutions ?” (Ryan, June 26, 2000). Larry Stevens, deputy executive director for Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, said, “One of the concerns the commission has is, are they going to bleed the lower program institutions of their resources?” (Knight, April 6, 2001). The images created by the words “sucking,” “bite” and “bleed” are framing devices used to portray the college as a sort of parasite.

Supporters of the new college called it a long term solution to growth in the area. In an article in the Sun titled, “Supporters Vow To Fight On for Henderson College,” (December 27, 2000) Libby wrote, “They say the merits of the school, billed as a long-term solution to growth in the Las Vegas Valley and as a more immediate solution to teaching and nursing shortages, will win over legislators.” The Review Journal reported

that Assemblywoman Vonne Chowning justified the college by saying, “Questions about the wisdom of establishing the new college can be answered by looking at the cost for a student to attend. A student can get a four year degree at Henderson for \$66 per credit this fall, compared with the \$85 that will be charged at UNLV” (Whaley, April 30, 2003).

Regents and legislators argued over the speed with which the state college initiative was moving. A number of articles used images and metaphors to illustrate the haste. One article in the Sun titled, “Speed of Project Worries Critics,” started with the metaphor, “Steve Sisolak is suffering from windburn. The cause isn’t fierce gusts that buffet the Las Vegas Valley this time of year. Instead, he’s feeling the effects of a proposal to build a state college in Henderson whipping through the university Board of Regents” (Kuz, December 26, 1999). A second article in the same issue was titled, “Phantom College on Fast Track” (Kuz), and then on April 6, 2001, another article expanded on that image. Titled, “College on Fast Track: Henderson School is facing Hurdles on Way to Funding,” the article used the image of a speeding train. “Following a glowing study justifying its need and powered by the endorsement of key state politicians, the idea has moved like a speeding train from Bartlett’s living room through the hands of state educators and into the halls of the Nevada Legislature, where lawmakers seem poised to provide \$29 million in startup funds” (Knight).

The Review Journal and the Sun used the funding conflict frame in decidedly different ways. The Review Journal was usually highly critical of the state college while the Sun often supported the state college. The Review Journal’s education columnist, Ken Ward, regularly took shots at the new state college. He referred to the college as a “boondoggle” (November 25, 1999; July 24, 2002), a term that describes something as a

key waste of time and money. In one article, he referred to the location of the new campus as “Hooterville,” and sarcastically wrote, “Despite barrels of bad ink, reams of negative reports and a governor calling for flat budgets, the Board of Regents likes this virtual campus just fine, thank you” (March 6, 2002). In another article, he writes, “I’ve been critical of the pork-barrel delight known as Hooterville Tech” (December 24, 1998). Through these statements, Ward questioned why the new college should be located in Henderson, a place on the periphery and out of reach for many Southern Nevada residents. He also drew attention to the bias toward Henderson displayed by the politicians who were pushing the college forward. Locating the new college in Henderson would clearly bring financial gain for that area.

Regular Review Journalist columnist Steven Sebelius also fueled the funding debate. In his December 3, 2002 column he asked, “Here’s a good question: Since Boondoggle U., also known as Nevada State College at Henderson, has enrolled far fewer students than anticipated, does that mean the fledgling campus will be giving back some of the \$3.75 million in startup costs the Legislature allocated in 2001? Or that next year’s laughable \$17 million budget allocation will be scaled back?”

Six editorials in the Review Journal framed the funding conflict to make the college appear in a negative way. Two editorials suggested that the state college was taking funds away from the existing state schools: “We have been told the state is in the midst of a budget crunch. In the meantime, many students at UNLV can’t graduate on time because they are unable to register for classes they need. Does it thus make sense to divert resources right now to start an entirely new college—which six months before its scheduled opening has attracted only 40 applicants—just miles down the road from

UNLV?” (February 27, 2002). Six months later, an editorial articulated the same message: “And as students at Nevada’s universities struggle to find classes in which they can enroll, the Legislature funnels millions into the fledgling, 200-student Nevada State College at an industrial park in Henderson. Some \$3.75 million is slated to go to the minimal standard, storefront campus this academic year- a chunk of change that would go a long way toward mitigating the effect of the reductions at Nevada’s two major universities” (August 30, 2002).

In three editorials, the Review Journal used metaphors to criticize the politicians who pushed the college through the funding process: “Is Nevada State College at Henderson—the sow’s ear which Speaker Perkins insists on funding like a silk purse—really necessary?” (December 13, 2002); “We can only hope that fiscal watchdogs such as Las Vegas Assemblyman Bob Beers will prevail on their colleagues and dry up the school’s subsidies... and fast. The state taxpayers could then throw a wake for this white elephant that’s long overdue” (December 1, 2002). Another editorial is titled with the metaphor, “Big Hat, Not Many Cattle,” and the sub-head includes yet another metaphor: “Henderson Tech: All-You-Can-Eat Bureaucratic Buffet” (August 6, 2002).

The Sun’s editorials, on the other hand, framed the funding conflict in a positive way for the new college. After founding college president Richard Moore suddenly stepped down, questions regarding the college’s future were pondered in an editorial titled, “Needed: Money, Not Magic” (February 27, 2002). The editorial asked readers, “How should people feel about the college? A state university system should have colleges specializing in education and nursing, two critical public needs. The college should not be abandoned. Finally, what lesson can we learn about starting a new college? Most

importantly, if a state college is to be started and private fund-raising is to be successful, the state needs to commit serious dollars.” In another editorial titled “Shuttering the College Doesn’t Make Sense,” a reference to the creation of UNLV is offered as a justification for funding the college: “We’re glad that the Legislature wasn’t shortsighted back in 1957, when Maude Frazier Hall stood all alone in the desert on South Maryland Parkway. From that humble beginning came the University of Nevada, Las Vegas” (February 26, 2003).

In his “Where I Stand” column, Sun editor Brian Greenspun, lauded Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson for taking a chance on the state college, when critics were charging that the Mayor’s backing of the college was just pork for Henderson. Greenspun wrote, “There was a time when leadership was defined by the willingness of elected officials at all levels to step out in front of the people to show them the better way to a better quality of life. Today it is difficult to find a politician willing to even suggest that taxes are a necessary component to the kind and quality of life we all want for our families. There is one though... His name is Mayor Jim Gibson” (March 8, 2001).

It should be noted that Hank Greenspun owned and developed much of the Green Valley area of Henderson in the 1967-1990 time frame and a new college would most likely enhance land values. Brian Greenspun and the rest of the Greenspun family involved in the Sun had a personal interest in the success of the state college. Sun articles about the new college reflected that bias.

Although Greenspun always seemed positive when writing about the new college, his columnists exhibited less enthusiasm. About a month after Greenspun’s touting of Mayor Gibson, Sun columnist Ruthe Deskin asked readers, “Why can’t I understand the

logic of rushing forward on the proposed state college in Henderson? My choice, as a taxpayer, would be to use the funding to increase facilities and opportunities at existing institutions of education where a need exists... The entire situation reeks of some big chains being yanked by some mighty influential people” (April 5, 2001). Columnist Dean Juipe also wrote of protecting the status quo: “Aren’t UNLV and the Community College of Southern Nevada—which has two campuses—providing sufficient opportunity to those people in this area who want to continue their educations?” Juipe ended his column with, “All in all, there’s something to be said for leaving well enough alone” (February 14, 2000).

*Conflict: Town v. Gown*

This sub-frame was comprised of 16 articles from the Sun and two articles from the Review Journal. In the *town v. gown* sub-frame, town referred to the rural area in the city of Henderson where the college was to be located, while gown referred to the college. This sub-frame was defined as articles that emphasized a tension between the residents of the area and supporters of the college.

Headlines in both newspapers illustrated the *town v. gown* conflict. Headlines in the Sun included: “Feud in the Hills: Paradise, Mission Residents Resist Development” (Libby, June 26, 2001); “Proposed College Site Spurs Concern Over Public’s View” (Harmon, June 19, 2000); “Residents Will Get Chance to Publicly Oppose College Site” (Libby, June 18, 2001); “Henderson Citizens Protest Downtown Expansion Proposal” (Miller, March 29, 2000); “Upscale Subdivision Residents Oppose Proposed College Site” (Libby, April 30, 2001). Headlines in the Review Journal read: “Opponents Speak

Out on College Site” (Patton, April 29, 2001) and “Tension High at State College Meeting” (Bond, April 18, 2001).

A metaphor that reflected the sentiment of opponents of the college was, “not in my back yard.” The lead in a Sun article said, “Mission Hills residents for the past three months have voiced opposition to building the Nevada State College on city and federal land in their back yards, arguing not against the college but against the development they say will accompany it” (Libby, June 18, 2001). Another article in the Sun explained that, “Many residents said that a college built in the foothills just south of the current city line will degrade home values, bring increased crime and destroy their rural lifestyle” (Libby, April 30, 2001). The article quoted a resident saying, “If I wanted to live in Green Valley I would... I’m not against a college, but I am against it being placed in a rural area.” In the Review Journal, quotes from the residents sounded out this sentiment. “Why here?” (Bond, April 18, 2001); “I believe there are better sites in urban areas,” said Laura Pederson, who lives near the would-be college site west of the Wagon Wheel Drive exit of U.S. Highway 95. “How we got to be first on the hit parade, I don’t know” (Patton, April 29, 2001).

The Sun also printed articles about supporters of the college that emphasized mutual benefit for both town and gown. Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson was quoted in an article declaring, “The benefits (of the state college) to the city and the state are substantial... There is a need for more higher education classrooms in Nevada. The state of Nevada has no option, no choice but to engage itself in a state college” (Miller, March 1, 2000). In another article, “Henderson Councilman Jack Clark asked about 180 Mission Hills residents gathered at City Hall Tuesday to remember the neighborhoods they had grown



up in and put aside the negativism he says is controlling discussion of a proposed state college site just south of their rural homes” (Libby, May 2, 2001).

In a later article in the Sun, the influence of the media in framing the *town v. gown* conflict was illustrated. “Councilman Jack Clark blamed inaccurate media reports for lingering opposition to the college site. He said it had been reported incorrectly that as many as 40 bars were planned in the vicinity of the college (June 20, 2001). It was unclear, if the inaccurate reporting came from the Sun, the Review Journal or the local television news.

#### *Conflict: Competing State Colleges*

This sub-frame was comprised of 10 articles from the Sun and two articles from the Review Journal. Articles using this frame highlighted a conflict between the new state college and the already well-established UNLV and Community College of Southern Nevada. Since conflict over funding was covered in the *funding* sub-frame, the *competing* state colleges sub-frame highlighted conflict over other issues, such as enrollment and institutional affiliation.

Articles framed the addition of the state college to the existing institutions as a fight over students. When the Sun reported on UNLV’s new high tech computer admissions process, the article asserted, “With Nevada State College at Henderson opening Sept. 3, UNLV will have its first regional competitor.” A quote from UNLV’s interim director of admissions said, “We’re all in competition” (Knight, June 10, 2002).

Assemblyman Richard Perkins and other supporters promoted the idea that creation of the college would be mutually beneficial to all the institutions. The Review Journal wrote that Chancellor Richard Jarvis backed the college for two reasons: “First, it would

take some of the enrollment growth pressures off UNLV. Second, he said, it would allow UNLV to concentrate on becoming a respected research university rather than focusing the bulk of its energies on teaching undergraduates” (Patton, April 1, 1999). The title of that article, “State College Debated,” fueled the conflict frame. Later, in a January 7, 2003 issue, The Review Journal ran an article that implied that UNLV, CCSN and NSC were working together and that the new state college would be beneficial to students as well. It was titled, “School Alliance to aid Students: Colleges to Give Undergrads More Options” (Patton). The word “alliance” completely changed the framing of the conflict.

Some articles focused on the decision of NSC’s president Richard Moore to align with the University of Nevada, Reno for accreditation, as opposed to UNLV. The lead in an article in the Sun began, “In an apparent slap in the face of UNLV, the proposed state college in Henderson chose today to align with the University of Nevada, Reno to work for accreditation” (Ryan, June 23, 2000). Regent Steve Sisolak was mentioned in the article as saying, “It will make UNLV and Henderson competing schools.” A later article in the Sun also framed the subject of accreditation as a conflict, by leading with, “The controversial alignment between the proposed state college at Henderson and University of Nevada, Reno, has been reopened for discussion” (Libby, October 18, 2000).

### *Growth Process*

This frame was featured in 96 articles from the Sun (approximately 41% of the Sun’s total articles about the creation of NSC) and 53 articles from the Review Journal (approximately 41% of the Review Journal’s total articles about the creation of NSC). The creation of the college was framed as a *growth process* by articles that depicted the college’s existence, from conception, to father figures to growing pains. The *growth*

*process* frame depicted the creation of the college in mostly a positive way and as a natural process. Numerous articles used the words “fledgling” or “new” or “start-up” whenever it mentioned the college.

Many articles used the word “birth” to describe the creation of the school. The Sun wrote about Governor Kenny Guinn’s approval of the college, “setting into motion the birth of a new state-run college system that would effectively create a middle layer of education for students” (Knight, January 23, 2001). When it covered the first day of classes at the college, the Sun used the phrase, “marking the birth of Nevada’s first state college” (Knight, September 3, 2002). The Review Journal used the image of a baby in its headline for an article about the college: “First Step for Henderson College: Find Campus Site” (Patton, January 30, 2000). The same article used the phrase “create and nurture” when speaking of the founding president’s plans for the college.

The various presidents of NSC were frequently framed as father figures, nurturing and guiding the college through tough times. A Review Journal article about the hiring of the college’s second president, Kerry Romesburg, described him as the person “who has guided the Utah Valley State College for 14 years” (Patton, July 31, 2002) and who now will be “leading” the Nevada State College.

Growing pains was a central theme in the *growth process* frame. The term “struggling” was often used to describe the college as it grew. In one article, the Sun used the metaphor of “life support” to describe the college’s struggle. “Nevada State College at Henderson officials said they are thankful that no one is pulling the plug on them this legislative session... But with drastic budget cuts being recommended, they acknowledged the school will be on life support for the next few years” (Knight, January

16, 2003). In the same vein, a quote in the Review Journal by founding president Richard Moore reassured readers that “the college is alive and well” (Whaley, June 30, 2001). The Review Journal quoted college president Kerry Romesburg’s description of the struggling status of the college when he was hired: “When I first arrived, there was a huge question mark that followed me and the college around” (Ross, November 19, 2003).

Other articles within the growth process frame used words relating to “building” the college. Phrases such as “pouring the foundation” and “laying the groundwork” were often used. Other terms used by articles that evoked images in the *growth process* frame were “opening day,” “kickoff,” “off the ground” and “launch.”

### *Consequences*

This frame was featured in 13 articles from the Sun (approximately 5% of the Sun’s total articles about the creation of NSC) and two articles from the Review Journal (approximately 2% of the Review Journal’s total articles about the creation of NSC). A *consequences* frame was defined by Fleming-Rife and Profitt (2004) as “a way to reassure or brace the audience for what was perceived as short-term and long-term consequences of the impending decision that would severely disrupt the status quo” (p. 247). The model I developed for this frame focused on the consequences of building the college other than those concerned with funding. The consequences frame also ruled out articles that focused on consequences to residents where the college would be built, since most of those articles were dominated by the *town v. gown* frame. Instead, the consequences frame followed the definition provided by Fleming-Rife and Profitt and was illustrated in articles that reassured or braced readers.

Several articles in the Sun framed the long-term consequences of the college as contributing to the growth and vitality of the Henderson area. “Business Owners Root for Downtown Campus” was the title of an article that emphasized the benefit of the college to downtown Henderson businesses (Miller, February 24, 2000). The article included quotes from business owners and workers that suggested enthusiasm and a warm welcome for the college. “The whole downtown shuts down at 5 p.m. right now,” said an employee of a coffee shop in the area who was looking forward to drawing business from the college. “A lot of college kids hang out at cafes. It’s the in-thing now.” The owner of a tavern said, “I know business will pick up. It (the college) will bring a whole new generation downtown.”

Editorial articles in the Sun stressed that the future of the Southern Nevada community depends on education and that the new college was an important factor. Editor Brian Greenspun’s “Where I Stand” column was sometimes written by guest columnists. On August 22, 1999, guest columnist Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson wrote of the need for establishing a state college in Henderson. He began the column by emphasizing the value of education. “Education is critical to the future of our state and to the future of Southern Nevada, but we have a major challenge to meet. We cannot put our children in college if we do not have room for them, nor can we prepare them for college if we are unable to meet the growing demand for qualified teachers to teach them.” On August 6, 2002, guest columnist Christine Chairsell, acting president of NSC at the time, wrote, “A college is both reflective of the values of the community that surrounds it and the means to achieve the higher aspirations of the community. Our explicit commitment to the values of trust, candor, dissent, individual accountability and

continual evaluation of our performance will produce the students that Nevada needs and serves.” By appealing to familiar values, this article framed the consequences of building the college as positive to the community.

The Sun’s choice of guest columnists indicates the bias the newspaper had toward the new state college. As mayor of Henderson, Gibson had a vested interest in the property tax base the college would bring, as well as other economic benefits to the community. As acting president of NSC, Chairsell had an interest in seeing the college succeed. The Sun deliberately chose to give supporters of the college a voice.

The Review Journal framed the consequences of the college in a more negative way. One article focused on the possibility that the new college would not solve the teacher shortage. The article quoted an excerpt from Governor Kenny Guinn’s state of the state address. Guinn said, “Tonight, I am pleased to endorse a project that addresses this (teacher) shortage—the proposed state college in Henderson... The new institution will enable us to train more teachers than ever before” (Patton, January 29, 2001). Although the governor was telling readers of a potential consequence of the college, the Review Journal tried to influence how readers thought about it, by posing a question in the very next paragraph: “But if the state builds the college, will the prospective teachers come?” A later article in the Review Journal foreshadowed the negative consequence of cost: “Though the plans are grandiose, and the long-term costs will be so astronomical they can only be guessed at, Romesburg said he expects to get the go-ahead” (Lake, January 2004).

In summary, news articles in both the Sun and the Review Journal tended to frame the creation of NSC primarily as a conflict. Articles emphasized a struggle over funding,

between town and gown and between competing state colleges. News articles often also framed the creation of NSC as a growth process. Articles gave readers a view of the creation of the college as a mostly natural process, complete with growing pains. Another frame, consequences, was used to make readers aware of the long-term and short-term consequences of the new state college. These three primary frames and three sub-frames told readers what to think about the creation of NSC and how to think about it.

### UNLV

Three overarching frames concerning the creation of UNLV became apparent in the 126 newspaper articles: *growth process*; *conflict* and *consequences*.

Table 2	<u>Local Newspaper Frames for the Creation of UNLV</u>
Frame	Total Percentage of Newspaper Articles
Growth Process	78%
Conflict	17%
Consequences	5%

*Growth process* was by far the frame most often used by the local papers, with a total of 98 articles (approximately 78%). The second most used frame was *conflict*, with a total of 21 articles (approximately 17%). Within the frame of *conflict*, two salient sub-frames emerged: *funding struggle* and *town v. gown*. Of those 21 *conflict* articles, 14 were categorized as the sub-frame *funding struggle* and seven as the sub-frame *town v.*

*gown*. The newspapers used the *consequences* frame in seven articles (approximately 5%).

While reading these results, it is important to note that individual bylines for articles were rarely used by the Review Journal or the Sun. The parenthetical citations therefore contain no author names. It is also important to understand the derivation of the name, UNLV, since many of the articles refer to the school by other names. The first courses offered at what is now UNLV were actually University of Nevada, Reno courses taught in the Las Vegas area from 1951 to 1953. These Las Vegas courses were considered a “program” of the University of Nevada, Reno. The Las Vegas program became a “branch” of the University of Nevada, Reno in 1954 and was referred to as “Nevada Southern.” In 1957, Nevada Southern became a regular college and in 1965 officially became “Nevada Southern University.” During the first graduation ceremony for Nevada Southern University in 1964, Nevada Governor Grant Sawyer first used the name “University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV)” to refer to the school. UNLV was made the official name of the school by the Nevada Board of Regents in 1969.

### *Growth Process*

This frame was featured in 36 articles from the Sun (approximately 76% of the Sun’s total articles about the creation of UNLV) and 62 articles from the Review Journal (approximately 78% of the Review Journal’s total articles about the creation of UNLV). The creation of UNLV was framed as a *growth process* by articles that emphasized the development of UNLV from a branch of the University of Nevada, Reno to a college called Nevada Southern to a university called UNLV. The *growth process* frame depicted the creation of UNLV in mostly a positive way and as a building process.



Reporting on the groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for the new school, a Sun article emphasized the building process. The lead began, “Southern Nevada’s first university campus site will come into official existence today with ground-breaking ceremonies on Maryland Parkway” (April 29, 1956). The article continued with an image of the construction process. “The first shovelful of dirt designating the beginning of the first Southern campus building will be turned by D. Maude Frazier, veteran Clark County assemblywoman and educational leader.”

On March 17, 1957, the Review Journal indicated its approval of the new university. The lead read, “Sunday will be a red-letter day in the history of Southern Nevada because at 2 o’clock the cornerstone will be laid for the first building of the Nevada Southern University. The catch phrase, “red-letter day” had positive meaning for readers. Similarly, the Sun encouraged readers to think of the new university in a positive way by describing a groundbreaking ceremony for a new building for UNLV would be a “brief, but historical occasion during which several speakers will outline how the convention hall started and what it means to the future of the community” (October 30, 1957).

In a June 10, 1957 editorial in the “It Seems to Us” column titled, “Is He Kidding?” the Review Journal let readers know what they thought of one of the Regent’s suggestions for setting up temporary quonset huts on the campus. The huts would be borrowed from the Nellis Air Force base and would be a temporary solution to space problems, but the Review Journal thought they would be an eyesore and not good enough for the new school. The editorial put the word “temporary” in quotes three times to indicate sarcasm, saying, “Once such structures are established, they are like taxes, they never are removed.” The editorial continued, “It is inconceivable that anyone would

think of throwing together a bunch of junk alongside the beautiful building that is to be constructed here.”

An article in the Sun about the quonset huts, framed the story in a less negative way. Headlined, “Quonset Hut For Campus Facility Pushed By Elwell,” the article framed the suggestion as a helpful one. The lead read, “Efforts to provide a social hall and study facilities for Nevada Southern’s new campus, where summer sessions are scheduled to begin Monday, are being pushed by William Elwell of Las Vegas, member of the state Board of Regents” (June 8, 1957). The article didn’t mention the controversial quonset huts until the second paragraph.

Review Journal editor Albert Cahlan wrote about the growth process in his “From Where I Sit” column on June 12, 1957 and framed the creation of the new school in a positive way by telling a personal narrative. He described how he went to look at Nevada Southern’s first new building and how he sat for a few moments “taking in all the details of the embryo campus.” He compared the experience of students at the new school to the experiences he had as a student at UNR. He offered the following invitation to readers: “If you are one who enjoys watching communities develop, drive out Maryland Parkway beyond San Francisco Street... Take a good look at the new building and do a little dreaming yourself.” In this way, Cahlan made readers feel like they could be part of the growth process.

In a September 11, 1957 article, the Review Journal used an image of a building bursting at the seams in reporting how the new school was already outgrowing its present space. “Enrollment at the school, according to local officials, is straining the present

building to the partitions and some means of accommodating the students is an absolute necessity now.”

A May 6, 1964 article in the Review Journal used a metaphor of siblings to describe growth at the two university campuses. The headline read, “NSU Now Tops Reno in Growth,” and the article said, “When it comes to age, the University of Nevada campus at Las Vegas doesn’t hold a candle to its older sister... But younger sister NSU is now bigger sister when it comes to counting acres.” Manifested in the article is a rivalry between the two siblings and a shadow of the rivalry between the city of Las Vegas and the city of Reno. Las Vegas passed Reno in population in 1955.

The Review Journal indicated the rivalry again in an article that reported on a name change for the southern school. The article noted that, “The subject is a touchy one with NSU students who frequently charge that the Maryland Parkway campus is regularly slighted by the powerful ‘big sister’ school in Reno” (December 9, 1964). The article carried the headline, “UNLV at Last?” and began, “The University of Nevada at Las Vegas? That title, a longtime dream of students and backers of Nevada Southern University, moved another inch toward reality Tuesday.” The headline and the lead indicated that the name change was a longtime coming.

### *Conflict*

This frame was featured in nine articles from the Sun (approximately 19% of the Sun’s total articles about the creation of UNLV) and 12 articles from the Review Journal (approximately 15% of the Review Journal’s total articles about the creation of UNLV). The *conflict* frame was based on definitions of the frame from previous research and defined as it was for NSC: articles that emphasized a struggle between individuals,

groups or institutions. I looked for language that conveyed a struggle, fight or argument. Variations of the words “oppose” and “protest” often appeared in headlines. As I went through the articles, it became clear that two specific conflicts were being framed, each with their own set of themes, metaphors, images, catch phrases and vocabulary.

### *Conflict: Funding Struggle*

As the larger of the two groups of articles within the *conflict* frame, this sub-frame focused on a conflict over funding for UNLV. This sub-frame was comprised of five articles from the Sun and nine articles from the Review Journal. This frame usually focused on a struggle over funding for higher education between the northern part of Nevada, where Reno is located, and the southern part of the state, where Las Vegas is located. In three of the 14 articles in the *funding struggle* sub-group, the article was framed to focus on the higher education system as a whole fighting for funds with other agencies and interests within the state of Nevada.

The earliest article that described a north-south struggle over funding reported on a survey undertaken to assess the need for a southern branch of the University of Nevada. The article in the Review Journal described how Dr. Minard Stout, president of the University, pointed out that “the finances received by the state are just about enough to operate the university as it is and any junior college or southern branch operation would have to be fitted into the present budget unless the legislators could and would appropriate additional funds” (November 24, 1953). This article suggested that northern and southern Nevada would be competing for funds, unless the legislature provided more.

In 1954, when Nevada Regents eliminated previously budgeted funds for a proposed UNLV building, the Review Journal and the Sun ran similar articles with nearly identical

headlines. The Review Journal's headline read, "Regents Chop Vegas Building Out of Budget" (August 15, 1954), while the Sun's headline said, "Regents Chop Vegas Branch U. Out of Budget" (August 14, 1954). Although either paper could have used a word with a less aggressive connotation, both newspapers chose the word "chop." Both papers quoted President Stout's observation that "the first consideration had to go to the elimination of temporary classrooms on the Reno campus," a statement that depicted Reno as competing with Las Vegas.

On March 15, 1955, the Review Journal printed another article highlighting the funding battle. The article reported that the state senate was considering not appropriating funds for the southern campus. The headline lamented, "Hope Fading for Southern Campus," and in the body of the story it stated that, "Senate Finance Committee sentiment was against the appropriation because of a feeling that with the little money that is available, the Legislature should build up the main campus in Reno." In addition to drawing attention to the two sides engaged in the fight for funds, the article identified Las Vegas as the underdog.

The following day, on March 16, 1955, the Sun published an article on the same topic and used an aggressive term in the headline: "Protest Move to Kill Bldg. Plan of Nevada Southern." The headline implied that the Legislature was making a move to kill the Las Vegas school and that students were organizing a protest. The language of the article suggested that the students' actions were urgent. The Sun wrote that the student council president "urged" students and townspeople to protest and that "the students came to life yesterday and started a campaign of letters and telegrams to the senators..." The article also noted that "Sen. Ken Johnson said yesterday that the Senate is not favorable toward

appropriating the money for the Las Vegas campus when the Reno campus needs so many things.”

Although most of the articles in this sub-frame focused on a north versus south struggle over funds, three articles highlighted a struggle for funds between the University system as a whole and other agencies within the state. One article was an editorial in the Review Journal titled “Tragic But True” (February 3, 1957). In the “It Seems to Us” column, the Review Journal accused Governor Charles Russell of thinking more about the future of the Economic Development Agency’s “Badwater Bill,” a pseudo-pro prospector, than about Nevada Southern University. “A peek at the recent budget which the governor presented to the Legislature reveals that he is more interested in seeing that Badwater Bill gets sufficient travel expenses than he is in a classroom building for Nevada Southern...Badwater Bill can be housed in the finest hotels in the country and eat food of a type to which he has never been accustomed—but the youngsters of the state can go hang.” Implicit in this editorial is the Review Journal’s staunch support for the creation of UNLV.

#### *Conflict: Town v. Gown*

This sub-frame was reflected in four Sun articles and three articles from the Review Journal. In the *town v. gown* sub-frame, “town” referred to the area in the city of Las Vegas where UNLV was to be located, while “gown” referred to the school that was to become UNLV. This sub-frame was defined as articles that emphasized a tension between the residents of the area or parties interested in the area (since the area was largely undeveloped at the time) and supporters of UNLV.

On January 3, 1956, a Sun headline proclaimed, “Southern Nevada Home-Siters Oppose University Location.” The Home-Siters objected primarily to the small parcel of land that the school planned to build on. The Sun included quotes from the Home-Siters that explained their objections. “It is the opinion of the Southern Nevada Home-Siters that the placement of our new university on so small a parcel would be a tragic mistake.” Another quote by the University president appeared to be an invitation to argue. “Nevada University President Minard Stout reportedly told Southern Nevada Home-Siters that, ‘The University is going ahead with its plans to locate the new Nevada Southern University in Paradise Valley’ and ‘you can do anything you like to oppose it.’” The article clearly pitted the two sides against each other.

Another article in the Sun introduced an ally for the school in its fight against the Home-Siters. The headline, “Paradise Valley Group Supports University on Nevada Southern Site” insinuated that there was a conflict of interests within the town. Jack Schofield, president of the Paradise Valley Improvement Association and today a Regent, was quoted in the article, saying that “the association questions the motives behind the criticism being made by those opposing the immediate development of the campus site.” (February 2, 1956). Schofield also warned that the “controversy could postpone the beginning of the university, ‘the long awaited dream of the people of Southern Nevada.’” An article in the Sun a few days later proclaimed, “Home-Siters Protest Meet on Campus Flops” (February 5, 1956). Although about 50 people showed up for the meeting, the Sun framed the protest as a failure by stating that it “drew a crowd of only some 50 persons,” as opposed to saying “as many as 50.”

### *Consequences*

This frame was featured in three articles from the Sun (approximately 6% of the Sun's total articles about the creation of UNLV) and four articles from the Review Journal (approximately 5% of the Review Journal's total articles about the creation of UNLV). I used the *consequences* frame previously defined for NSC, based on Fleming-Rife and Proffitt's (2004) definition for articles that reassured or braced readers. The model I developed for this frame was similar to the NSC model, focusing on consequences of building UNLV other than those concerned with funding. The consequences frame also ruled out articles that focused on consequences to residents or concerned parties where UNLV would be built, since most of those articles were dominated by the *town v. gown* frame.

Both the Sun and the Review Journal posited that a long-term consequence of building a university in Southern Nevada was that Nevada's college-age population would be educated in the state and were likely to stay in Nevada once they became professionals. In an article on November 24, 1953 headlined, "Stout Stresses Need for Branch University in Southern Nevada," the Sun cited one of University President Stout's reasons for establishing the school. "When a college is available to students, the percentage of students engaged in higher education increases." A survey was cited that said, "Considering that the state of Nevada contains approximately one percent of the nation's population, on the basis of a national collegiate population of two and a half million, Nevada should have 2,500 college students." However, it was noted, "there are only 1,250 enrolled in the state." The article suggested that one reason for the small enrollment is that the only institution of higher education in the state is located in Reno.



The Review Journal also stressed that a consequence of having a college or university in the southern part of the state was for the benefit of area residents. In an article headlined, "Need for a Good University Told Kiwanians," the newspaper described how the managing director of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce told the Kiwanians organization that, "the University not only would prove to be a real cultural influence on the area, but would help professionalize this section." This statement serves to reassure Review Journal readers that the consequences of the new school will be positive.

On November 2, 1951, the Review Journal hinted at both long-term and short-term consequences. The article stated that, "The Administrative Council of the University of Reno reported that the establishment of the Vegas branch is of far reaching importance and that progress should be made cautiously and with full faculty thought and direction." For the short-term, "The Council also suggested that members of the faculty give careful thought to the nature of the work that might be offered during the year 1952-1953."

On May 10, 1954, the Review Journal again highlighted both long and short-term consequences. Headlined, "University Officials Plan Details for Vegas Branch," the article quoted the dean of statewide development for the University of Nevada. "The new southern Nevada college will serve both as a transfer unit for those students deciding to go on to a four year university degree and as a short-term school for students wanting training in the technical fields of study." The dean also declared that "one of the primary purposes of the expanded college was to satisfy the needs of students who do not want to attend a four year university or go out of state for higher education training."

Both newspapers also emphasized the inconvenience of Las Vegas teachers spending their summers in Reno to earn recertification credits and for area students to have to

travel 450 miles and spend four years in Reno to get a Nevada degree. Having students attend college for two years in Las Vegas and two years in Reno would be more reasonable. Consequences of creating UNLV were framed in a mostly positive way in both the Review Journal and the Sun.

Overall, three main frames emerged from the study of articles in the Review Journal and the Sun about the creation of UNLV. The growth process was the frame in which readers most often viewed the creation of UNLV. A conflict frame was also used and the sub-frames funding struggle and town v. gown were employed. The funding struggle focused mainly on a struggle over funds for higher education between the northern and southern parts of Nevada. Finally, a consequences frame was used by the local newspapers, primarily to reassure readers about the long-term and short-term consequences of building a university in Southern Nevada.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### Discussion

This study attempted to answer four research questions. First, what were the dominant frames used by the Sun and the Review Journal to portray the creation of UNLV and NSC? Second, were there substantial differences between how the Sun and the Review Journal framed the creation of UNLV and NSC? Third, did new frames emerge when NSC was established? Fourth, was the establishment of UNLV in 1967 met with similar opposition in the community as the establishment of NSC in 2002?

The frames used to portray the creation of UNLV were *growth process*, *conflict* and *consequences*. Within the *conflict* frame, *funding struggle* and *town v. gown* were sub-frames. Articles in the Review Journal and the Sun framed the creation of UNLV mostly as a growth process that emphasized building the school. Sometimes, articles highlighted a conflict over either funding between the University of Nevada in Reno and UNLV, or between UNLV and the area where it was to be located. A few articles stressed the long and short-term consequences of creating the school.

The frames employed to convey the creation of NSC were *conflict*, *growth process* and *consequences*. Within the *conflict* frame, *funding struggle*, *town v. gown* and *competing state colleges* were used as sub-frames. Readers of the Sun and the Review

Journal saw the creation of NSC mostly as a conflict, and the conflict usually focused on a struggle over funding between the state college and UNLV or the Community College of Southern Nevada. Occasionally, articles were framed as a conflict between NSC and the residents of rural Henderson, and, a little less often, articles portrayed a fight over students and institutional affiliation between NSC and other Nevada schools of higher education that were already established. Readers of both newspapers also saw the creation of NSC as a natural growth process, and sometimes the articles focused on the long and short-term consequences of building the college.

I originally thought that “victory” and “north versus south” would emerge as primary frames in this study. Instead, the word “victory” was used as a metaphor in describing the first graduation ceremony of NSC, a milestone for the college, that came under the frame, growth process. “North versus south” described the two areas of the state that were involved in a conflict over funding for UNLV, and were subsumed by the sub-frame of conflict called funding struggle.

Both the Sun and the Review Journal framed the creation of UNLV in a mostly positive way, clearly supporting the addition of a university to Southern Nevada. However, this study shows that the Review Journal framed the creation of NSC in a way that was detrimental to the already well-established UNLV and community college. The Review Journal ran scathing editorials blasting the legislators, Regents and others who supported the college. Regular columnists used words such as “boondoggle,” “Hooterville Tech” and “pork-barrel” in articles about NSC. The political and editorial philosophy of the editors and publisher of the Review Journal was a factor in how events were portrayed.

By contrast, the Sun framed the establishment of NSC in a mostly positive way, highlighting the benefits to the community that the college would bring. Since the Greenspun family owned much of the community where the college would be located, the clear bias the Sun showed in favor of the college might be expected.

The frames conflict, growth process and consequences were consistent over time, with both newspapers using these three frames for both the creation of UNLV and of NSC. However, the frequency with which the papers used the frames changed over time. For UNLV, most articles were framed as a growth process, while for NSC, most articles were framed as a conflict. One new sub-frame within conflict emerged with the creation of NSC. The *competing state colleges* sub-frame was non-existent during the creation of UNLV because the only other institution of higher education in the state was the University of Nevada at Reno. The Reno and Las Vegas schools competed over funds, but these articles were categorized as the sub-frame of conflict called funding struggle.

This study revealed that the creation of UNLV in 1967 was met with some controversy in the community, but not nearly with as much controversy as the creation of NSC in 2002. Letters to the editor were not part of the sample for UNLV, so it was difficult to gauge community sentiment, but articles often reported on conflict over funding that had to be divided between the Reno school and the Las Vegas school, as well as conflict over where to locate the university in Southern Nevada. For the creation of NSC, letters to the editor were part of the sample and headlines of letters in the Sun read, “NSC President’s Salary Ridiculous” (August 5, 2003), “College Won’t Solve Teacher, Nurse Shortage” (March 11, 2002) and “Questions Linger About College” (April 25, 2001).

Both newspapers ran numerous articles in which opponents of the state college were quoted. Legislators argued whether or not the college would take money away from the state's other colleges and universities, as well as from other state agencies. Regents debated whether or not the college was needed because other institutions might be able to fulfill the same needs of students. Residents of Henderson protested the location of the college in their rural area.

Although there was much opposition to NSC, there was also support to fuel the controversy. The Sun clearly framed the creation of NSC in a positive way. Both papers interviewed and quoted supporters of the college. Letters to the editor in both newspapers sometimes indicated positive sentiment, with headlines such as, "New Henderson College Desperately Needed" (Review Journal, March 8, 2002), "Keep Politics Out of Education" (Sun, August 9, 2000) and "The Time Is Now to Support State College" (Sun, April 12, 2000). Clearly, the creation of NSC was controversial.

#### Limitations and Suggestions

Although this study has extended framing research, it has several limitations. A major limitation of framing analysis in general is that the identification of frames is a highly subjective exercise. This observation has been noted in other studies employing framing theory (Menashe & Siegel, 1998). Different researchers may have developed a different set of frames for this study and may have categorized articles as fitting more into one dominant frame than another. Despite this limitation, care was made in this study to develop a model for each frame and to adhere to the model when carefully analyzing each article for characteristics based on the model. A future study might employ several researchers to develop frames and analyze articles for more reliability.

Another limitation of this study is the small sample of articles covering the creation of UNLV. This limitation is primarily due to time restrictions and there are two accompanying reasons for the small sample. First, articles in the Review Journal and the Sun prior to 1996 are available only on microfilm. Going through microfilm by hand is an extremely time-consuming and tedious task. This may be one of the reasons that the majority of framing research articles I examined for the literature review employed almost exclusively online resources to gather the samples. Since most online databases do not include coverage of older issues, research studies may be disregarding entire time periods and subjects.

Another reason for the small sample of articles about the creation of UNLV is the absence of an index to articles from the Las Vegas Sun prior to 1983. Compiling such an index would be such a time consuming task for a library or other organization, it is likely there will never be an index for all of the issues of the Sun going back to the 1950s. The absence of an index for any publication that is only available in microfilm raises questions about the ability to conduct comprehensive research. On the other hand, the existence of an index raises questions about gatekeeping. Although an index to older issues of the Review Journal was made by hand by the Nevada Historical Society, it is likely that every single article was not actually indexed. Also, the person making the index decided what articles to include and what articles to exclude.

Using the dates of articles printed in the Review Journal to find articles in the Sun is also a limitation of this study. The Review Journal dictated what dates would be searched in the Sun, and if the Sun covered events that the Review Journal did not, those

articles were not included in this study. In this way, one newspaper controlled what was found in the other newspaper.

Regardless of the small sample, the articles examined in this study provided a general idea of the discourse surrounding the creation of UNLV in the 1950s and 1960s. A future study might employ several research assistants to go through the microfilm by hand to identify all possible articles for the time period.

This research study could possibly be replicated for other states, such as Arizona, to explore how local newspapers framed the creation of the colleges or universities in that state. The UNLV library has microfilm for the newspapers in most major cities of every western state to facilitate the research.

### Conclusion

This study supports the theory that communities are formed by communication (Depew & Peters, 2001; Wirth, 1964) and that newspapers play a significant role in shaping communities (Cooley, 1909; Lynd & Lynd, 1929; Putnam, 1995; McLeod, Scheufele & Moy, 1999). It also supports the theory that framing is a means for community building (Pan & Kosicki, 2001). It was revealed by the present study that the growth of a college or university encourages the growth of a community. This framing analysis of local newspaper articles showed that numerous proponents of the creation of UNLV and of NSC touted the benefits of higher education to the community.

On March 17, 1957, Sun editor Hank Greenspun told his readers, "Just as the foundation of every state is the education of its youth, so is the growth of every community dependent upon the educational facilities offered its citizens." He also wrote, "Of all the fine projects started in Las Vegas since the inception of the town, none can be



of greater benefit than the laying of the cornerstone for the first building of Nevada Southern University.” Forty-seven years later in his newspaper, his son, Brian Greenspun, told readers that legislators “should be doing whatever is required to maintain or improve the quality of life of its residents. And that means, at a minimum, a first-class public school system that leads the way for education into the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (March 8, 2001).

This study is unique in that it is one of the few framing studies that examines the issue of higher education. This is also one of the few studies that compares a sample of articles from a recent time period to a sample of articles from a much older time period.

Studying the way that the Review Journal and the Sun framed the creation of higher education in Southern Nevada provides a means to examine the influence exerted by mass media in a community’s development. Much of the meaning assigned to the frames was determined by metaphors, images, catch phrases, vocabulary and the general viewpoint of the article. The frames told Southern Nevada newspaper readers what to think and how to think about the creation of UNLV and NSC.

A comparison of news articles in the Sun and the Review Journal may not be possible anymore for events occurring after 2005, when the Sun ceased its regular edition. The new insert published within the Review Journal simply does not cover the depth and breadth of news stories that it did in the past. Newspaper readers may have lost a second viewpoint or frame on many topics. The fierce rivalry exhibited between the editors of the Sun and the editors of the Review Journal will probably diminish, but time will tell.

State legislatures all over the country are forced to make tough choices when it comes to dividing funds between state agencies. The opportunity for a public higher education

comes with a high price tag for the state that is making it available to its residents. As the college-age population of many states increases, states will struggle to make existing colleges and universities accommodate higher enrollment. Over time, some states may consider building new colleges and universities which will put another burden on an already strained budget. States will ask, “Is higher education worth the cost?”

This study reveals that communities value education and that colleges and universities provide cultural and professional opportunities for nearby residents. By having a college or university in the area, students are likely to attend those institutions and remain in the area once they become teachers, nurses and other members of the work force. The investment in higher education is an investment in the community.

However, this study also raises an argument that the conflict likely to accompany the creation of new institutions of higher education is not worth the cost. This study indicates that a new college or university may be a competitor for funds between existing institutions in the state’s higher education system and among other state agencies. The new school may also compete for students and faculty with the schools that are already established. The new college or university may infringe on the residents of the area where the campus is to be located. These are all considerations that may offer guidance to states that are or will be creating new institutions of higher education.

Through framing analysis, this study chronicles the growth process of Southern Nevada’s first university and the state’s first four-year college. It provides some insight into the political and editorial philosophy of the community’s local newspapers and suggests that the local mass media played a part in shaping the Southern Nevada community. In these ways, this study also contributes to research on local history.

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