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GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS IN MATTERS OF RACIAL SENSITIVITY

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

This study assesses factors influencing the responsiveness of government officials in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina regarding the public display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds in the aftermath of the Charleston, South Carolina shooting. The purpose of this dissertation research is to understand the factors influencing how government officials make decisions during racially/culturally sensitive events. Two research questions frame this study:

1) What factors are relevant to understanding state government officials' decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds?

2) Under what conditions of public decision making regarding the Confederate flag is executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes used?

Employing grounded theory across newspaper content in Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi, 117 articles were examined to provide insight into the research questions. The themes which emerged from this analysis are:

1) Key factors in the decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds are:
    a. The response to a triggering crisis event
    b. A desire for inclusiveness
    c. A perception of outside attention or scrutiny
    d. A concern for the economic well-being of the State
    e. The political agency of the decision maker

2) Economics, standing law, and political expediency influence decisions of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

This study introduces a detailed model of decision-making for public officials in racially/culturally sensitive matters to navigate the handling of issues with similar schema-forming symbols which can call forth dynamic and polarizing responses. The findings from this research study can be used to foster improved government efforts at responding to matters of a highly charged emotional nature.

Keywords: bureaucratic responsiveness, policy responsiveness, Confederate Flag, grounded theory, critical race theory, agenda-setting theory, decision-making theory

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Alabama
AST	Agenda-Setting Theory
BR	Bureaucratic Responsiveness
CRT	Critical Race Theory
DMT	Decision Making Theory
IC	Interest Convergence
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
MS	Mississippi
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
PR	Policy Responsiveness
SC	South Carolina
SCV	Sons of Confederate Veterans
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy

DEFINITIONS

Appropriate inclusion	"defining the population to be considered as the community for decision-making purposes" (Saltzstein, 1992, p. 69)
Bureaucrat	an unelected government official
Bureaucratic Responsiveness	Two alternatives: a) public administrator responsiveness to elected officials who represent the public; b) public administrator responsiveness to the demands/wishes of the public (Saltzstein, 1985)
Confederate Flag	the battle flag of the Confederacy featuring the St. Andrew's cross
Decision	"a course of action designed to achieve a goal" (Simon, 1964)
Decision Making	"a process that begins with attending to a problem and ends with committing to and implementing a course of action" (Lipshitz & Mann, 2005, p. 49)
Decisionmakers	an official who makes important decisions impacting the welfare of others
Government Responsiveness	refers to government action (by elected and non-elected) officials responding to the preferences of its citizens
Interest Convergence	the dominant culture or persons will support racial justice only when they understand and recognize that there is a benefit in doing so to them

Microaggression	a negative encounter, experience, or feeling as a result of racism, which is generally unnoticed by a member of the majority race
Policy Responsiveness	government action responding to the preferences of its citizens (Erickson, 2016)
Political Expediency	an action(s) taken by a political actor to advance her/himself politically
Racial/Cultural Sensitivity	Cultural sensitivity has been defined as "Being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist and have an effect on values, learning and behavior." (NYC.gov, 2018). For the purposes of this study, referring to matters of racial/cultural sensitivity involves events, situations, or incidents in which race or cultural differences and/or similarities exist and impact values and behavior.
Racial Realism	the need to recognize historical context and the experiential knowledge of people of color in analyzing society
Racial Sacrifice Covenant	"sacrifice the freedom interests of blacks to resolve differences of policy-making Whites" (Bell, 2004, p. 38).
Reconstruction	Period of the South rebuilding after the Civil War and the restoration of the Confederate states to the Union

Reconstruction Amendments	13th, 14th and 15th Amendments of the United States Constitution. The 13th Amendment abolished slavery. The 14th Amendment granted due process and equal protection under the law to all persons. The 15th Amendment established the right to vote for all citizens.
Silent Covenants	The term Bell (2004) gives to describe the tacit agreements of interest convergence and racial sacrifice covenants.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Ensuring public policy reflects the needs and preferences of all citizens is a fundamental component of a democratic society. When there are deep-seated emotional divides among the citizenry, this task becomes more problematic. The challenge of weighing competing desires and determining the best policy for society is an issue public officials face regularly. For the United States, with its troubled history of race relations and its increasingly diverse populace, this has been, is, and will continue to be a challenging task. From the first landing of African slaves in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619[1], through the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Era, and today's Civil Rights Renaissance, the path towards racial equality and understanding in the United States has been turbulent. The struggle to forge harmonious relationships in the shadow of centuries of abuse, deep-seated misconceptions, and misunderstandings has been met with successes and failures.

Continuously, the field of Public Affairs is challenged by widely differing expectations (often falling along racial lines) as to how government should respond to societal issues, particularly those matters which involve race. While a plethora of laws and regulations have been instituted to address America's "race problem," there remains a hesitant, cautious nature to discourse and discussion of matters relating to race and culture in the United States. This lack of communication creates a deeply concerning dilemma for public officials attempting to respond to the "will of the people" in racially/culturally sensitive matters. Sometimes unknowingly,

[1] (Sansing, 2013).

responsiveness to one population is at the expense of another for "arbitrary or undemocratic reasons," leaving portions of the community feeling unrepresented and isolated (Saltzstein, 1992, p. 285). Conversely, at times "the democracy of the part can be contrary to the democracy of the whole," with special interests overriding the needs of the public (Saltzstein, 1992, p. 285). The inability to have open, transparent conversations regarding this issue has resulted in feelings of hostility and resentment, as well as, a deficiency in long-term solutions. Left unmediated, this undercurrent of tension has manifested itself into cyclical episodes of unease and crisis events which are problematic for public officials.

One recent illustration of this phenomenon occurred in 2015 when race relations in the United States reached another crisis point. On June 17, 2015, a lone gunman named Dylan Roof opened gunfire during a prayer service at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, a historically Black church in Charleston, South Carolina killing nine African Americans (Beckhusen, 2015; Strother, Ogorzalek, & Piston, 2017a; 2017b). In his confessions to the crimes, Mr. Roof, a white nationalist, acknowledged that he desired to "start a race war" between African-Americans and Whites (Sanchez and Payne, 2016; Corasaniti, Pèrez-Peña & Alvarez, 2015: Freking, 2015; Strother et al., 2017a; 2017b). On his social media platforms, Mr. Roof attempted to explain his actions by declaring:

> I wish with a passion that niggers were treated terribly throughout history by Whites, that every White person had an ancestor who owned slaves, that segregation was an evil and oppressive institution…but it is all based in historical lies, exaggerations, and myths. (Connelly, 2016)

Mr. Roof also posted a photo montage of himself destroying the American flag, standing in front of monuments to the Confederacy and South Carolina's Museum and Library of Confederate History; and posing with the Confederate flag (the Flag). It was his association with the Flag which set off a maelstrom of debate and dissension in the shooting's aftermath.

The Charleston Church Shooting sent shockwaves throughout the country and forced public officials to once again address the appropriateness of displaying the Confederate Flag on state grounds (Taylor, 2015; Hanson, 2015). For decades, the Flag has been a consistent, controversial representation of conflict (Brumfield, 2015, Lopez, 2017). There are those who view the Flag as a symbol of heritage and pride. These proponents of the Flag promote free speech and the preservation of history to champion for the Flag's continued presence on state grounds. However, others perceive the Flag as a symbol of racism and division (Freking, 2015; ADL, 2016; Coates, 2015; Hanson, 2015). These individuals seek an end to the Flag's public display due to its association with White supremacy. These separate perspectives on the same icon consistently diverge along racial lines (Wihbey, 2015).

Following the Charleston, South Carolina tragedy, the tension between those who supported the Confederate Flag as a symbol of heritage and those who perceived it as a perpetuation of hate reached an apex. Reactions to the Confederate Flag's public display are a barometer of United States racial relations. The close association between the Confederate Flag and race is in large part because the Flag as a symbol is a powerful communication tool. As Connelly (2016) noted, "The Flag represents many different histories and meanings to Americans that are often determined by factors such as regional location, ancestry, and race" (p.

9). Almost instantaneously, any exhibition of the Flag creates a swirl of spoken and unspoken passions depicting America's racial frustrations. As Nintzel (2015, ¶1) noted,

> When that flag goes on display, a message of racism goes with it—whether that is the intended effect or not. For the recipient, the impact can be as in-your-face aggressive as the sight of a swastika—which hate groups often display alongside it.

When there are deep-seated emotional divides among the citizenry, such as the one presented by the Confederate Flag, the task for determining the representative "will of the people" becomes more complicated and difficult to achieve. This predicament is particularly troublesome during or in the aftermath of a crisis event, such as the Charleston Church Shooting.

After the Charleston Church Shooting, the Confederate Flag became a lightning rod of debate in social and print media, as well as rallies in support for and against its public display (Rogers, 2015). This study explored government responsiveness through the case of the Confederate Flag to better ascertain what influences how government officials respond to racially/culturally sensitive crisis events. The purpose of this research was to develop a framework for a theory of decision-making in racially/culturally sensitive matters. These crisis events impact the sociological and psychological well-being of American citizens. Additionally, these incidents have the capacity to promote protests or riots which are costly financially (increased law enforcement presence, loss or destruction of property), with the capacity to result in physical injury, and the potential for loss of life. How government decision-makers (bureaucrats and elected officials) respond to such racially/culturally divisive incidents warranted an examination to gather effective solutions to reduce the probability of future harm and unrest.

Previously, no theory of decision-making existed to assist public officials in specifically responding to the uniquely complex nature of racially/culturally-motivated incidents. During this study, a theory regarding decision making for racially/culturally sensitive matters was developed.

This theory will assist public officials in responding to issues such as the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds based on systematic analysis (Honarmand, 1982). Employing the use of such a theory in racial/cultural crises would direct decision-makers in methodically analyzing relevant information and "in predicting consequences of choices more accurately" based upon following rules and patterns of regularity (Honarmand, 1982, p. 3). Findings from this study can be used to better predict and inform government responses to racially motivated social crises and assist in fostering improved government efforts to respond to extremely sensitive matters. Similarly, understanding can be garnered as to how to improve the handling of issues with similar schema-forming symbols, which can call forth dynamic and polarizing responses.

Background of the Problem

Heritage versus Hate

The Confederate Flag is an ideal case to study race, decision-making, and responsiveness as it has been embedded in the racial turmoil of the United States since its adoption by the Confederacy in 1863 (Coski, 2015; Alter, 2015). Over the decades, the Flag has been the center of continuous debate over whether it is a symbol of southern heritage or a representation of hate towards African Americans. Groups such as the Sons of the Confederate Veterans and the United

Daughters of the Confederacy herald the Flag as a representation of southern heritage, pride, and advocacy for states' rights (ADL, 2016; Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2015; UDC, 2017). However, other groups have perceived the Flag as a symbol of racism. The Anti-Defamation League, a renowned watchdog for civil and human rights, includes the Flag in its Hate on Display™ Hate Symbols Database under the category of "General Hate Symbols" (ADL, 2016). Anne Rubin (2005) in her work, A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy: 1861-1868 aptly encapsulated the dilemma stating:

> It sometimes seems that the Confederacy is more alive today than it was in the 1860s. Conflicts over its imagery and symbols-its flags, its leaders, its memorial culture-have been almost constant over the past several years. These battles are all arguments about the meaning of the Confederacy, about the relevance that it has or does not have today. Each side tries to use history in its service, with the argument most often devolving into an "it was about slavery…it was about state rights," back and forth, neither side listening to the other, each side convinced it is right (p.1).

These differing opinions regarding the Flag place public officials in a quandary, particularly as to the display of the Flag on state grounds. Defenders of the Confederate Flag contend that it is a representation of their history (Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2015; UDC, 2017; Coski, 2005; Lopez, 2017; Taylor 2015; Brumfield, 2015). For the Flag's supporters, the Flag stands as a tribute to their ancestors who fought in the Civil War or what they commonly refer to as the "Second American Revolution" (Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2015: UDC, 2017). To these proponents of the Flag, any action to remove it from

public display is akin to expunging history (Coski, 2005, p. 274; Lopez, 2017; McInnis, 2015; Taylor, 2015). Such groups revere the Flag as a racially-neutral representation of Southern culture. They maintain the impetus of the Confederacy was to preserve liberty and freedom; and esteem the Confederate Battle Flag as "the flag of the South" (Hanson, 2015; Brumfield, 2015; Coski, 2015).

Flag proponents argue the Confederate Flag and its symbolism have been co-opted by outside groups. They contend there is a distinction between recognizing the Confederacy as an essential part of Southern culture and symbolically approving of the racist attitudes cast upon it by fringe groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (Coski, 2005, p. 277; Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2015; UDC, 2017). Flag supporters contend that disinformation and miseducation create the modern-day perception of the Battle Flag as offensive. These advocates view the Flag as an object worthy of reverence for future generations (Coski, 2005, p. 293; Alter, 2015; Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2015; UDC, 2017). From their vantage point, outsiders need to be instructed as to the true symbolism of the Confederate Flag (independence, honor, valor and liberty), rather than continue to associate the Flag with errant beliefs, which do not appropriately characterize the Flag's meaning (Coski, 2005, p. 293; Alter, 2015). In a strongly-worded press release, following the Charlottesville Massacre, Thos. V. Strain, Jr. (2017), Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), stated:

> Neither white supremacist nor any other racist group represent true Southern Heritage or the Confederate Soldier, Sailor, or Marine… The SCV condemns all acts of hatred and the improper use of our ancestors' battle flag which they nobly carried into battle for their

> own political independence. The Battle Flag was not and is not a symbol of racism; it is a soldier's battle flag given to the SCV by the Confederate Veterans. The KKK, nor any other group has legitimate use of our Confederate symbols.

Patricia Bryson (2017), President General of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) echoed these sentiments acknowledging:

> To some, these…markers are viewed as divisive and thus unworthy of being allowed to remain in public places. To others, they simply represent a memorial to our forefathers who fought bravely during four years of war. These…. markers have been a part of the Southern landscape for decades. We are grieved that certain hate groups have taken the Confederate flag and other symbols as their own. We are the descendants of Confederate soldiers, sailors, and patriots. Our members…have spent 123 years honoring their memory by various activities in the fields of education, history and charity, promoting patriotism and good citizenship…. The United Daughters of the Confederacy totally denounces any individual or group that promotes racial divisiveness or white supremacy. And we call on these people to cease using Confederate symbols for their abhorrent and reprehensible purposes.

Those opposing the public display of the Confederate Flag argue that the Flag implies support and sanctioning of the Confederate cause for which the soldiers fought—the institution of slavery (Coski, 2005, p. 283; Alter, 2015; Lopez, 2017; Brophy, 2015). The need for the Flag arose from the advent of the Confederacy formed to support the institution of slavery which was key to the economic vitality of the South (Lopez, 2017; Coates, 2015). In an 1861 speech,

Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens spelled out the purpose of the Confederacy by stating:

> Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth (Coates, 2015; Alter, 2015, ¶15).

Before the Civil War, several states made similar declarations attributing the preservation of African slavery and white supremacy as their cause for secession from the United States and the formation of the Confederate States of America (Lopez, 2017; Brumfield, 2015). The critics of state-sanctioned display of the Confederate Flag maintain that allowing the Flag to continue to fly at government facilities and on public state grounds communicates symbolic messages of exclusion to African-Americans that can translate with negative consequences (Coski, 2005, p. 273; Domonoske, 2017; Brophy, 2015). Flag protesters equate the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds with state-sanctioned racial discrimination (Domonoske, 2017). While acknowledging that public officials have an obligation not to demean the heritage of racial and cultural groups supporting the Confederate Flag; they also contend that government is not obligated to promote the Flag at the expense of other constituents (Coski, 2005, p. 291; Brophy, 2015). In the eyes of those who oppose the public display of the Flag, the ideals the Confederacy sought to protect (slavery and white supremacy) are not worthy values to honor or commemorate, and cause African-Americans to feel like second-class citizens (Lopez, 2017;

Domonoske, 2017; Brophy, 2015).

The Charleston Church Shooting and Its Aftermath

The Charleston Church Shooting (herein referred to as "the Shooting") further cemented the Confederate Flag's delineation as a lightning rod of controversy within the American Experience (Costa-Roberts, 2015; Lopez, 2017; Strother, et al, 2017a; 2017b; Fausset & Blinder, 2015). On June 17, 2015, Dylan Roof walked into the doorways of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church sat and prayed with the Church's congregants, and then opened fire upon them (Corasaniti et al., 2015; Ellis et al., 2015). Mr. Roof killed six women and three men, including the Church's Pastor, who was also a prominent South Carolina state senator (Corasaniti et al., 2015; Ellis, Payne, Perez & Ford, 2015). As details of the chilling massacre emerged, Mr. Roof's association with White Supremacist hate groups and the Confederate Flag unfurled. In the days following the Shooting, pictures of Mr. Roof draped in or holding the Confederate Battle Flag, his self-written race manifesto, and his open declaration that he wished to start a "race war," caused public officials in several states to consider the appropriateness of displaying the Flag on public grounds (Corasaniti et al., 2015; Freking, 2015; Holpuch, 2015).

Public officials in the states of Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi made critical decisions regarding the state-sanctioned display of the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Shootings (McInnis, 2015; Diamond, 2015). Within a week of the Shooting, quickly and quietly, without fanfare or deliberation with the State's legislature, or putting the matter to the public for a vote, the Governor of Alabama, Robert Bentley ordered the removal of the Confederate Flag from the grounds of its State's capital by executive order (Blinder, 2016; Dean,

2015; LoBianco, 2015; Terkel, 2015). Governor Bentley avowed that the removal of the Flag would be permanent. He explained his decision was because of the turmoil surrounding the Confederate Battle Flag following the Charleston Shooting. The Governor stated his actions were taken to avoid having the controversy distract from the state's legislative agenda (LoBianco, 2015; Dean, 2015; Terkel, 2015).

Two days before Governor Bentley's decision to remove the Confederate Flag from Alabama's capital, South Carolina's Governor, Nikki Haley, called upon her State's legislature (in the last week of their legislative year) to remove the Confederate Flag from the South Carolina State Capitol (LoBianco, 2015; Hanson, 2015). On June 23, 2015, the South of Carolina House of Representatives introduced the bills: H4365 (Flags) and H4366 (Clementa C. Pinckney Act) to prevent the placement of any Confederate Flag on Capitol grounds and to remove the current Flag from the Confederate Soldiers Monument (SC H4365, 2015; SC H4366, 2015). Simultaneously, in the South Carolina Senate, the bill S0897 (SC Infantry Battle Flag of the Confederate States of America) (2015) was introduced to permanently remove the Flag from its location and to transport the Flag to the nearby South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum for "appropriate display."

On July 9, 2015, S0897 (2015) passed in the South Carolina House of Representatives by a vote of 94-20. Officials removed the Flag from the South Carolina statehouse grounds on July 10, 2015. The Flag's lowering was precisely 23 days following the Charleston Shooting (Holpuch, 2015). In contrast to the hushed, tranquil removal of the Flag in Alabama, thousands of people gathered at the South Carolina State House. During the impromptu rally,

the crowd chanted, “Take it down!” and “U.S.A.! U.S.A.!” (Fausset & Blinder, 2015).

While the public officials in Alabama and South Carolina were grappling with how to handle their crisis events surrounding the Confederate Flag, Mississippi faced a unique dilemma. While there were still states with some remnant of the Confederate Flag in their state flag (e.g., Florida, Georgia, Arkansas, North Carolina), the State of Mississippi was the only state flag that incorporated the entire Confederate Battle Flag Emblem into its design (Sanburn, 2015; Costa-Roberts, 2015; Taylor, 2015; CBS News, 2016). After the Charleston Church Shooting, Mississippi legislators introduced 21 pieces of legislation regarding the Confederate Flag, both in support of keeping it and in opposition to doing so (Sanburn, 2015). While none of the legislation made it out of committee, the State’s Governor, Phil Bryant, declared the month of April would be Confederate Heritage Month and established April 24 as Confederate Memorial Day (Strother et al., 2017a; 2017b). There has been no executive or legislative change to the status of the Confederate battle emblem embedded within the Mississippi state flag on public grounds since the Charleston Church Shooting. Mississippi became labeled as the “last holdout in the battle over state-sponsored Confederate symbols because of the refusal by public officials to lower or change the Flag (Grinberg, 2016, ¶9). However, governing officials in many Mississippi cities, counties, and all 8 of the state's public universities have independently chosen to not display the Confederate Flag in their public spaces (Pettus, 2017; Blinder, 2016; Domonoske, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The Charleston Shooting created racially charged chaos within the United States, as it

was designed by its perpetrator to accomplish, requiring government officials to act (McInnis, 2015; Diamond, 2015). The primary issue that gained prominence during the Shooting's aftermath was whether the Confederate Flag should be displayed on state grounds, especially considering perceptions that the Flag stands for racism, hatred, and division (Costa-Roberts, 2015; Lopez, 2017; Strother, et al, 2017a; 2017b; Fausset & Blinder, 2015). Before the Shooting, three states (i.e., Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi) either displayed the Confederate Flag over the state capitol or the Confederate battle emblem as part of its state flag (Coski, 2005; Schedler, 2000). After the Shooting, calls abounded for both the removal and the protection of these Flags (Sanburn, 2015; Costa-Roberts, 2015; Lopez, 2017; Strother, et al, 2017a; 2017b; Fausset & Blinder, 2015). Government officials in each State were tasked with having to make quick decisions regarding the display of the Confederate Flag to eliminate strife, chaos, and loss of life. The resulting solutions varied widely.

This study seeks to understand the reasons why government officials in the states of Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi had differing responses to the question of whether the Confederate Flag should be displayed on public grounds. More generally, what influences how government officials respond to racially/culturally sensitive matters/crises?

Purpose of the Study

This study explores government decision-making and responsiveness in racially sensitive matters through a qualitative, multi-case study approach. Findings from this study can be used to predict government responses to racially motivated social crises and assist in fostering improved government efforts at responding to sensitive matters. Similarly, understanding can be

garnered as to how to improve the handling of issues with similar schema-forming symbols which can call forth dynamic and polarizing responses.

Research Questions

1) What factors are relevant to understanding state government officials' decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds?

2) Under what conditions of public decision making regarding the Confederate flag is executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes used?

Advancing Scientific Knowledge

There is a dearth of research regarding how public officials make policy decisions in the face of racially/culturally polarizing matters. Research in Public Affairs and Public Administration in areas regarding race, often involve the importance of diversity and cultural competency, particularly, in the areas of curriculum and education for public administrators (Carrizales, 2010; Lopez-Littleton & Blessett, 2015; Rice, 2007; Sabharwal, et al, 2014); racial profiling and policing (Glaser, Spencer, Charbonneau; 2014; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2008); and bureaucratic and symbolic representation (Saltzstein, 1979; 1989; Theobald & Haider Markel, 2008). However, these do not give guidance to a decision-making process for public officials in the wake of a racially/culturally motivated crisis event.

Studies regarding the Confederate Flag have focused upon the Flag's ties to education (Dirickson, 2006; Hardie & Tyson, 2017), free speech (Forman, 1991), geography (Webster & Lieb, 2001; 2002; 2012; 2016), voter preference (Ehrlinger et al, 2010), historical context (Coski, 2005; Moeschberger, 2014; Moltz, 2006), and racial and religious discourse (Orey, 2004; Holyfield et al, 2009; Bostwick, 2003; Moltz, 2006; Webster & Lieb, 2002). However, the

process of public decision-making regarding racially/culturally charged symbols, icons, or events (such as the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds) has not been studied.

There is no current research addressing all three elements of this research study: decision making, responsiveness, and race. As such there are clear gaps in the literature as relates to the field of Public Affairs. The processes by which public decision makers in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina came to their decisions regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds; how and why the decisions differed; and the resulting consequences of these choices previously have not been studied from a Public Affairs perspective.

Significance of the Study

This inquiry is timely and significant due to the increasingly volatile nature of race/cultural relations in the United States. It is imperative in such an environment to assess the role public policymakers can have in ameliorating societal conflict. As the United States finds itself, once again, amid a slew of racialized conflicts involving the African American community, analysis such as this will assist in filling the gap in knowledge regarding decision making, bureaucratic responsiveness, and race. The potential for increased violence and upheaval due to racially sensitive matters necessitates a closer examination of the processes by which public officials make decisions regarding polarizing cultural symbols, such as the Confederate Flag.

The Confederate Flag is emblematic of an American reluctance to have an open conversation about race/culture. For example, the display of the Flag produces a “dog whistle” which releases a tide of frustration and resistance with little discussion as to why or how to

overcome it. Display of the Confederate Flag elicits strong emotions, which are breeding ground to continued racial unrest. Across the nation, several pro-Flag rallies have emerged, as well as numerous anti-Flag demonstrations. These gatherings can be dangerous powder kegs of emotion. This volatility is a result of high levels of racial unease stemming from centuries of slavery and long-standing racial disparities. The precariousness of the current state of affairs is particularly troubling in the wake of recent racially charged incidents involving the African-American community and law enforcement, which have exposed a deep undercurrent of racial unease in the United States. In this increasingly changing global society, an examination of how our public policy makers respond to such divisive schema-forming symbols is warranted to promote increased racial/cultural understanding, decrease racial unease, and lessen fears and misconceptions.

While it is important to emphasize this study will focus on the Confederate Flag, it is noteworthy to mention that various parts of the United States are currently involved in serious debates regarding the appropriateness of maintaining other symbols and monuments to the Confederacy on state grounds. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, in the aftermath of the Shooting, 110 Confederate symbols have been removed (Ingraham, 2018; Winns & Carew, 2018). There are close to 2,000 more memorials to the Confederacy existing throughout the country (Ingraham, 2018). The plethora of Confederate memorials remaining throughout the United States supports the need to develop a framework which can assist in handling such controversies with fairness and consistency.

This analysis is not to declare a right or wrong in the debate over the Confederate

Flag. However, it is to broaden understanding of how public actors can best handle conflicts which emerge as to race and race relations. Findings from this study can be used to promote discussion as to how to better integrate the voices of marginalized people groups into public policy decisions. By examining the consistent issues which emerged during the public discourse on the Confederate Flag; discovering what factors motivated each state officials' decision-making regarding the use of the Confederate Flag on public grounds; and exploring under what conditions executive authority is used versus direct vote/referendum or legislative action on such polarizing issues; a better understanding can be had regarding bureaucratic responsiveness during times of emotional unrest.

Evaluating decision-making and bureaucratic responsiveness in this manner is significant in that can it used to predict and inform government responses to racially motivated social crises and assist in fostering improved government efforts in responding to extremely sensitive matters. Schema-forming symbols, such as the Confederate Flag can call forth dynamic and polarizing responses, studying bureaucratic responsiveness in this area can help improve the handling of such issues. Sound, timely decisions in this area are critical. Evaluating public official decision-making may encourage greater inventiveness and logic in decision-making; as well as, produce techniques, which can accelerate or improve results regarding racially/culturally sensitive matters. Sound decision-making can assist in preventing tragedy and
help to support a community in recovering from unrest.

This study will examine three states' official response (Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi) to the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds through the lens of several

theoretical decision-making frameworks and the theories of bureaucratic responsiveness and policy responsiveness. Decision-making theory (Simon; Hossein Honarmand); agenda setting (McCombs, Shaw); critical race theory & interest convergence (Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Richard Delgado, Jean Stefancic, Charles Lawrence III); bureaucratic responsiveness (Max Weber, Grace Hall Saltzstein, Thomas Bryer), and policy responsiveness (Miller & Stokes) will be examined to assist in determining the consistent issues which emerged during public discourse on the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Charleston, South Carolina Shooting.

Rationale for Methodology

This study explores the responsiveness of public officials in racially-motivated events through multi-case study analysis. A case study is an empirical study that investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Case study is a fitting methodology for investigations, such as this study which require a holistic and in-depth approach (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991; Yin, 2009). Additionally, case studies are particularly well-suited to areas, such as this present case, in which existing theory appears to be inadequate, and theory building is needed (Eisenhardt, 1989; Rowley, 2002). The inductive approach of using a multi-case study will give room to explore meanings, perceptions, and understandings which are critical in race related matters.

Case studies have the benefit of permitting intensive unit analysis which can provide reliable information of both an explanatory and predictive nature. The units of investigation in this study are the decisions made by public officials in the states of Alabama, South Carolina,

and Mississippi regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds after the Charleston Shooting. Selecting multiple distinct case studies maximizes the information which can be garnered in a specific time (Tellis, 1997).

Nature of the Research Design

Employing grounded theory across a variety of sources (newspaper articles, editorials, op eds, and letters to editors), this research study will develop a decision-making theory in matters of a highly charged emotional nature (race/culture). Grounded theory has been utilized in qualitative research to assist in providing explanations for empirical data regarding human behavior (Sutton et al., 2011). This method is helpful in research such as this, where current theories about a phenomenon are either inadequate or nonexistent; and the area of study would benefit from an exploration of the theoretical relationships causing the phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Sutton et al., 2011). Through grounded theory, data collected will undergo a constant comparative analysis to arrive at a theory regarding decision-making in racially/culturally motivated matters (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 273; Sutton et al., 2011).

Dissertation Overview

Increasingly society is requiring public officials to have the ability to navigate skillfully across perceived barriers of race, culture, and ethnicity. To do so, attention should be paid as to what influences government responsiveness in matters of significant racial/cultural sensitivity. The case of the Confederate Flag is ideal to study public official responsiveness in racially sensitive matters. The aftermath of the Charleston Church Shooting forced public officials in South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi to seriously question the appropriateness of displaying the Confederate Flag on state grounds. The differing conclusions from this inquiry

warrant further study.

There is no current research addressing all three elements of this research study: decision making, responsiveness, and race. Using a qualitative, multi-case study approach in conjunction with analysis derived from grounded theory, this study developed a theory about public official responsiveness to citizens in times of social crisis, especially those racially or culturally motivated.

This inquiry is timely, significant and imperative in assessing the role public policymakers can have in ameliorating societal conflict. This inquiry will assist in filling the gap in knowledge regarding decision-making, bureaucratic and policy responsiveness, and race. This study is organized into five chapters. In Chapter I, the background of the problem, as well as the purpose and significance of the study is explored. In Chapter II, an examination of key empirical studies regarding bureaucratic and policy responsiveness is provided.

Additionally, Chapter II introduces Critical Race Theory, Agenda-Setting Theory, and Decision-Making Theory which serve as the theoretical bones of this study. This Chapter also includes a review of the historical underpinnings of the Confederate Flag debate. In Chapter III, the study's research methodology, research design, and data collection methods are presented. In Chapter IV, the data results are discussed and analyzed. In Chapter V, research conclusions, theory, and implications for future research are drawn.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter I introduced the purpose and significance of exploring government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive situations. Specifically, this study analyzes decision-making and government responsiveness through the case of public leader response to the display of the Confederate Flag on public premises. In this Chapter, the conceptual frameworks and theories (critical race theory, agenda-setting theory, decision-making theory) used to inform and ground this study of government responsiveness (bureaucratic and political) are discussed.

Additionally, in Chapter II, the study of government responsiveness in such racially/culturally charged circumstances are advanced through a survey of the literature surrounding the Confederate Flag debate, to include the history of the Confederate Flag from pre-Civil War times to the present day. The theoretical framework delineated herein will be the lens/perspective through which the data collected using the research methodology outlined in Chapter III is analyzed and will guide the subsequent results and conclusions formulated and pronounced in Chapters IV and V.

Theoretical Foundation/ Conceptual Framework

The conceptual frameworks which inform and ground this study of government responsiveness are: critical race theory (Derrick Bell; Alan Freeman; Richard Delgado; Jean Stefancic, Charles Lawrence, III), agenda setting theory (McCombs & Shaw; Scheufele & Tewksbury; Lopez-Escobar & Rey), and decision-making theory (Simon; Honarmand). These

theoretical frameworks are the lenses for the data analysis process discussed in Chapter III and implemented in Chapter IV.

Critical Race Theory

Whether one determines that the primary purpose of the display of the Confederate Flag is racism or heritage; there is no denying that race plays a role in the conflict. Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides an ideal conceptual framework for this study and studies such as this due to its emphasis on the central role of race in any social system (Crenshaw, 1989). The impetus of CRT was a desire to eliminate all forms of oppression, through beginning with the recognition of racial inequities (Matsuda, 1993). This study's analysis centers around criteria which emerge from CRT. Principally, the notion from CRT that race must be a central component in the interpretation of a research problem is a core consideration of this study.

Critical Race Theory is a multi-dimensional, interdisciplinary framework derived from legal scholarship which spread to other disciplines. It is considered a part of critical postmodern theory (Delgado & Stefanicic, 2002). CRT attempts to generate individual and societal transformation and change through understanding the oppressive aspects of society (Ortiz & Jani, 2010, p. 176). Consequently, CRT places race relationships in historical, economic, social, and political contexts; and provides a lens to understanding media, policy, politics and interactions (Taylor, 2004, p. 35).

Critical Race Theory proclaims race as the primary issue underlying all our law and public policy (Zion & Blanchett, 2011; Ortiz & Jani, 2010). CRT contends that racism is an

ingrained part of the American system. People of color are marginalized because of existing power structures created from white privilege (Critical Race Theory, 2010). In CRT, the notion that neutrality, meritocracy, objectivity, and colorblindness exists within any American system is met with skepticism. Critical Race Theorists assert the need to recognize historical context and the experiential knowledge of people of color in analyzing society (racial realism). Heretofore used principally in the field of education, CRT encourages a structural approach to solving the problems of a diverse society through dialogue and social relationships (Ortiz & Jani, 2010). One core premise of Critical Race Theory is that race remains a social construction, which exists for social stratification (Ortiz & Jani, 2010).

The primary tenets of CRT are multidimensionality of oppressions; narratives or counter-stories, and commitment to social justice (Critical Race Theory, 2010; Litowitz, 1999). The CRT framework has five elements:

1) centrality of race- the intersectionality of race and racism in society. Race and racism are American cornerstones; racism intersects with all segments of society, such as gender, class, culture, and sexual orientation.

2) challenge to dominant ideology-Neutrality, colorblindness, and meritocracy do not exist in the American culture. There is self-interest, a quest for power, maintenance of the status quo, and privilege.

3) centrality of experiential knowledge-The narratives of people of color, their stories and how they tell them is important.

4) interdisciplinary perspective-Look through the lens of history and contemporary context to derive meaning and to explore racism and oppression.

5) commitment to social justice-Work to eliminate all forms of subjugation of all people (Delgado, Stefanic, & Harris, 2012; Solórzano & Yasso, 2002; Litowitz, 1999).

These elements are delineated and briefly defined in Appendix B.

Uniquely tied to CRT is the principle of interest convergence. The principle of interest convergence (IC) is used within Critical Race Theory to explain why those in power converge with those on the margins to produce laws and public policy which can effectuate civil rights gains (Zion & Blanchett, 2011). Dr. Derrick Bell, who originated critical race and interest convergence theory, explained that the dominant culture or persons would support racial justice only when they understand and recognize that there is a benefit in doing so to them (Blumenfield, 2013; Zion & Blanchett, 2011). IC proposes that change benefitting people and communities of color only occur when those interests also benefit whites who are in policy-making positions (Bell, 2004, p. 69). According to Bell (2004), interest convergence is one of two tacit agreements or "silent covenants" which exist in society.

> Even when the interest-convergence results in an effective racial remedy, that remedy will be abrogated at the point that policymakers fear the remedial policy is threatening the superior societal status of Whites (Bell, 2004, p.69).

The other form of 'silent covenant' is racial-sacrifice covenants. These covenants are policy decisions that "sacrifice the freedom interests of blacks to resolve differences of policy-making Whites" (Bell, 2004, p. 38). A prime example of a racial-sacrifice covenant is the protection of

slavery during the drafting of the Constitution to ensure its ratification by the Southern States (Wassell, 2004).

Interest convergence is an analytical tool which can be utilized to orchestrate an authentic dialogue about the impact of race on policy decisions (Zion & Blanchett, 2011, p. 2189). Critical Race Theory and interest convergence explore the processes within racialized and equity centered movements and assists in fostering support to "advance social change in the human condition" (Milner, 2008, p. 339). In combination, CRT and interest convergence can aide in identifying elements, which if properly engaged, can promote moves toward more equitable social outcomes (Zion & Blanchett, 2011, p. 2196).

Weaknesses of this theory

Critical Race Theory and interest convergence can provide a high degree of explanatory power regarding complex societal issues. However, critics argue the framework has little structural integrity and provides little predictive ability. Additionally, critics argue the framework establishes an insider versus outsider thought process which prevents a balanced analysis (Litowitz, 1999). Moreover, this critique of CRT as a biased perspective is because unlike other theories, CRT calls upon the researcher to take a stance as to the inequalities which exist in society due to race. Social scientists such as Darder and Torres (2004) contend that this places a hyper-emphasis on race. It is argued that race as a concept has been under-theorized and because of this, CRT's primary tenants cannot be adequately supported (p. 99).

Agenda-Setting Theory

This study seeks to understand what factors are relevant to understanding state

government officials' decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds. It has core assumptions that such factors can be culled from the context of media accounts, specifically newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editors surrounding the Charleston Shooting and its Aftermath; and that such media will reflect the populace's and state decisionmaker(s) attitudes and beliefs regarding the display of the Confederate Flag following the tragedy. These assumptions are based upon criteria put forth in the Agenda-Setting Theory. Agenda-Setting Theory examines the interaction between media and agenda setting. Several studies have affirmed the correlation between media and the public agenda (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). Through the lens provided by Agenda-Setting Theory a portrait of the public opinion to which government officials are responding can be garnered, as well as some insight into the factors influencing decision-making can be gathered.

Agenda-Setting Theory reflects "the ability [of the news media] to influence the importance placed on topics of the public agenda" (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002). A fundamental principle of agenda-setting theory is the association between the prominence of a topic in the news and the importance of that topic in the public agenda (Carroll & McCombs, 2003). The theory first came to light out of a 1968 Chapel Hill Study by McCombs and Shaw regarding the 1968 Presidential election between Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey. The social scientists sought to examine how media influenced people's perception toward issues during the campaign. The study and subsequent others found a strong correlation between mass media and its ability to shape people's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Agenda-Setting Theory has been used to explain how government actors set

their priorities, examine or ignore issues, and make decisions to take a stance or not on public concerns (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006).

Rogers and Dearing (1996) identify three types of agenda-setting:

1) Media agenda setting-focus is upon how the mass media influence an audience. Issues of relevance are how the media is presented to an audience.

2) Public agenda setting-reflects a focus on the audience's agenda. Issues of relevance are driven by those being discussed or personally relevant to members of the public.

3) Policy agenda setting-reflects policies which policymakers consider to be important. Issues of relevance are those presented by elite policymakers (also known as political agenda setting).

Of importance to this study, is the third type of agenda-setting, political agenda setting. The mass media's political agenda-setting power was studied and conceptualized by Walgrave & Van Aelst (2006). These researchers presented a contingency model of political agenda setting by the media. They theorized that media input and political context directly impacted the rate of political adoption of an issue (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). Their depiction of this process is in Appendix C.

According to Walgrave & Van Aelst (2006), factors influencing policy agenda setting are: 1) issues covered (obtrusive versus unobtrusive); 2) media outlet type (television versus newspapers); and 3) type of coverage (whether positive or negative). These factors in combination with five political context variables (election/routine; institutional rules; internal functioning; political configuration; and personal traits of the policymaker) impact political

adoption outputs ranging from no adoption to fast and substantial adoption of the policy issue (p. 103-104). Such factors can be used as guiding criteria when evaluating the newspaper articles, op-eds, letters to the editor, and editorials written around the times of the Charleston Shooting and its Aftermath, to glean insights into policy decisions made during that time.

Weaknesses of this theory

Agenda-Setting Theory has a high predictor power regarding complex societal issues. However, critics argue the framework has more of a cognitive than affective focus, and it assumes a well-informed and thoughtful public audience. It has also been argued that Agenda-Setting Theory does not deal sufficiently with competing or dueling agendas.

Decision-Making Theory

As this study explores the factors influencing state government officials' decision-making regarding racially/culturally sensitive matters, an examination of how policymakers arrive at decisions would be an appropriate undertaking. Examining how policymakers decide what they do and why necessitates a comprehensive examination of public policy theories regarding decision-making. Those working in the field of Public Affairs, whether an elected official or a bureaucrat make daily decisions for the populace they serve. These decision-makers seek to manage the complex "wicked problems" which plague society; and the decisions made require a great deal of contemplation regarding the wants and needs of the citizenry, as well as the potential impacts of any decision on the community. Decision-making theory (DMT) aids decision-makers in making sound decisions and in choosing the best action to achieve desired goals. DMT guides "decision-makers in studying issues systematically, in analyzing the relevant

elements, and in predicting the consequences of choices more accurately" (Honarmand, 1982, p. xi-3). Existing theory regarding effective decision-making helps form the conceptual framework for this study.

According to Honarmand (1982), a properly developed Decision-Making Theory would "enable decision-makers to apply it both in normal circumstances and in times of transition or turbulence" (p. ix). Decision-making is a process (Simon, 1987). As a tool, DMT assists decision-makers in making choices "by following rules and patterns of regularity" (Honarmand, 1982, p. 3). There is agreement among scholars that the DMT involves the following steps/phases:

1. Sensing. Identify the problem. Namely, look at who is involved, what is or is not occurring?
2. Establish goals. What stakes are involved? What ultimately is to be accomplished?
3. Diagnose obstacles. What are the potential or perceived barriers to achieving the outlined goals?
4. Explore alternatives. Develop alternatives and evaluate them through brainstorming, use of surveys, or discussion groups.
5. Select alternatives. Select the most advantageous solution with the least number of disadvantages. Consider the solution and possible consequences of implementation.
6. Implement the solution.
7. Evaluate the solution.

A depiction of this process is in Appendix D. Such factors can be used as guiding criteria when examining the decisions made by policymakers in Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds in the aftermath of the Charleston Massacre.

Weaknesses of this theory:

Decision-Making Theory assumes the presence of rational actors, and that there is one "ideal" solution to a situation. It is criticized because the very nature of human beings is to be irrational impacted by feelings and emotions which cannot be rationally explained. Therefore, it is argued that this theory has very little predictive ability.

Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the decision-making of the governors of Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds between 2015-2017. This exploration is an evaluation of government responsiveness (bureaucratic and policy responsiveness) in matters of a highly sensitive racial/cultural nature.

Bureaucratic Responsiveness

Bureaucratic Responsiveness refers to how bureaucrats (non-elected public servants) respond to the demands/wishes of the populace. Governing officials who follow the demands of citizens face the challenge of weighing competing desires and determining the best policy for society. While this decision-making is associated typically with elected officials, they are not alone in decision-making or the need to be responsive to citizens. Numerous studies have

shown that public bureaucrats are involved in a variety of ways in the formulation as well as the implementation of policy. The clear-cut dichotomy which once was believed to exist between administration and politics no longer has wide acceptance (Kweit & Kweit, 1980, p. 648). Like elected officials, public officials, juggle multiple stakeholders who often have conflicting demands. Both elected officials and public administrators grapple with decision-making as to which group's agenda to promote and what form (if any) of remedy should be applied. Such choices in Public Affairs occur daily. However, today's increasingly global society calls for these choices to be made with a certain degree of cultural competency[2] and formalized decision-making. Having explored decision-making theories to ascertain how and why decisions are made; a more in-depth examination of bureaucratic responsiveness, or how these decisions are carried out and the resulting response is warranted.

There are two forms (perspectives) of bureaucratic responsiveness: bureaucratic responsiveness to the public's wishes and bureaucratic responsiveness to the interests of the state[3](Saltzstein, 1992, p. 68). This study will center upon bureaucratic responsiveness to the public's wishes. According to Saltzstein (1985), "acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them" is critical to democracy and the political system (p. 285). As previously noted, public officials face many competing interests from their constituency (Bevan, 2015, p. 139). Public officials navigate between multiple stakeholders (who often have

[2] The capacity to function within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior.
[3] "The responsibility of the bureaucracy to "represent" the state in interactions with the public (Pitkin, 1967, 41; Saltzstein, 1992, p. 67). Theoretical support for this view of the representational function of bureaucracy typically ascribes a unique role to the bureaucracy that may be independent of the wishes of either elected officials or the public. (Saltzstein, 1992, 67-68).

conflicting demands) to decide whose ideas will be translated into public action (Bryer, 2006). The term responsiveness refers to the way this balancing act is carried out and its impacts on the trust the public has in its institutions and decision makers (Bryer, 2006, p. 481). Bureaucratic responsiveness is derived from the belief that administration cannot be wholly separated from politics (Saltzstein, 1992, p. 526).

One of the primary perspectives in bureaucratic responsiveness is the role of the bureaucrat as a representative of the public. The traditional view is that elected officials are the legitimate representatives of the public, and bureaucrats are neutral tools used by elected officials to meet public demands. However, an alternate theory as to the role of bureaucrats reflects more independence and casts bureaucrats with representational functions equivalent to those performed by elected officials. It can be argued that 'the people' delegate their authority to three equal branches of government, that elections are merely one of several means of selecting authorized agents of the people, and that elected and nonelected officers alike may "represent" the public in direct fashion (Saltzstein, 1992, p. 527-528).

Essential questions when evaluating bureaucratic responsiveness are: responsiveness to whom, to what, and in what form? Saltzstein (1985) aptly encapsulated the quandaries of bureaucratic responsiveness as follows:

> [I]f articulated demands reflect the people's will, which of those must be met? All of them, even if contradictory or only the most intensely felt? Similarly, if responsiveness is owed to general public opinion, which opinions are relevant? Are only strongly felt majority opinions relevant? What responsiveness is owed to uninformed opinions,

> strongly felt minority opinions, or situations in which opinion is evenly divided? Is responsiveness a winner-take-all proposition, or does it require some attempt to balance competing claims and provide something for everyone (p. 286).

The answers to these questions are often dependent upon the model of democratic theory accepted by the analyst (Saltzstein 1985; 1992). Populists are likely to seek the approach which is most in line with the mass public and its needs. Decisions which reflect obedience to rules and direct order and place a high value on expertise and professionalism are most likely to be supported by those who align with a populist theory of democracy. Whereas, those who have a more pluralist view will seek to be responsive to the wishes or desires of the population. They are likely to employ "political" decision-making techniques such as bargaining, coalition building, and compromising (Saltzstein, 1985; 1992). A map of the conceptualization of bureaucratic responsiveness advanced by Saltzstein (1985; 1992) is provided in Appendix E.

Responsiveness is multifaceted. Both Saltzstein (1993) and Bryer (2007) acknowledge that the factors which impact bureaucratic responsiveness are varied. Yang and Pandey (2007) contend there are three factors: (1) support of elected officials, (2) influence of the public and media, and (3) decentralization of decision making, which may be able to account for bureaucratic responsiveness to citizens (Bryer, 2007, p. 2 71-272).

Bryer (2007) identified six variants of bureaucratic responsiveness: dictated, constrained, entrepreneurial, purposive, collaborative, and negotiated. These variants shape public administrator thought and behaviors (Bryer, 2006, p. 479). Responsiveness behaviors which are dictated or constrained are profoundly impacted by "rules, regulations, organizational cultures,

leadership, and authority structures" (Bryer, 2006, p. 483). Here, there is limited discretion in a public official's decision-making ability. Purposive and entrepreneurial responsiveness recognizes that laws are not implemented neutrally and equally for all people in the same manner. Public officials possess greater discretion to choose right from wrong. Decisions can be formulated from public goals or per the needs and demands of their constituency (Bryer, 2006, p. 486). Collaborative responsiveness involves an open-minded, flexible mindset in which officials look to consensus for answers/solutions (Bryer, 2006, p. 487).

Negotiated responsiveness reflects the need to appropriately balance between potentially conflicting desires or demands of a constituency (Bryer, 2006, p. 488). Public managers have discretion over how and to what extent citizen involvement is initiated and structured (Feldman & Khademian, 2002). They can influence the structure and meaning of their citizen interactions by the decisions they make or fail to make (Feldman & Khademian, 2002). Bryer (2006) suggests that responsiveness research should be dynamic and not static in design to account for change over time in public official thought and behaviors and that all six variants need to be taken into consideration (p.496).

In their research, Yang and Callahan (2007) test a framework which assumes the decision to involve citizens in administrative processes and public decision-making reflects responsiveness to 1) salient community stakeholders, 2) normative values associated with citizen involvement, and 3) administrative practicality. Yang and Callahan (2007) sought to explore efforts to involve citizens in the public decision-making process. The team looked to discover what encourages citizen participation and if public official attitudes, thoughts, and

behaviors influenced citizen engagement (Yang & Callahan, 2007). The researchers suggest that meaningful, authentic participation is rarely found. Many public officials are reluctant to include citizens in decision making. If citizens are involved, usually it is after the issue has been formulated and decisions have been made (Yang & Callahan, 2007; deAndrade, 2016).

Policy Responsiveness

Policy responsiveness refers to governmental action responding to the preferences or wishes of the public (Erikson, 2016). This governmental action is generally taken by those in an elected capacity. As this study concerns the influences on elected state decision holders regarding the Confederate Flag, an exploration of a how these individuals typically respond to public opinion, and other potential factors is necessary.

Miller and Stokes (1963) maintained that the public influenced their elected officials by two means: 1) persisting in getting their representatives to correctly perceive their opinions and support them, or 2) impacting the identity of the representatives through election and the elected representative then votes their views. Accordingly, Erikson (2016) notes that public opinion strikes an influential tone in impacting public policy responsiveness by elected officials in the United States, especially ideologically.

According to Öhberg and Naurin (2015), elected leaders or politicians typically tend to base their responsiveness on one of three factors: 1) respect for their party; 2) being responsive to citizens, or 3) their convictions. Burstein (2003) argued that the impact of public opinion tends to remain strong despite the activities of political parties or a decision-maker's ties

to party affiliation. However, economic forces and the inequitable distribution of influence across all segments of the public also play a determining role in policy responsiveness.

Historical Background of the Confederate Flag

The historical background of the Confederate Flag plays a critical, if not primary, role in the current controversy surrounding its public display on government grounds. A review of Confederate Flag history is relevant to understanding some of the emotional baggage, and the diverse, passionate feelings it elicits from people in the United States. Throughout the decades, the Flag has embodied the same conflicts as those associated with the tensions which were a preamble to the Civil War—the institution of slavery versus state's rights. The following subsections provide an overview of the origins of the Confederate Flag; and chronicle the evolving perceptions of the Flag from its inception in 1861 to the Reconstruction Era; World War II; the Civil Rights Movement and today.

Pre-Civil War

The New World was a harsh environment for the settlers when they first arrived. Unaccustomed to the terrain and weather, colonizers struggled with maintaining crops and were constantly in a fight for their existence. The answer to their agricultural woes came in 1619, when the first African slaves arrived in Jamestown, Virginia (Walvin, 2013; Slavery in America, 2012). How the Africans came to the "New Land" would, unfortunately, set the stage for centuries of racial division and unease. In a tempestuous journey from their homelands, over 12.5 million Africans were transported to the New World between 1525 and 1866 to serve as slaves. Only 10.7 million survived the voyage. Surprisingly, a small fraction of

this number (388,000) became slaves in the colonies, soon to become the United States of America (Gates, 2013).

The slaves were a financial commodity for their owners and were the center of the colonies' agriculture-based economies. The slaves suffered centuries of physical, emotional, and psychological maltreatment as they toiled to create the financial backbone of the burgeoning nation. According to Walvin (2013), slave labor "substantially transformed the habits and economics of the Western world" (p.9). By 1776, slavery existed in all 13 colonies, and 20% of the entire population was slave labor. The Southern colonies chose to export highly labor intensive crops (e.g., tobacco, cotton, and rice) and as such, these areas had larger percentages of slaves than their northern counterparts. Slaves in the north were less numerous and worked in areas other than agriculture. They were often artisans or craftsmen who drew wages and held social status.

In 1765, as Americans set out to fight against Great Britain for their freedom, their Black slaves battled alongside them. The irony was clear. While the colonists were against England restricting their rights; they were, at the same time, enslaving and depriving the freedoms of others. Yale Professor Zagarri (2016, ¶7-8) best explained the paradox:

> Awareness of this contradiction forced white Americans to look at slavery in a new light. If Americans chose to continue to enslave black people, they would have to devise new arguments to justify slavery. It was at this time that arguments about blacks' inherent racial inferiority emerged to rationalize the institution…. Because Southern states had a

much deeper economic investment in slavery, they resisted any efforts to eliminate slavery within their boundaries.

Ultimately, the colonists won their fight against Great Britain and established themselves as the United States of America. In 1777, the American Flag, also known as "the Stars and Stripes," was created as a symbol of this unity (Miller, 2010). Now, this country formed on "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," had to grapple with the practice it began over a century before in Jamestown–slavery (Slavery in America, 2012). In doing so, a noticeable fissure began to formulate between the northern and the southern territories of the United States. The North was more densely populated and economically diverse than the agriculturally based South (Mintz, 2016). Between 1800 and 1860, the commercial, manufacturing, financial, and transportation industries dominated the North leaving little need for slavery (Mintz, 2016; Civil War Trust, 2014). More northerners held careers in education, business, or medicine than their Southern counterparts (Civil War Trust, 2014). The South's wealth and growing economy were married inextricably to the "peculiar institution" of slavery (Civil War Trust, 2014; Mintz, 2016). The Southern population tended to be less literate than their Northern counterparts, spent less time in school, and gravitated more toward military or agricultural careers (Civil War Trust, 2014).

As the United States began to expand its territories toward the West, the rift widened between the North and the South with the central area of contention being the institution of slavery (Mintz, 2016). There were several attempts at compromise to alleviate the increasing friction between those who opposed slavery and its proponents (Mintz, 2016). However, the Dred Scott Supreme Court decision (1857), followed by John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry

(1859) prompted Southerners to view Northerners as race inciters whose mission was to free slaves (Mintz, 2016). Resultantly, a Civil War ensued pitting brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor (Civil War Trust, 2014).

The Civil War

Paradoxically, from 1861 to 1865, the "United States of America" was a nation divided (Davis, 2002). The reason for the fracture of the United States of America has been debated for centuries. There were 13 Confederate States which seceded from the United States to constitute the "Confederacy" or the Confederate States of America (Van Diver, 1970). The Confederate States existed as an independent nation, as it waged war with Union soldiers comprised mainly from the Northern States (Van Diver, 1970; Davis, 2002). Union soldiers believed they fought to end the practice of human slavery (Coski, 2005). Confederate soldiers believed they fought to defend their states and homes from attack and to preserve their individual and constitutional liberties (Coski, 2005). These soldiers of the Confederacy held that the interference of the Northern states with the institution of slavery was a violation of their constitutional rights and an infringement upon their customary way of living (Coski, 2005). Also, the cornerstone of this new government rested, in the words of Confederate vice president Alexander Stephens,

> upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery ... is his natural and moral condition (Noyalas, 2016, p. 193).

It was a costly dispute, not only monetarily but also in the loss of lives. During the Civil War, over six hundred thousand people died, which at the time was 2 percent of the entire population (Martinez et al., 2000, p. 316).

The Need for the Confederate Flag

During this brief time of Confederate sovereignty, the Confederate Flag emerged. The independent nation needed a flag to symbolize its autonomy and separation from the Union. The Flag, as it is now commemorated, was the result of practicality. Originally, the Confederate Congress had adopted a flag in March 1861 which was remarkably like the flag flown by the Union, known as the "Stars and Bars." This resemblance proved to be profoundly impractical and dangerous on the battlefield as soldiers became confused during battle (Coski, 2015). As a result, a new rendition of the flag was commissioned resulting in the adoption of a battle flag featuring the St. Andrew's cross (Cannon, 1994). The St. Andrew's cross became the Confederacy's symbol declaring it as a 'separate and independent nation'; and symbolizing resistance to any violation of their liberties (Coski, 2005, p. 19). The flag, for the Confederacy, now stood as a symbol of "liberty, courage, and commitment" (Coski, 2005, p. 27). It was also a rallying symbol during battle. Bonner (2002) encapsulated the passion and nationalism felt for the Flag in the words of a Confederate fighter:

> Soldiers have died with one last look upon its dear cross; and in the hour of victory it has seemed transfigured into something God-like, when the rapturous shouts of our Southern soldiery shook its folds like a storm.' Having acquired such associations, it seemed clear. ... that 'the baptism of blood and fire has made the battle-flag of General Johnston our national ensign,' regardless of its delayed official recognition (p.318; Connelly, 2016, xvi-xvii).

Post-Civil War/Reconstruction

On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee capitulated to General Ulysses S. Grant in Appomattox, Virginia and the flag which symbolized the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of the Confederate States of America ceased to fly (Forman, 1991). The Post-Civil War years (also known as the "Reconstruction Era"), entailed the remerging of the Confederate and Union states (Mintz, 2016). This era of time, from 1866 to 1877, was a period of questions and answers regarding race which would set the stage for how the United States would handle race relations for the next century and a half (Mintz, 2016). While the physical war had ended, the animosity between the North and the South had not (Independence Hall Association, 2016; Mintz, 2016). Southerners, facing the crippling of their economies, attempted to force the emancipated slaves to work on plantations (Mintz, 2016). Southern agriculturalists lobbied for and succeeded in establishing some laws to negate the newfound freedom of the slaves. Northerners seeking to combat these abuses sought to press their victory with the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments (Independence Hall Association, 2016; Mintz, 2016). Readmission to the United States required that any state wishing to re-enter the union would have to ratify these amendments (Independence Hall Association, 2016).

In response to the Reconstruction Amendments and the changing times, the South saw the formation of fraternal, social orders based upon race. In the mid-1860's, decommissioned Confederate soldiers in Tennessee formed the Ku Klux Klan, a white supremacist organization, in fervent opposition to the constitutional rights given to Blacks (Independence Hall Association, 2016; Shavin, 2015). In the beginning, such organizations were known to play tricks on the

freed slaves such as pretending to be ghosts of dead Confederate soldiers (Shavin, 2015). However, antics soon turned deadly as the KKK sought to curtail the freed slaves from registering to vote, voting, participating on juries, or holding public office (Shavin, 2015). During this time, the Confederate Flag did not appear publicly. It was a symbol of the "losing side," and as such was relegated to the homes of the Southern soldiers and families who fought for the Confederacy.

WWII and the Civil Rights Movement

Despite the cessation of war, the Confederate Flag did not end with Lee's surrender in 1865 (Coski, 2005, p. 97). Instead of fading into oblivion as a symbol of a defeated attempt at succession from the Union, the flag morphed into a powerful cultural symbol eliciting visceral responses from diverse groups. The chaotic mix of symbolic meanings associated with the Confederate Battle Flag evolved over the course of a century (between 1860s-1960s). The perception of the Confederate Flag changed because of World War II and the Civil Rights Movement (Cannon, 1994; Coski, 2005). According to Coski (2015), before World War II, the flag was tolerated as a symbol of the defeated South. However, the early 1950s ushered in the era of the Confederate Flag as the symbol of racial intolerance and subjugation (Coski, 2005).

As early as 1948, the segregationist Dixiecrat party adopted the Confederate Flag as its emblem (McInnis, 2015; Coski, 2015). The Flag embodied the Party's support for Jim Crow segregation (Coski, 2015). Coinciding with this purpose for the Flag's display, the Ku Klux Klan began to actively use the Confederate Flag as a symbol (Coski, 2015). Upon the KKK's

adoption of the Confederate Flag, the Flag indisputably became a symbol of white supremacy and racial hatred (Noyalas, 2016, p. 193). Around the same time, Confederate Flags began to proliferate the military as well as college campuses (Coski, 2015). As southern military men began to interact more with soldiers from other regions of the United States during World War II, they displayed the Flag as a demonstration of their southern heritage (McInnis, 2015; Coski, 2015). Confederate pride was at a pinnacle during this 100 years post-Civil War, as evinced by the proliferation of Confederate monuments erected in honor of Civil War icons such as: General Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson (Little, 2017). Concurrently, while fighting in foreign lands, Black American soldiers were exposed to other cultures which did not discriminate based on color. Having enjoyed freedoms in other countries that they did not enjoy in their own country, African-Americans began to demand different treatment. The first front where this challenge appeared was education. Noticeably, it was relating to the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision (which ended the segregation of American schools) that the Confederate Flag first arose as a symbol of racial subjugation (Coski, 2005). The Brown decision marked the beginning of arch-segregationists displaying the flag as a representation of opposition to integration (Coski, 2005, p. 206).

Confederate heritage organizations concerned about the tone and direction of these organizations regarding the Confederate Flag condemned the use of the flag in demonstrations by such political groups. These organizations wanted to protect the Flag from "misuse" (Coski, 2015). However, the intervention appeared to have come too late, as the Confederate Flag was now "confetti in careless hands" and opponents to the Flag were becoming increasingly more

vocal (Coski, 2015). Military service and desegregation strengthened the political voice of African Americans. They used their newfound power of speech in opposition to the Confederate Flag, sparking hundreds of incidents and public debates (Coski, 2005, p. 183). These "Flag Wars" were first seen in the mid-1960s and have occurred in waves throughout the decades following (Coski, 2005).

Contemporary Context of the Confederate Flag

From 2000-2003, significant public controversies arose in South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi over the symbolism of the Confederate Flag in their states (Wihbey, 2015). Because of the disagreements, several public measures were debated, and remedies proposed (Wihbey, 2015). The fervor over the Confederate Flag again surfaced in 2011, prompting the Pew Research Center (2011) to conduct a poll which found that 30% of Americans have a negative reaction to displays of the Confederate Flag. A YouGov (2013) Poll stated 38% disapprove of the Confederate Flag being displayed on public grounds. Even with these findings, the Southern Poverty Law Center noted that recognition of the Confederacy is widespread with at least 1,170 publicly funded Confederate symbols across the country (Blinder, 2016).

In June 2015, race relations in the United States reached a crisis point after the lone gunman and self-proclaimed White supremacist Dylan Roof opened fire during a meeting at a historically Black church killing nine African Americans. At the center of the controversy lay the Confederate Flag, as Roof was observed draped in the Flag on social media. Political pressure mobilized to ban the Confederate Flag as Roof divulged that his murders were committed to ignite a race war. Despite a decision in 2000 by voters to keep the Flag's display on state

grounds, the South Carolina Governor and legislators removed the Flag from public display in July 2015 (Wright & Esses, 2017, 224).

The Confederate Flag's removal from state grounds in South Carolina and mounting political pressure prompted commissioners in Marion County, Florida to reinstate the Confederate battle flag to at a government-building complex. Florida State Representative Dennis Baxley stated, "we are all exposed to messages and symbols that may not connect for us, but we should all honor our ancestors and protect free expression" (Wright & Esses, 2017, p. 225). In contrast, Darrell Jackson, an African-American resident stated, "When I see a Confederate soldier, I don't get goosebumps and get all warm and fuzzy" (Wright & Esses, 2017, p. 225).

The 2016 Presidential election also has precipitated an increase in the Confederate Flag's display. Political supporters of now President-elect Donald Trump have brandished the Flag during rallies to emphasize Trump's pre-election message of bringing back an America from yesteryear. Confederate Flags were seen emblazoned with the slogan "Trump 2016" (Fausset, 2016). While Mr. Trump declared his message does not promote racial tension or divide, the increase in the demonstration of the Confederate Flag coupled with a spate of violent acts towards minorities has elicited serious concern from numerous citizens. Since Election Day, several accounts of discrimination have flooded the news and social media (Fausset, 2016). The Southern Poverty Law Center has cataloged more than 430 reports, ranging from offensive vandalism to physical violence, tied to Mr. Trump and his campaign's ideology (Fausset, 2016).

Several states have begun considering new ways to protect demonstrations of

Confederate pride; and to prevent other efforts to remove the Confederate Flag (Blinder, 2016). Recently, calls for the removal of other Confederate symbols (such as statues and monuments) housed on public grounds have surfaced. Consequently, the pressure is, once again, on public officials to assist in determining the fate of this controversial icon.

Previous Studies on the Confederate Flag

In a study which combined a national representative sample, and datasets including White Georgians, White South Carolinians to ascertain the racial motivations of those displaying the Confederate Flag. The research found race-based prejudices were strongly associated with the Confederate battle emblem (Strother et al., 2017). Talbert (2015) sought to examine whether the use of the Confederate Flag reflected Southern culture and regional pride or if it reflected racism and hatred. This question was answered by testing the effects of social class and residence in predicting a person's support for or against the removal of the Confederate Flag (Talbert, 2015). Talbert (2015) found that social class had a substantial effect on perceptions of the flag, noting that upper-class persons have negative attitudes regarding the display of the flag. This research cited "racial attitudes, Southern identity, and race" as variables which impacted predictions regarding the flag (Talbert, 2015).

Holyfield et al., (2009) also studied the relationship between race, Southern identity, and the Confederate Flag. Here, the researchers employed exploratory data from focus groups to perform a critical discourse analysis. The study found that racial hierarchies and racism were maintained through discourse regarding the Confederate Flag (Holyfield et al., 2009). The study suggested that providing education concerning the controversies over the Confederate Flag to

schools in the southern US would assist in challenging racism in the classroom (Holyfield et al., 2009). No recommendations were given in any of these studies as to how this information could be utilized to impact or to guide future policy decision-making.

Moltz (2006) provided a qualitative analysis of the discursive repertoires used during discussions regarding the Confederate Flag to ascertain if it fits within a color-blind paradigm. Using focus groups comprised solely of White individuals and employing critical discourse analysis, Moltz (2006) examined attitudes toward the Confederate Flag to connect the flag to racial discourse. Moltz (2006) concluded that for social change to occur, Whites should become more "privilege-cognizant" as a group and refuse to participate in socially assigned scripts (p. 52). However, Moltz (2006) does postulate that "a racially diverse focus group may yield surprisingly different results" (p. 54).

Bostwick (2003) undertook a sociological examination of Confederate Flag use by employing the use of racial prejudice as a sense of group position theory. Bostwick (2003) used a content analysis of Internet web pages to explore Herbert Blumer's theory that "dominant racial groups perceive a threat to their proprietary claims from a subordinate group" and will "recoil from the potential loss of privilege" (Bostwick, 2003, p. iv). In this study, Bostwick (2003) employs a loss/gain perspective from the vantage point of the dominant group only. Bostwick (2003) argues that by recognizing the extent to which the dominant group perceives loss or threats to power and responding accordingly, can reduce tensions and end controversy. However, there is no examination or attention given to the actions or inactions of the subordinate group and how this interplay impacted decision-making.

Cooper and Knotts (2006) utilizing a rolling cross-sectional survey concluded that support for the Confederate Flag was not only influenced by racial attitudes, but also by the geographical region. Webster and Leib (2002; 2012) also examined the Confederate Flag debate through the lens of geography. In 2002, the researchers analyzed the 1999 vote of the Alabama House of Representatives legislators on the issue, and concluded that both political culture and religion are the forces heavily influencing perceptions of the Confederate Battle flag. Webster and Leib (2012) examined the geography of the 2001 Mississippi referendum vote regarding the design of its state's flag incorporating the Confederate battle emblem. Using cartographic and statistical analyses, the researchers studied the vote and attitudes towards the Mississippi flag (Webster & Leib, 2012).

Reingold and Wike (1998) focused on the State of Georgia to explore the relationship between race, Southern identity, and the Confederate Flag among White respondents. The researchers conducted a survey inquiring as to whether the Confederate emblem should be removed from the State's Flag. Based on the survey results, the researchers concluded that race and racial conflict continue to be a dominating factor in southern society and politics (Reingold & Wike, 1998). The defense of the Confederate Flag was tied to racially based concerns rather than to association with Southern heritage or pride (Reingold & Wike, 1998). In another study, Orey (2004) studied Mississippi college students and found racism was the most significant factor in support for the Confederate Flag. Orey (2004) noted the findings as "startling" considering the level of education of the persons surveyed (p. 102).

Woliver et al., (2001) conducted in-depth interviews with interest group activists;

members of the South Carolina legislature; educational, religious, and business leaders; and observations from five pro-and anti-flag demonstrations and rallies to explain how the State's effort in 2000 to remove the Confederate Flag in South Carolina was partially successful. This analysis which involved analyzing media attention from 1962 to 2000 in South Carolina regarding the Confederate Flag argued that interest group work, a NAACP tourism boycott, and national media attention pressured the legislature and the governor to respond. This study was an illustration of applied philosophy (Woliver et al., 2001).

Recently, Connelly (2016) suggested how the Confederate Flag is perceived (whether as a symbol of hate or heritage) is linked to the social environment at the time and whether there is a corresponding triggering event. Connelly (2016) argued

> The power of the Confederate Flag's symbolism to incite a national outcry against the Flag depends on its direct association with a racist trigger event, such as the Charleston Shooting of 2015 (p.iii).

Connelly (2016) explored the different approaches of two South Carolina Governors to the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds. In 1961, South Carolina State Representative John Amasa May, a Confederate supporter, in opposition to the Civil Rights movement, raised the Confederate Flag on the South Carolina State House grounds (Connelly, 2016). As this commemoration occurred during the State's Civil War Centennial, it was met with little resistance. Despite May's racially incendiary language during his presentation of the Flag, there was sparse to no national outcry in opposition to the Flag. Conversely, national outrage over the Flag and its perceived meaning precipitated Nikki Haley's lowering of the Flag from state

grounds (Connelly, 2016). The researcher suggested the differences lie in the agency of each of the decisionmakers, a triggering event, and national media attention/focus (Connelly, 2016).

Studies regarding the Confederate Flag have been in the fields of education (Hardie & Tyson, 2013), racial studies (Moltz, 2006; Talbert, 2015), geography (Webster & Lieb, 2001; 2002; 2012; 2016), and history (Coski). As such, there are clear gaps in the literature as relates to the field of public affairs, and more specifically to bureaucratic responsiveness and public policy decision-making. A review of the literature regarding the Confederate Flag appears to present a common theme of finding associations regarding race, Southern identity, and racial attitudes but provides no analysis as to whether, and if so, to what extent these factors influenced bureaucratic responsiveness or decision-making in the Confederate Flag debate. This study fills the gap in current knowledge by employing a multi-case study approach to analyzing public decision making regarding the Confederate Flag and considers the perspectives of both the "dominant" and "subordinate" people groups associated with the controversy.

Summary

This study examines factors relating to public decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate flag on public grounds following the Charleston Shooting. Chapter II introduces Critical Race Theory, Agenda-Setting Theory, and Decision-Making Theory. These serve as the theoretical bones of this study. CRT acknowledges the critical role race holds in society. Based upon the premises that the American system of governance is built upon keeping a status quo of white supremacy and the marginalization of people of color, CRT advocates for the use of dialogue and relationship building in the betterment of racial relations. AST provides a link

between media and agenda setting, asserting media impacts decision-making on public concerns. DMT examines the process of decision making.

In Chapter II, the conceptual framework used to inform and ground this study, government responsiveness (bureaucratic and policy) was introduced, and a discussion of the Confederate Flag through the history of the United States and previous studies on the Flag was undertaken. In Chapter III, the study's research methodology, research design, and data collection methods are presented. The framework set forth in Chapter II is the perspective through which the data collected from Chapter III's methods will be analyzed and help to structure discussion in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Previous chapters in this study have examined key empirical research regarding bureaucratic and policy responsiveness; provided an overview of existing conceptual and theoretical work in public policy decision-making and explored the historical underpinnings of the Confederate Flag debate. In this Chapter, the study's research methodology, research design, data collection, and data analysis methods are presented. The methods presented herein will guide the collection of the data that will be presented in Chapter IV and discussed in Chapter V.

As hitherto noted, there is no current research addressing all three elements of this research study: decision-making, responsiveness, and race. This study uses the case of the Confederate Flag to explore their intersection. Questions abounded in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting of whether the Confederate Flag should be flown on state grounds considering negative perceptions (racism and hatred) associated with its display (Costa-Roberts, 2015; Lopez, 2017; Strother et al., 2017a; 2017b; Fausset & Blinder, 2015). Decisions made by government officials in three critical states (Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi) varied widely. This study seeks to understand what influences how government officials respond to racially/culturally-motivated crises.

These questions are explored through investigating the factors relevant to state government officials' decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds; and attempting to ascertain under what conditions this decision is made by executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes. Examining newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to editors of the top daily newspapers in each of the three states through

constant comparative analysis, new insights can be garnered as to how to improve the handling of issues with similar schema-forming symbols.

Research Methodology

Qualitative Research

This study utilized a non-experimental, exploratory qualitative research approach to assess the link between public official decision making regarding the Confederate Flag and bureaucratic and policy responsiveness. Non-experimental, explorative research is observational and is appropriate to provide a rich description and understanding of phenomena (Newing, 2011). The case of the Confederate Battle Flag, as previously discussed, is both a complex and sensitive issue due to its deep ties to racial, cultural tensions and controversy. Qualitative methods are useful in exploring sensitive topics and examining complex issues by systematically questioning meaning through observation (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, Shank, 2002). Through this process, qualitative researchers can provide subjective insights regarding attitudes, behavior, and opinions of a social and cultural phenomenon (Koharti, 2004). Using qualitative research to explore decision-making in the context of the public display of the Confederate Flag is ideal because it allows for an exploration of 1) processes; 2) symbols and social meaning; 3) sensitivity to contextual factors (Ospina, 2004). Additionally, qualitative research allows the researcher to play an active role as a participant in the study (Creswell, 2005).

According to Hennink and colleagues, (2011), qualitative research is conducted to: understand processes, such as how people make decisions; examine sensitive issues in detail; and study complex issues which cannot be understood adequately through quantitative research. A

qualitative research study allows for the exploration of thoughts and feelings which cannot be easily extracted from quantitative research methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For the present study, the decision-making process of public officials regarding the public display of the Confederate Flag was examined.

Second, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explain that qualitative researchers examine phenomena in their natural settings to understand the meanings people carry with them. Hennink et al., (2011) further explain these meanings are shaped by social, economic, cultural or physical factors. The 'soft data' culled from these interactions are used to obtain 'rich data' which assists in understanding the world (Domegan & Fleming, 2007). Thus, qualitative methods are useful for situations, such as the case of the Confederate Flag, which call for considering social and cultural context (Newing, 2011). Data can be obtained from written sources depicting people, their environment, their life events, and their deeply held beliefs and attitudes (Myers, 2009; Sprinthall, Schmutte, & Surois, 1991). Qualitative research data can be derived from documents and texts, such as newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editors of newspapers which this study utilizes.

Third, sensitive topic research exploring the experiences of people is more likely to employ qualitative methodologies (Dickson-Swift, James, & Liamputtong, 2008; Liamputtong, 2007). Qualitative research has been used pervasively in research on sensitive topics such as drug abuse, safe sex practices, poverty, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, feminism, and homelessness (Lee, 1993; Dickson-Swift et al., 2008). According to Lee (1993), qualitative research is suitable for sensitive topic research because people can present their reality and

experiences (Dickson-Swift et al., 2008). The case of the Confederate Flag has serious racial and cultural connotations which inspire intense emotions and require an exploration of individual realities and personal perceptions. Such a case constitutes as sensitive topic research, and consequently, lends itself to the unique features of qualitative research.

Fourth, in qualitative research, the researcher plays a prominent role in the study (Creswell, 2005). For the present study, this researcher was the key data collection instrument and the interpreter of the data findings outlined in Chapter IV (Creswell, 2009; Fink, 2000; Fusch & Ness, 2015). While the qualitative researcher uses a protocol for examining documents, conducting interviews, or making observations, the researcher herself is the one who gathers the information or data. As a human being, the researcher is the only entity or instrument complex enough to both understand and learn from the human experience and the interaction of phenomena (Fink, 2000). There is no reliance on the tools or instruments developed by other researchers (Creswell, 2009). The delineation of this researcher's values, assumptions, and potential bias are noted in a later section entitled, "Ethical Considerations."

Population and Sample

This study employs the use of deliberate or purposeful sampling. Deliberate sampling, also known as nonprobability sampling, involves the purposeful selection of a representative population which fits the parameters of the questions posed in the research study (Koharti, 2004; Tracy, 2013). Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina are significant sites in the battle over the Confederate Flag. The responsiveness of elected officials to the racially sensitive controversy of the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting reached a critical stage in these

states with differing outcomes. Alabama removed the Flag by executive order of its Governor; South Carolina permanently lowered the Flag and retired it to a historical museum through legislative action, and Mississippi retained their status quo of publicly displaying the Flag on state grounds. Consequently, these states were chosen deliberately for this study as critical instance[4] samplings of importance.

Sources of Data

Qualitative data can be derived from any non-numerical information (Trochim, 2006b). One principal source for qualitative data is review of written documents (Trochim, 2006b; Creswell, 2009). This study uses written documents as its source for data. Data was collected from print media (newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to editors). A purposive sample of this data was obtained by performing a query of 1) the top daily newspapers in Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi; and 2) LexisNexis®Academic. The data obtained from these searches was systematically organized and prepared by the researcher. Data were recorded on computer hard drive and Microsoft Office OneDrive for storage and security. The data were then coded for emergent themes. As no human subjects were involved, consideration and clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) were not required.

[4] Focuses on data which is strategically tied to the argument presented (Tracy, 2013).

Research Design

Case Study

This study explores public official decision-making in racially-motivated events through the research design strategy of multi-case study analysis. A case study is an empirical study that investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 2009). Case studies provide a holistic, in-depth exploration of an activity, event, or process (Newing, 2011; Stake, 1995; Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991; Yin, 2009). Case studies are ideal for investigations, such as this study, which entails describing and understanding a specific situation or phenomena.

First, this research study employs a multi-case study approach which allows for a more nuanced examination of a complicated societal matter. Using multiple case studies grants room to explore meanings, perceptions, and understandings associated with decisions made in each of the respective states covered in this study (Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina). Also, selecting multiple distinct case studies maximizes the information, which can be garnered in a specific time (Tellis, 1997).

Second, case studies are particularly well-suited to areas, such as this present case, in which existing theory appears to be inadequate, and theory building is needed (Eisenhardt, 1989; Rowley, 2002). Comparative case study designs such as these are used to compare two or more cases to create inferences and theories about their differences (Newing, 2011). According to Eisenhardt (1989), this juxtaposition of evidence increases the likelihood of novel theory.

Third, case studies have the benefit of permitting intensive unit analysis, which can provide reliable information of both an explanatory and predictive nature. In this study, the cases

under investigation are the differing decisions made regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting. The units of analysis are the public officials involved in the decision-making.

Data Collection Methods

Yin (2009) explains a robust case study is crafted carefully from multiple sources of information. Data collection for this research study involved the use of both primary and secondary data. Primary data involves information directly from the people or situation under study and can include newspaper accounts of someone at or on the scene of an occurrence; historical documents, and letters (Creswell, 2009; Leatherby Libraries, n.d.). Secondary data is information which is already available or secondhand accounts of the people or situation written by others; such as books, papers, newspaper editorials, public records, and historical commentaries (Koharti, 2004; Trochim, 2006b; Leatherby Libraries, n.d.). By using documents in data collection, the actual language and words of participants are obtained unobtrusively (Creswell, 2009; Trochim, 2006b).

This study examines newspaper content (newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editors) between the dates of May 2015 (a month prior to the Charleston Shooting) and August 2015 (a month after the decision regarding the display of the Confederate Flag in each state), with a random sample taken each year following until September 2017 (the time of the Charlottesville Protests). These documents were collected from two sources: 1) the top daily

newspapers in Alabama (*The Tuscaloosa News*), South Carolina (*The Greenville News*), and Mississippi (*The Clarion-Ledger*)[5]; and 2) LexisNexis®Academic.

Search terms for locating articles were directly aligned with the research questions presented, as each of the daily newspapers was searched for the term "Confederate Flag." *The Tuscaloosa News* search engine allowed this researcher to restrict dates of query from May 1, 2015 to August 31, 2015; and from September 2015 to September 2017 for the randomly chosen monthly sample article. *The Greenville News* and *The Clarion-Ledger* did not have a date restriction option available. This researcher manually sorted through and date restricted the articles for these papers to correspond to the dates used to search *The Tuscaloosa News.* The LexisNexis®Academic content type was set to "newspapers," with the same time restrictions as previously noted. The search terms remained "Confederate Flag." From the "All Results" drop-down menu retrieved from this search, the "Geography" group was selected. From the "Geography" group, South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi search results were chosen.

The articles were placed in PDF format for ease in reading and logged into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data was organized first by state, source (newspaper), type of text (article, op-ed, editorial, letter to the editor), and date order. To guarantee the relevancy of the sample, repeat and irrelevant articles were omitted. Articles about Confederate Flag license plates; Confederate Statues; Confederate monuments; or other memorabilia were excluded.

[5] The top daily newspapers by circulation (Agility PR Solutions, 2017a; 2017b; 2017c).

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, the relationship between data collection and data analysis is constant and continuous (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Stake (1995) explains that there is no exact moment when data analysis actually "begins." Instead, the qualitative researcher is in a continual state of collecting data and breaking it down for information and meaning. This process is almost cyclical, as the researcher performs steps from the specific to the general and sometimes back, to uncover themes, insights, and to gain understanding (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). A robust qualitative study possesses a data analysis strategy which is both flexible and steeped in systematic organization. This dissertation research study uses grounded theory methodology for data analysis.

Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss first introduced grounded theory in 1967 in their work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Sutton et al., 2011; Trochim, 2006c). This methodology has been utilized in qualitative research to assist in providing explanations for empirical data regarding human behavior (Sutton et al., 2011). Grounded theory can be considered as a "bottom-up" analysis in which the researcher begins with a wide array of information collected from diverse sources (Sutton et al., 2011).

> A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 23).

Data is obtained from interviews, documents, personal or professional experience and is collected, coded, and analyzed simultaneously based on emerging theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Sutton et al., 2011). In this rigorous approach to research, information gathered is then winnowed down through deductive and inductive reasoning coupled with constant comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994; Sutton et al., 2011; Trochim, 2006c).

Research Steps

According to Sbaraini, et al., (2011), the fundamental components of a grounded theory research study are: 1) openness; 2) analyzing immediately; 3) coding and comparing; 4) memo-writing; 5) theoretical sampling; 6) theoretical saturation, and 7) production of a substantive theory. It is important to note these components do not necessarily occur linearly (Creswell, 2009; Sbaraini et al., 2011). For instance, openness occurs throughout the research study process; theoretical saturation is reached during the sampling, data collection, and analysis stages of a study; memo-writing can be completed during all phases of research; and so forth. (Sbaraini et al., 2011).

Component 1: Openness. Qualitative coding is an open process. Grounded theory utilizes inductive analysis, where themes are drawn from data collected through repeated observation and comparison (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Sbaraini et al., 2011). Grounded theory begins with a question which guides the research (Trochim, 2006c). Strauss and Corbin (1998) advocate for the selection of a research problem a priori. They argue that the research problem can be articulated through 1) assigned research; 2) evaluating problems discussed in academic or practicing professional's literature; 3) issues recognized from personal or professional

experiences; or 4) evolved notions of the problem (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Sutton et al., 2011). The research question is derived from the literature review conducted; and while open and broad initially, narrows as relationships and concepts emerge (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Sutton et al., 2011). The qualitative researcher reads through all data collected to acquire a general "feel" for the data gathered while beginning to establish reflections on meaning, tone, depth, and credibility (Creswell, 2009). While some grounded theorists suggest a purer approach to the text, in this present research study, a literature review was conducted to provide a theoretical knowledge basis for interpretation of the data generated.

Component 2: Analyzing immediately. As previously noted, there is a constant interplay in qualitative research between data collection and analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994; Stake, 1995). Grounded theory researchers analyzing data "do not wait until the data are collected before commencing analysis" (Sbaraini et al., 2011, p. 3). Constant analysis occurs in each stage of the research study. Throughout the research process, analysis, memoing, and recording insights garnered from data, is continuous (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Sutton et al., 2011).

Component 3: Coding and Comparing. According to Rossman and Rallis (1998), data coding is the process of organizing information into groupings of text to establish meaning. Trochim (2006c) explains coding in grounded theory consists of categorizing the information gathered and detailing the implications of the categories determined. Codes are tags or labels which assign meaning in a study, by using phrases linked to a specific context (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Miles & Huberman 1994). Codes can be derived a priori from existing theory (theory-driven), emerge from the data collected in a study (data-driven), or stem from research goals or

questions (structural) (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). This study employs the use of theory-driven and data-driven codes. A codebook of these codes was created to guide the research process and promote consistency among the coders (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). (See Appendix G.)

Coding commences with open coding, in which the researcher begins to break down information collected through conceptualizing, comparing, and categorizing the data collected (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Trochim, 2006c; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006). The coding system for this research study was developed individually by this researcher and a secondary coder through joint meetings and discussion. This researcher and the secondary coder adhered to the following guidelines during the *initial coding phase*[6]:

1) Look for significant themes related to the research questions and record them.
2) Record verbatim quotations to illustrate the category chosen.
3) Up to three codes were permitted.

During the *second phase of coding*[7], this researcher and the secondary coder examined which initial codes were most dominant and relevant to the research questions posed. A special note was made of which codes were constant across articles and any new or essential codes/categories were added. At this point in the research study, a check for intercoder reliability was conducted. During this refinement process, a coder check-in was completed

[6] (Zickmund, 2010).
[7] (Zickmund, 2010).

which assisted in defining codes and making a note of any inclusions/exclusions for the Codebook.

Component 4: Memo-Writing. According to Sbaraini et al. (2011), memos are used in grounded theory studies to both stimulate and to record the researcher's thinking. In addition to a memo field on the Microsoft Excel sheet for use during coding, this researcher maintained a journal during the research study. This reflexive journal was used to record thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and experiences throughout the research study. Reflexive practice in qualitative research is now a widely accepted approach (Ortlipp, 2008). The goal of reflexive journaling is to create transparency in the research process as to the researcher's values and attitudes; and to demonstrate a more accurate representation of the research process as often nonlinear and messy (Boden, Kenway & Epstein, 2005; Ortlipp, 2008). This process is utilized increasingly in studies, such as this one, which is situated in critical, post-structuralist paradigms, such as critical race theory (Ortlipp, 2008).

Component 5: Theoretical Sampling. In a grounded theory study, axial coding is conducted. During the *third phase of coding*[8] for this research study, data was reassembled from the deconstruction of phases one and two by making connections between categories. A coding paradigm generated from examining the phenomena in its situational context and exploring the consequences of the human actions and interactions surrounding the event was completed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Creswell (2009) refers to this step as positioning the category within a

[8] (Zickmund, 2010).

theoretical model. A story is then derived from the interconnection of these categories; this is termed "selective coding" (Creswell, 2009). In selective coding, the core category is systematically related to other categories, the relationships are validated, and categories that need further refinement and development are filled (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During this *final phase of coding*[9], a final codebook was established, through which any remaining articles were filtered. The Final Codebook is provided in Appendix G.

Component 6. Theoretical Saturation. The research process is complete when theoretical saturation of concepts is achieved (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Per Fusch and Ness (2015), data saturation occurs in three instances: 1) when enough information to replicate the study is obtained (no new data), 2) the ability to obtain additional new information is reached (no new themes), and 3) further coding is not practicable (no new codes). This researcher understood saturation in the analysis of information had been reached when the same information repeatedly occurred (no new themes), no further coding was feasible, and when all the concepts of the theory being developed were supported by the data (Sbaraini et al., 2011).

Component 7: Production of a Substantive Theory. According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), grounded theory is a method to develop theory from data which has been systematically gathered and analyzed. In a complex iterative process, grounded theory allows for the generation of new theory that is literally 'grounded' in data and observation (Sutton et al., 2011; Trochim, 2006c). Grounded theory methodology is helpful in studies such as this present case, where

[9] (Zickmund, 2010).

current theories about a phenomenon are either inadequate or nonexistent; and the area of study would benefit from the exploration of the theoretical relationships causing the phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Sutton et al., 2011). In this present research study, the information cultivated was translated into concepts through the delimitation of theory, and the results were formulated into systematic substantive theory.

Goodness and Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four standards for evaluating qualitative research. Their criteria for judging the goodness and trustworthiness of qualitative research are: 1) credibility; 2) transferability; 3) dependability; and 4) confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Trochim, 2006a).

1. Credibility. Credibility refers to the confidence that the results of the qualitative research performed are credible or truthful (Trochim, 2006c; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998). Credibility asks the question of how closely the findings align with reality (Merriam, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) list two techniques which can be utilized in establishing credibility in research: analyst triangulation and theory/perspective triangulation.

According to Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999), analyst triangulation occurs by using "multiple analysts to review findings or using multiple observers and analyst" (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). This researcher has sought a review of her analysis by a historian familiar with matters involving the Confederacy or Civil War history. This contributor also is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the Confederacy. This external review provides a check on selective perception and can be used to highlight any blind spots in

the interpretive analysis (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006; Shenton, 2004). The intention behind the outside review is not to gain a consensus regarding the investigation's findings but to allow for additional perspectives on the data (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

Theory/perspective triangulation refers to using multiple theoretical schemes to interpret phenomenon (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). The research is examined from different perspectives with different questions presented (Hales, 2010). It is unnecessary for the theoretical perspectives to be similar, as the diversity of theoretical lenses could provide for a more nuanced analysis with the ability to recognize different issues/concerns (Hales, 2010). This research study employs the use of several theoretical lenses: agenda-setting theory, decision-making theory, critical race theory, bureaucratic and policy responsiveness to study the case of public official decision-making in racially/culturally sensitive matters.

2. Transferability. Transferability refers to the level the findings of the research study can be applied to other contexts or settings (Trochim, 2006c; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006; Shenton, 2004). The qualitative researcher plays a significant role in ensuring the transferability of a study by providing an in-depth account of the research context and any assumptions of the research undertaken (Trochim, 2006c). The researcher assists in providing a thick description. Thick description is "the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context" (Holloway, 1997; Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). In the qualitative researcher providing a thick description, "the person who wishes to "transfer" the results to a different context is then responsible for making the judgment of how sensible the

transfer is" (Trochim, 2006; Shenton, 2004). This researcher has attempted to provide a thorough accounting of the social, political, and cultural context of the case of the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting. Also, background data to establish the context of this study, as well as the boundaries and assumptions of this present research study are outlined.

3. Dependability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe dependability as the third alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research. Dependability refers to showing the findings of the research study are consistent and have replicability (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). Shenton (2004) advises to address the dependability issue directly. A researcher should report the study's processes with enough detail that a future researcher would be able to repeat the work, even if the same results were not obtained (p. 71). This researcher has attempted to provide a step-by-step, thorough, and detailed accounting of the steps taken during this research study. The criteria used for data collection has been outlined in the "Data Collection" section of this study. Each phase undertaken during data analysis has been delineated in the "Data Analysis" section herein.

Additionally, an intercoder reliability test was conducted to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the data, promote consistency, reliability, and reproducibility of information (Joyce, 2013; Mouter & Noordegraaf, 2012). An intercoder reliability test assists in determining the extent to which coders rate the same units of data identically (Krippendorff, 2004). There were two coders for this research study. The primary coder was this researcher. The secondary coder was a University of Central Florida master's in public affairs student, with a background in English literature. This coder was a white male in his twenties with limited prior knowledge of

the Confederate Flag. Having two coders with different racial backgrounds, age, education, and knowledge of the Confederate Flag was purposefully done to support an unbiased approach to the data collected.

This researcher randomly selected 10% of the articles from the overall dataset for each coder to code independently. Individually, the coders conveyed the data into categories and groupings, with the primary aim of the coders being to assign an identical value to the same content (Joyce, 2013). According to Klaus Krippendorf (2004), by measuring for agreement, we can infer reliability. This researcher selected a reliability coefficient of .80, which was reached in this study. Neuendorf (2002) proposes that as a rule: "Coefficients of .90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, .80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and .70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies for some indices" (p. 145; Joyce, 2013; Mouter & Noordegraaf, 2012). As this study used two researchers, the measurement coefficients of percent agreement and Scott's π were also employed.

4. Confirmability. Confirmability is the fourth criteria for evaluating qualitative research. Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study are not shaped by researcher bias (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that triangulation and reflexivity are techniques for establishing confirmability and reducing the effect of researcher bias. The triangulation of this research study through analyst triangulation and theory/perspective triangulation has been discussed previously in the "Goodness and Trustworthiness" subsection entitled "Credibility."

Cohen and Crabtree (2006) suggest developing a research journal to foster reflexivity helps to establish confirmability. As aforementioned in the section entitled, "Research Steps," this researcher maintained a reflexive journal throughout the study. Also, the following section entitled "Ethical Considerations" provides full disclosure of this researcher's beliefs and assumptions relevant to the topic of the Confederate Flag.

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative researchers perform an interpretive inquiry into social and cultural phenomena. The interpretations of a qualitative researcher are unable to be divided from their backgrounds and history (Creswell, 2009). There are grounded theorists who believe it is critical to grounded theory that the researcher approach the data collected with as little bias or preconceived notions as possible to allow the data to drive the theory development. There are others who support acknowledging researcher influence (bias) as an integral part of the research which drives the methodological process and has concrete impacts on the research design (Sutton et al., 2011; Ortlipp, 2008). The better a researcher can identify their attitudes and beliefs, the more she will be able to distinguish the behavior and attitudes of others; and accurately reflect this in the data collected (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

This researcher is a mid-40s-year old, African American female from the rural South (Virginia). As such, this researcher has experienced or has perceived incidents of racism/prejudice at various times throughout life. This researcher currently resides in Marion County, Florida aforementioned in Chapter II. In July 2015, Marion County commissioners voted unanimously to display the Confederate Flag on the site of government buildings. This

investigator seeks to provide a neutral observation of the questions posed. However, she recognizes the possibility of latent biases which may exist due to both her racial and residential background. Accordingly, several safeguards, as presented throughout this chapter (intercoder reliability, analyst and theory/perspective triangulation, background data for context, the provision of detailed, thick, rich data, and reflexive journaling) have been established in this research study to control bias.

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

Assumptions

One assumption of this study is that the context of decision-making and responsiveness by public officials can be understood through the analysis of newspaper articles regarding an event. Additionally, it is assumed that newspaper articles reflect some portion of the populace's beliefs and attitudes regarding a crisis event, as well as those of significant decision-makers. Another assumption of this study is using newspaper samplings from the onset of the Charleston Shooting to September 2017 (a month following the Charlottesville Protests), will generate sufficient data to support saturation and will provide for emergent theory.

Limitations

A limitation of case study research, which is the methodology of this investigation, is its interpretive nature and that it is often subject to the bias of the researcher. Attempts have been undertaken to address potential bias in interpretation through the addition of a secondary coder and review of the study by a historian specializing in knowledge of the Confederacy and Civil War.

Delimitations

The concentration of this study was upon perspectives published in newspaper articles, editorials, op-eds, and letters to editors of the top daily newspapers in the state of Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi regarding the Confederate Flag. The study examined these documents between the dates of May 2015 (a month before the Charleston Shooting) and August 2015 (a month after the decision regarding the display of the Confederate Flag in each state), with a random sample taken each year following the decision until September 2017. Recently, while there has been a spate of racially motivated events and movements (Police Shootings; Black Lives Matter, Charlottesville Protests), this study will not concentrate on the state of current events, but solely upon decision-making regarding the Confederate Flag following the Charleston Shooting.

While there are several states which have made determinations regarding the display of the Confederate Flag, the focus of this study is on the three states which made critical decisions regarding the Confederate Flag following the Charleston Shooting. Additionally, the concentration of this study has been placed on the public display of the flag on state grounds only. It does not involve any other public or state use of the Flag (i.e., no focus on Confederate Flag license plates, statues, monuments or other Confederate memorabilia).

Summary

Qualitative methods are useful in exploring complex, challenging topics. The Confederate Battle Flag controversy is both a multi-faceted, sensitive societal issue due to its deep ties to racial, cultural tensions and controversy, as such qualitative research methods are

uniquely suited for this study. A non-experimental, exploratory qualitative research approach is used to assess the link between public official decision-making regarding the Confederate Flag and bureaucratic and policy responsiveness. The research design strategy of multi-case study analysis was employed to allow for a more nuanced, holistic, and in-depth examination of the relevant factors in decision-making regarding the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting. Case studies are ideal in situations such as the current case where theory building is needed.

This research study uses deliberate, purposeful (nonprobability) sampling to examine the decision-making of public officials in AL, MS, and SC (states chosen as critical instance samplings of importance). Through an inductive and deductive qualitative constant comparative analysis derived from grounded theory, this study develops a theory about bureaucratic responsiveness to citizens in times of social crisis. This research is undertaken to broaden understanding of how elected officials and public actors can best handle conflicts which emerge as to race and polarizing cultural symbols.

In Chapter III, the study's research methodology, research design, and data collection methods are presented. In Chapter IV, the data results of the methodology explained in Chapter III are discussed. Chapter IV explores the history and demographics of AL, MS, SC and each state's association with the Confederate Flag. Newspaper content concerning the Confederate Flag is mined for factors influencing government officials' decision-making regarding its display on state grounds. In Chapter V, research conclusions based upon an analysis of study results and literature review are discussed, and implications for future research are drawn.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine government responsiveness in racially sensitive matters. The research objectives were to ascertain what factors influence decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds. More generally, what influences government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive matters; and under what conditions are executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes employed? Previous chapters provided an overview of the theoretical and historical underpinnings of this research study; as well as detailed the methodology used to approach the research questions posed substantively.

In this Chapter, the data collected from the methods delineated in Chapter III were examined and searched for themes and meaning. The research findings reported in this Chapter were divided into two parts. The first section was based on a comparative analysis of each state's history, demographics and resources, and association with the Confederate Flag. The second section contained an examination of newspaper content regarding the Confederate Flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting. This part has been segmented into two themes: the relevant factors influencing government responsiveness regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds; and factors impacting when executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are employed in decision-making regarding the Confederate Flag. Both parts are provided here to present a full, rich case in a single area.

Background

Alabama

"*Audemus Jura Nostra Defendere*"

We Dare Defend Our Rights, Alabama State Motto[10]

History

According to Bridges (2016), people have lived in what is now Alabama since the Ice Age, progressing from a Stone Age civilization to an agriculture-based one. These natives built complex, vibrant and prosperous communities which were leveled by diseases by the arrival of Europeans. On July 2, 1540, Hernando De Soto, a Spanish explorer entered the present bounds of Alabama and "discovered" the settlement (DuBose, 1901; Flynt, 2017). In the 1700's, the land now known as Alabama was under the reigns of Spain, France, and Great Britain, although the territory was predominantly occupied by Native Americans known as the Creeks (Bridges, 2016). After the American Revolution, English settlers began to expand their territories resulting in the Creek War (1813-1814) and the Creeks ceding their land to the United States (Bridges, 2016). On December 14, 1819, Alabama became the 22nd state to join the United States (History, 2009). Montgomery has been the capital of Alabama since 1846 (NState, 2016).

Like most of the states in the South, Alabama cotton plantations relied on the labor of enslaved Africans. Nicknamed "The Heart of Dixie," Alabama was one of the largest slaveholding states. By 1860, Blacks made nearly half (45%) of the state's population. When

[10] https://statesymbolsusa.org/symbol/alabama/state-motto/we-dare-defend-our-rights

Abraham Lincoln was elected in November 1860, it was viewed by those in political power as a direct threat to slavery and the onset of a race war (Hubbs, 2016). Soon after that, on January 7, 1861, a Secession Convention was held in Montgomery, Alabama (Brown et al., 1998). Alabama, by a determination of 61 to 39 voted to leave the Union and was the fourth state to do so on January 11, 1861 (Rosenberg, 2001; Hubbs, 2016).

The next month, Montgomery became the capital of the Confederate States; and Jefferson Davis was named the Confederacy's president (Brown et al., 1998; Rosenberg, 2001). Three months later, the Civil War was officially in full swing, and it was determined that Richmond, Virginia would best suit the needs of the Confederacy as the capital city. Richmond was much more abundant in population, and the oppressive heat and mosquitoes of Montgomery were also contributing factors to the decision (Risley, 2011; Brown et al., 1998).

By March 1865, the Confederacy had suffered round after round of defeat but remained undaunted. Alabama's Governor, Thomas Hill Watts exhorted Alabama troops and proclaimed to the state's citizens:

> We must either become the slaves of Yankee masters, degrading us to equality with the Negroes or we must with the help of God, and our own strong arms and brave hearts, establish our freedom and independence (Rosenberg, 2001).

However, in two months' time, on May 4, 1865, the last Confederate surrender occurred east of the Mississippi in Citronelle, Alabama (Brown et al., 1998; Rosenberg, 2001).

Some Alabaman historians argue that the Civil War was the "most significant event in Alabama's history" (Hubbs, 2016). The Civil War hit the state hard physically and economically.

An estimated 122,000 Alabamans fought for the Confederacy during the War (Panhorst, 2015). While estimates vary, approximately 35,000 of those men lost their lives during the conflict (Fleming, 2012). Alabama claimed destruction amounting to $300-500 million in property losses (Coulter, 1970, p. 2; Fleming, 2012). The Union had systematically destroyed various means of transportation: steamboats, railways, bridges (Fleming, 2012). For six months after the surrender at Citronelle, Alabama was a land without law. No longer part of the Confederacy and not yet rejoined to the United States, Alabama weary from war existed without a government to oversee it (Fleming, 2012). Blacks also were without a sense of direction as to how to wield this newfound freedom. Many, out of continued fear for their safety and well-being, returned to their former masters for employment (Fleming, 2012).

During the Reconstruction Period (1865-1874) which followed, the Federal Government attempted to rewrite Alabama's Constitution and to establish rights for Blacks (Fitzgerald, 2017). However, Alabama's Southern Democrats challenged each move to enfranchize the former slaves. In 1901, the Southern Democrats effectively lobbied to pass a State Constitution that disenfranchised African Americans and poor whites (Brown et al., 1998; Fitzgerald, 2017). 500 Amendments later, this document still stands as law (Brown et al., 1998). The harsh treatment of African Americans due to their disenfranchisement, racism, and discrimination led to them taking a mass exodus from the state from 1915-1930. These years were called "the Great Migration" as African Americans went West and North in efforts to achieve better lives (Brown et al., 1998; Fitzgerald, 2017).

The 1960s ushered in a renaissance of Black resistance to the status quo of racial oppression and apartheid in Alabama. From April to May 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. commandeered the Birmingham Protests against racism, segregation, and discrimination. These Protests were checkered by police-sanctioned violence against the marchers. King, himself was arrested. While imprisoned, he authored his infamous "Letters from the Birmingham Jail." 1965 heralded two triumphs in the fight for equal treatment under the law: The Civil Rights March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama and the 1965 Voting Rights Act (Brown et al., 1998).

This renaissance was not without its opposition. In June 1963, Governor George Wallace stood at the entryway to the University of Alabama in defiance of the Attorney General's order to integrate the University. On September 15 of the same year, four young African American girls attending Sunday School were killed in a bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The racially biased Southern Democrats held a stronghold on Alabama state politics deep into the 1980s (Brown et al., 1998). However, due to increased Black voter participation through the Voting Rights Act by the 1990s, 25% of Alabama legislators were Black (Flynt, 2017).

Demographics and Resources

The United States Census Bureau (2017a) estimates the population of Alabama to be 4,874,747 persons. Females comprise 51.6% of this number, and 16.5% of the population are persons 65 or older. The racial makeup of Alabama is primarily two groups: White (69.2%) and Blacks (26.8%). 84.8% of the population has a high school diploma, with 24% of the population having a bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income is $44,758 (Flynt, 2017).

Alabama has a high poverty rating, ranking 44th out of the states with 17.1% of the population living in below the federal poverty level (810,231 persons) (Center for American Progress, 2018a; United States Census Bureau, 2017a). The state ranks 49th in hunger and food insecurity (Center for American Progress, 2018a).

The key natural resources of Alabama stem from its long rainy growing season and a wide variety of soils, which promote a model environment for raising livestock and growing crops (Alabama Natural Resources Council, 2018; NState, 2016). Alabama's primary natural resources are timber, water, wildlife, and soil (Alabama Natural Resources Council, 2018; NState, 2016). Timber is a large producer for the economy, with Alabama having the second largest commercial forest in the United States (23 million acres) (Alabama Natural Resources Council, 2018). Alabama's economy is based upon agriculture, manufacturing (paper products, chemicals, textiles), services, and mining (coal, natural gas, limestone) (NState, 2016; History, 2009). Jobs in the state surround the areas of aerospace, agriculture (poultry, cattle, greenhouses, cotton, and peanuts), auto production, and the service sector (hotels and lodging, health services, education, and legal services) (NState, 2016; History, 2009).

Connection to the Confederate Flag

The Alabama State Flag was adopted in 1895 to preserve the features of the Confederate Battle Flag (MSNBC, 2015). See Appendix A. The Confederate Flag was flown on the State Capitol in conjunction with this flag until June 2015 (Blinder, 2016; Dean, 2015; LoBianco, 2015). There were four Confederate Flags displayed at a Civil War memorial (in honor of Alabamans who fought in the conflict) in front of the state's capital buildings in Montgomery

(Margolin, 2015). Within a week of the Charleston, South Carolina Shooting, without legislative approval or much fanfare, Governor Robert Bentley gave the executive order to have the Confederate Flag permanently removed from state grounds (Blinder, 2016; Dean, 2015; LoBianco, 2015; Terkel, 2015; Wihbey, 2015). The Governor acknowledged his decision to remove the flag was sparked by the Charleston Shooting, making Alabama the first Southern state to remove the symbol from Capitol grounds (Thompson, 2015). Governor Bentley also stated he wanted to give attention to pressing legislative matters in his state, noting:

> This is the right thing to do. We are facing some major issues in this state regarding the budget and other matters that we need to deal with. This had the potential to become a major distraction as we go forward. I have taxes to raise; we have work to do. And it was my decision that the flag needed to come down (Feeney, 2015).

The Governor's decision to remove the Flag was met with a judicial challenge one month later (Margolin, 2015). Governor Bentley was accused of overstepping his authority in the issuance of the executive order to remove the Flags from the state capitol grounds (Margolin, 2015). The lawsuit against Governor Bentley alleged he violated Alabama code which granted authority to the Alabama Historical Commission to "promote and increase knowledge and understanding of the history of this State from the earliest time to the present, including the archaeological, Indian, Spanish, British, French, colonial, Confederate and American eras" (Margolin, 2015). The suit requested a preliminary injunction against the Flags removal and a return of the Flags to the memorial. A judge dismissed the lawsuit in September 2015 for failure to state an actionable injury which could be redressed (Owens, 2015).

Mississippi

"To understand the world, you have to understand a place like Mississippi."

William Faulkner[11]

History

Native Americans, namely the Choctaw, Natchez, and Chickasaw Tribes resided in the territory now known as Mississippi before the onset of Spanish explorers in 1540, the settlement of the French in 1699, and further by the British in 1763 (Busbee, 2015; Sansing, 2013). Mississippi is named after the 2,320-mile river that runs along its border and has the city of Jackson as its capital. On December 10, 1817, Mississippi became the 20th state in the United States. During the early 1800s, Mississippi was the #1 producer of cotton in the United States principally due to its productive, long growing season, and the labor of African slaves, who made up over 50% of the population (Dattel, 2017; Ransom, 2001.)

The Mississippians relationship with the African slaves was a tenuous one. Fearing slave revolts and questioning the morality of owning human beings, the 1832 Mississippi legislature attempted to write a new Constitution in which the importation of slaves into the State to be sold was banned (Busbee, 2015). However, the highly lucrative nature of the slave trade and the state's dependence upon the labor of the slaves for their cotton, sugar, and tobacco crops stymied the implementation of this Constitution without it maintaining slavery as an institution. Although it did not end slavery to the territory, the Constitution of 1832 was still a progressive

[11] (Sansing, 2013, p. iv).

document which increased the size of the Mississippi legislature, removed all property qualifications for public office and voting, and made judicial officers subject to election by the people (Sansing, 2013). The conflict in Mississippi regarding the institution of slavery was ultimately resolved on January 9, 1861, when the state voted to secede by a vote of 84-15 (Busbee, 2015; Sansing, 2013). The vote made Mississippi the 2nd state to secede from the United States, as it followed South Carolina's lead (Stokesbury, 1995; Sansing, 2013).

Mississippi secessionists believed the separation from the United States was going to be a peaceful one. Stating their desire to leave the United States was based on state's rights, they argued they had voluntarily entered the Union as such had the right to leave it willingly. Mississippians also argued they retained their Sovereignty under the 10th Amendment to the Constitution (Sansing, 2013). Many did not see the correlation between their fight for rights and the battle to protect King Cotton and the institution of slavery. However, in April 1861 the first shots of the Civil War were fired, marking the beginning of a bloody conflict between the Union and the Confederacy.

Mississippi was a primary target of the Union military. Vicksburg, Mississippi was an "impregnable fortress" and a key to the Confederacy's survival (Sansing, 2013). The Fall of Vicksburg coupled with the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg (July 1863) foreshadowed the Confederate defeat in April 1865. The Civil War was devastating for Mississippi. Around 80,000 Mississippians fought in the conflict with over 27,000 dying for the cause (Marszalek & Williams, 2009). While the Mississippi of the 1860s was one of the wealthiest states in either the Union or the Confederacy, the War devastated the state's roads, bridges, stores, hotels, and in

the end, the economy (Sansing, 2013). It was a waste laying with long-lasting effects. To this day, Mississippi ranks among America's poorest states.

Being one of the first states to secede, Mississippi was slow to return to the Union, finally committing to do so in February 1870. The Reconstruction period for Mississippi lasted for over a decade (Phillips, 2017; Sansing, 2013). Samuel Thomas (1865) in his testimony before Congress in 1865 gave insight as to the Mississippian ex-Confederates' attitudes toward the freedmen:

> Wherever I go- - the street, the shop, the house, or the steamboat- - I hear the people talk in such a way as to indicate that they are yet unable to conceive of the Negro as possessing any rights at all. Men who are honorable in their dealings with their white neighbors will cheat a Negro without feeling a single twinge of their honor. To kill a Negro they do not deem murder; to debauch a Negro woman they do not think fornication; to take the property away from a Negro they do not consider robbery. The people boast that when they get freedmen affairs in their own hands, to use their own classic expression, "the niggers will catch hell.
>
> The reason of all this is simple and manifest. The whites esteem the blacks their property by natural right, and however much they may admit that the individual relations of masters and slaves have been destroyed by the war and the President's emancipation proclamation, they still have an ingrained feeling that the blacks at large belong to the whites at large, and whenever opportunity serves they treat the colored people just as their profit, caprice or passion may dictate.

This inability to see the newly freed men other than as property was reflected in continuous attempts to nullify the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation, and a refusal by the citizens of Mississippi to ratify the 13th Amendment (Sansing, 2013). The Mississippi legislature constructed the New Black Codes to restrict the civil and political rights of the nearly 400,000 freed slaves and to reinstitute the institution of slavery. The Mississippian Black Codes held that the freed slaves: could not vote or hold public office; could only own land in certain areas; could have a firearm only by special permission; and could not gamble or drink. The Codes also established provisions for when a white male could purchase a freedman if they committed acts of vagrancy or were unemployed (Sansing, 2013).

In response to these Codes, the Federal Government created the 14th Amendment to make every state honor the outcome of the war. In 1867, the state's Republican Party, heavily supported by Blacks sought a New Constitution for Mississippi. This Constitution of 1868 was very progressive banning discrimination and even extending property rights to women (Busbee, 2015). However, it failed to be ratified due to Democratic opposition and the increasing intimidation tactics of the Ku Klux Klan, and a group called "The White Man's Party," which patrolled the streets with guns and warned African American voters to stay home during elections (Phillips, 2017; Busbee, 2015). This resistance to granting civil rights to the freedmen was persistent. In 1890 a new Mississippi Constitution was drafted which sought to challenge the enfranchisement of Blacks, with the establishment of a literacy test and a poll tax. The institution of these elements essentially eliminated Blacks from state politics (Sansing, 2013).

After the War, Blacks were sharecroppers and tenant farmers of their former owners. Legal segregation existed, and a culture of intimidation and violence existed throughout Mississippi. Between 1889 and 1945, 476 people were lynched in Mississippi. This dangerous environment led Blacks to leave the state in large numbers during the Great Migration, also known as the Black Exodus (Sansing, 2013). Black men also joined the Armed Forces and were able to travel to foreign lands and experience life without the high levels of racism, discrimination, and fear which permeated Mississippi. When they arrived back from their tours of duty, following World War II, these men began to demand and to exercise more of their civil and political rights (McInnis, 2015; Coski, 2015; Sansing, 2013).

The Democrat Party trying to keep pace with this growing segment of their party sought to adopt a civil rights platform. The possible addition of a civil rights platform resulted in a split in the party. The section which opposed the recognition of civil rights for African Americans were called the "Dixiecrats." These individuals adopted the Confederate Battle flag as a symbol of their resistance to civil rights (McInnis, 2015; Coski, 2015). In 1955, the world was stunned by the murder of 14-year-old, African American Emmitt Till for reportedly whistling at a white woman. Till was visiting Mississippi from Chicago, when he was kidnapped, beaten and his remains thrown into the Tallahatchie River (Sansing, 2013). Till's mother ordered that his casket remain open so that the world could see what happened to her son, and his murder became the face of Mississippi to those outside its borders. The following decades saw continued gains in the battle for equality for African Americans. Mississippi is reported to have more black public

officials than any other state, a testament to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Connor v. Finch*[12] (Sansing, 2013).

Demographics and Resources

The United States Census Bureau (2017b) estimates the population of Mississippi to be 2,984,100 persons. Females comprise 51.5% of this number, and 15.5% of the population is persons 65 or older. The racial makeup of Mississippi is primarily three groups: White (59.2%), Blacks (37.8%), and Hispanics (3.2%). According to Karahan (2004), Mississippi's Black population is higher than any other jurisdiction in the United except for Washington, D.C. (p.109). 83% of the population has a high school diploma, and 21% has a bachelor's degree or greater. The median household income is $40,528, with Mississippi having the lowest per capita income in the United States (United States Census Bureau, 2017b; Center for American Progress, 2018b; and Sansing, 2013). 20.8% (602,768) of the population lives in poverty (Center for American Progress, 2018b; United States Census Bureau, 2017b). Mississippi is ranked last in the United States in overall poverty rate[13] and hunger and food insecurity[14] (18.7% of the population) (Center for American Progress, 2018b).

The principal means of economic support in Mississippi is agribusiness (Sansing, 2013). Mississippi's top five agricultural businesses are broilers (5-12-week-old chickens), cotton, soybeans, farm-raised catfish, and cattle. Cotton still accounts for 13% of Mississippi's

[12] Black Mississippi legislators increased after the Supreme Court ruled that Blacks were not fairly represented in the state's legislature.
[13] Percentage of people who fell below the poverty line-$24, 340 for a family of four in 2016.
[14] Percentage of households who were food insecure on average from 2014 to 2016, meaning that at some point during the year, they had trouble providing enough food due to a lack of money or resources.

agricultural receipts, and the state remains in the top 3 of cotton-producing states. Manufacturing products within the state are clothing, processed foods, furniture, motor vehicles, electrical products, appliances, and chemicals. Petroleum and natural gas are vital to the mining industry in the state. The services sector makes up a large part of the Mississippi economy. Mississippi also has a thriving gambling industry (NState, LLC., 2017; Sansing, 2013).

Connection to the Confederate Flag

The State of Mississippi is the only state flag that incorporates the entire Confederate Battle Flag Emblem into its design (Sanburn, 2015; Costa-Roberts, 2015; Taylor, 2015; CBS News, 2016). The Confederate Flag insignia has been integrated into the State Flag design since 1894. As one resident noted, "I do not call it the state flag, but a state-sponsored Confederate flag" (Moore, 2015). An indication of the importance of the Flag to Mississippi is reflected in the fact that a State Law prohibits the harming or desecration of the Confederate Flag. A 2001 vote of Mississippians underscored the popularity of the Flag in the state. On April 17, 2001, the State held a public referendum on whether to replace its flag with a new one which would delete the battle emblem associated with the Confederacy. The state's voters overwhelmingly rejected this proposal. The 1894 flag garnered nearly 64% of the 767,682 votes cast in the special election (Karahan, 2004).

After the Charleston Church Shooting, Mississippi legislators introduced 21 pieces of legislation regarding the Confederate Flag, both in support of keeping it and in opposition to doing so (Sanburn, 2015). Proposals ranged from forming a commission to create a new flag, to requiring the Flag to be flown at state universities at the penalty of withholding monies from the

schools if the Flag was not displayed. None of the legislation made it out of committee (CNN Wire, 2016). Noteworthy, is the fact that the State's Governor, Phil Bryant did declare the month of April as Confederate Heritage Month and established April 24 as Confederate Memorial Day in keeping with long-held tradition in Mississippi to do so annually (Strother et al., 2017a; 2017b; Ladd, 2016). Governor Bryant regarding the display of the Confederate emblem on its state's flag maintained his long-held position that the state should keep it as is, stating "A vast majority of Mississippians voted to keep the state's flag, and I don't believe the Mississippi Legislature will act to supersede the will of the people on this issue" (Dreher, 2015). There has been no vote/referendum, executive or legislative change to the status of the Confederate battle emblem being displayed on public grounds or within the Mississippi state flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Church Shooting.

South Carolina

"*A state where it's always a great day... The State of South Carolina will always be the place of new beginnings and fresh starts...*"

Marco Rubio, 2016

History

The Cherokees, Catawbas, and Yamassee tribes inhabited the land now known as South Carolina before exploration by the French and Spanish in the 1500s and settlement by the English and Barbadians in the 1600s (South Carolina State Library, 2018; Hicks et al., 2016; Bache, 2009). In 1670, settlers from England and Barbados established Charles Town (now

known as Charleston), the largest southern city during the colonial period (Hicks et al., 2016). The colony was named "Carolina" after King Charles I[15] and was later divided into what is now North and South Carolina (Hicks et al., 2016; Bache, 2009; South Carolina State Library, 2018). The territory was lush with vegetation, possessed a temperate climate, and rich soil (Bache, 2009). West African slaves were brought to the land to assist with farming rice, indigo, and cotton crops and by the early 1700s reflected most (two-thirds) of the colony's population (History, 2018; South Carolina State Library, 2018; Hicks et al., 2016; Bache, 2009). The wealth obtained from the crops and having the slaves as assets made South Carolina one of the richest colonies in America (South Carolina State Library, 2018; Bache, 2009; Hicks et al., 2016).

It was this affluence, and its root source which almost prevented South Carolina from signing the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Initially, Thomas Jefferson wrote an anti-slavery clause in the Declaration. However, it was removed before the final draft due to opposition from South Carolinians who depended heavily on slavery for their economic well-being (Bache, 2009). After the signing of the Declaration of Independence, South Carolina became a significant force in the American Revolutionary War. Over 130 battles were fought on South Carolinian soil during this conflict, and

> the fighting within the state shifted the entire momentum of the war, and ultimately helped force the British to surrender at Yorktown. That victory gained the United States

[15] Charles is "Carolus" in Latin (Bache, 2009, p. 6)

its independence, thus making it one of the most important moments in American history (Bache, 2009, p. 91).

South Carolina was the eighth state to enter the Union by ratifying the U.S. Constitution on May 23, 1788, by a vote of 147 to 73 (South Carolina State Library, 2018; History 2018; Hicks et al., 2016).

Economically, during the Antebellum period, South Carolina continued to thrive despite growing tensions regarding slavery and state's rights. Cotton replaced rice and indigo as the state's primary crop (Bache, 2009; Hicks et al., 2016). The slaves who tended these crops vastly outnumbered their slaveowners, which created a growing cause for concern and unease. South Carolina leaders fearing for their safety and to quell a rebellion from slaves developed a series of "black codes." These codes prevented the slaves from learning to read or write and made it illegal to hold meetings or to travel without permission (Bache, 2009).

Meanwhile, outside of South Carolina, the crusade against slavery was intensifying. There were slave revolts as well as calls for the end of the "peculiar institution" from the Northern parts of the country. This fraction set up a brewing debate between those supporting state's rights and those advocating for the authority of the federal government. Namely, the states counted it as their right and not that of the federal government, to choose whether they engaged in the institution of slavery. South Carolina leaders also resisted the imposition of national tariffs by the federal government which could harm South Carolina's economy (Bache, 2009).

Ultimately, the questions regarding slavery and state's rights lead to South Carolina becoming the first state to secede from the Union on December 20, 1860 (Stokesbury, 1995;

History, 2018; Bache, 2009). Soon thereafter, South Carolinians began arming themselves and making moves to seize federal property, leading to the first shots of the Civil War at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861 (Stokesbury, 1995; History, 2018). The Confederate soldiers defeated the Union during the battle of Fort Sumter, perhaps setting up unrealistic expectations for the duration and intensity of the War which they had begun. The Union soldiers outnumbered the members of the Confederate Army by a total of 3 to 1, due to the larger populations of the Northern states. The Union also had greater monetary assets, machinery, railroads, naval ships, and an established form of government (Bache, 2009).

Despite these disadvantages, several debilitating losses (The Fall of Vicksburg, the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg), and the inevitability of surrender, the Confederate Army would not submit to defeat. Noticing the tenacity of the Confederate troops, General William Sherman determined the only way to secure a Union victory would be by psychologically devastating the Confederacy. Sherman declared a "total war" and instituted attacks on the major institutions and structures of the Confederacy, including their business and civil life (Bache, 2009; Russell, 2001). South Carolina was one of the primary states "singled out" for special destruction (Russell, 2001). In February 1865, Union soldiers burned, looted and destroyed more than two-thirds of the city of Columbia (Bache, 2009; History, 2018). Sherman, holding South Carolina accountable for the Civil War ordered his troops to be especially brutal. The mercilessness included destroying innocent people, businesses, private farms and entire towns (Bache, 2009). Finally, on April 9, 1865, the Confederacy relented. Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses Grant in Appomattox, Virginia (Forman, 1991).

While once a thriving community, the Civil War left South Carolina struggling, unable to successfully compete with the newer cities of industry. Between 5,000-17,500 South Carolinians lost their lives during the Civil War, and hundreds lost limbs becoming amputees (American Battlefield Trust, 2018; Bache, 2009). Soldiers returned to homes devastated by the warfare of Sherman, inoperable railways, bridges, canals, businesses, and a system of wealth through slave labor which was no more (Hicks et al., 2016). The Civil War leveled South Carolina economically for decades.

Attempting to grapple with this newfound situation, South Carolinians turned to their "black codes" for stabilization and "to preserve the social control of slavery" (Hicks et al., 2016, p. 194; Bache, 2009). The South Carolina black codes provided a definition for being black or a "person of color," as anyone whose blood was more than 1/8th black; restricted the travel of freedmen, established a Black person could never testify against a white person; and enforced harsh penalties (death, public whipping, forced work) for Blacks convicted of a crime against a white person. In reaction to these codes, the United States Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 14th Amendment (Hicks et al., 2016; Bache, 2009). South Carolina in January 1868 held a new constitutional convention and crafted a Constitution which gave a Declaration of Rights and equal treatment to all freedmen, removed property ownership as a voting requirement, funded public schools, and allowed interracial marriage (Hicks et al., 2016). Having the largest number of black officeholders of any state during Reconstruction (315), South Carolina quickly ratified the 13th and 14th Amendments, marking its readmission to the Union on June 25, 1868 (Hicks et al., 2016).

However, there was a vacuum when the federal government began to remove troops after South Carolina's readmittance. No longer under the watchful eye of the American government, South Carolina began to see a rise in the Ku Klux Klan and other racially motivated hate groups using violence and intimidation to gain control (Hicks et al., 2016). The 1875 South Carolina Governor's election marked the political return of White Power through the Democratic Party (Bache, 2009). Having firm control of the state governing system, in 1895, the Democrats passed a new state Constitution. This new constitution ensured blacks attended separate schools from whites, again made interracial marriage illegal[16], and sheltered methods used to discriminate and keep African Americans from voting. The control wielded through this revision of "black codes" and the white supremacist Democrat Party would last for the next 75 years in South Carolina (Bache, 2009).

The Civil Rights Movement was brought forth by African American frustration with discrimination, particularly in the wake of the service Blacks had given to the United States military in both World War I and World War II. Having fought in foreign lands for their country, Black military men repeatedly were denied access to programs which were established to benefit soldiers returning from war. As a people, blacks were "economically inferior and politically powerless" (Hicks et al., 2016, p. 297). These Black Veterans began to lead the charge for a change to Jim Crow legislation, which restricted their rights as free Americans. In 1954, in the now infamous case of *Brown v. Board of Education,* the United States Supreme

[16] Interracial marriage was not made officially legal in South Carolina until 1998.

Court ordered all South Carolina schools be desegregated (Hicks et al., 2016). However, it was not until the 1970s that South Carolina's schools become fully integrated (Bache, 2009). Since the passing of the Civil Rights Acts and the Black Power Movements, South Carolina has had increased participation of African Americans politically, both as voters and as candidates. (Hicks et al., 2016).

Demographics and Resources

The United States Census Bureau (2017c) estimates the population of South Carolina to be 5,024,369 persons. Females comprise 51.5% of this number, and 17.2% of the population is persons 65 or older. The racial makeup of South Carolina is primarily three groups: White (68.5%), Blacks (27.3%), and Hispanics (5.7%). 86% of the population has a high school diploma, and 26.5% has a bachelor's degree or greater. The median household income is $46,898. 15.3% of the population (735,960) lives in poverty. South Carolina ranks 37th out of the states in overall poverty and 30th in hunger and food insecurity (Center for American Progress, 2018c).

South Carolina's key natural resources are its rich soil, minerals, forests, and water supply. For the most part, South Carolina has moved away from being agribusiness focused and has become based in industry, particularly tourism (Bache, 2009). South Carolina's coastline is a premier resort destination on the East Coast with over 100 golf courses (History, 2018). Agriculture is still active in the economy but is primarily based on livestock (poultry, cattle, hogs), with the state's most important crop being tobacco (NState, 2017b; Bache, 2009). There has also been a shift towards manufacturing with the number of plants in the state growing

dramatically in the last 60 years because of South Carolina's location and transportation network[17]. Efforts have been made to attract new businesses such as the automotive and aerospace industries (Hicks et al., 2016).

Connection to the Confederate Flag

South Carolina began displaying the Confederate Flag on state grounds in 1961 during the commemoration of the 100-year anniversary of the commencement of the Civil War (Worland, 2015). While civil rights leaders were occupied trying to secure voting rights and attempting to end racial apartheid in the US, the Confederate Flag was hoisted on the dome on the top of the Capitol with little contention as to its display (Worland, 2015). It was not until almost 40 years later, in 2000, that the Flag began to ignite controversy when the NAACP led a boycott of the state due to the Flag's presence at the State's capital. The boycott resulted in the removal of the Flag from the Capitol and to state grounds near a monument to Confederate soldiers (Worland, 2015; History 2018). However, as further testament to the deference paid to the Confederate Flag and other artifacts of the Confederacy, a State Law exists prohibiting the harming or desecrating of the Confederate Flag.

Four Confederate Flags flew over the State Capitol with the State's flag until July 2015. In the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting, South Carolina's governor, Nikki Haley called for the removal of the Flag in June 2015. Haley stated:

[17] Five interstates run through South Carolina and connect it to various states; there are over 2,000 miles of railroad tracks; three major airports in the state; and a busy deep-water port (Hicks, et al, 2016).

> We are not going to allow this symbol to divide us along longer. ... The fact that it causes so [much] pain is enough to move it from the capitol grounds. It is, after all, a capitol that belongs to all of us (Phillips, 2015).

While Nikki Haley continuously expressed her desire for unity among all South Carolinians and called for the removal of the Flag, it was not a decision she could make unilaterally. The Confederate Flag was protected by the Heritage Act of 2000, which required a two-thirds vote of the South Carolina legislature for the flag to be removed (Bellware, 2015). South Carolina's Governor, Nikki Haley, called upon her State's legislature (in the last week of their legislative year) to remove the Confederate Flag from the South Carolina State Capitol (LoBianco, 2015; Hanson, 2015).

On June 23, 2015, the South of Carolina House of Representatives introduced the bills: H4365 (Flags) and H4366 (Clementa C. Pinckney Act) to prevent the placement of any Confederate Flag on Capitol grounds and to remove the current Flag from the Confederate Soldiers Monument (SC H4365, 2015; SC H4366, 2015). Simultaneously, in the South Carolina Senate, the bill S0897 (SC Infantry Battle Flag of the Confederate States of America) (2015) was introduced to remove the Flag from its location permanently and to transport the Flag to the nearby South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum for "appropriate display." Governor Nikki Haley with the assistance of the State's Legislature removed the Confederate Flag from state grounds in South Carolina on July 10, 2015.

Study Findings

"South Carolina has furled its Confederate battle flag, Gov. Robert Bentley has yanked down Alabama's Confederate flags and Mississippi may redesign its state flag because it is, for all practical purposes, a Confederate flag in disguise. It's a Confederate-imagery apocalypse in the South."

Phillip Tutor

This study used a constant comparative method to analyze the data collected from newspapers in Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi following the Charleston Shooting. Articles were collected from two sources: 1) the top daily newspapers in Alabama (*The Tuscaloosa News*), South Carolina (*The Greenville News*), and Mississippi (*The Clarion-Ledger*); and 2) LexisNexis®Academic. Search parameters for articles were set between the dates of May 2015 (a month prior to the Charleston Shooting) and August 2015 (a month after the decision regarding the display of the Confederate Flag in each state), with a random sample taken each year following the decision until September 2017 (the time of the Charlottesville Protests). Repeat and irrelevant articles were omitted from the data. An article was deemed irrelevant if:

1) it did not pertain to either research question posed in the study;
2) it contained reference to Confederate Flag license plates, statues, monuments or other memorabilia;
3) it referenced Confederate Flag discussions in States other than Alabama, South Carolina, or Mississippi; or

4) it originated from sources in states other than Alabama, South Carolina, or Mississippi.

The data collected was maintained in Microsoft Excel files, delineated as to each state. Microsoft Excel was ideal for categorizing, storing and tracking large amounts of information.

A total of 117 articles were examined to provide insight into the research questions. Each article was coded as to the concepts suggested by the data, and constantly compared and contrasted (looking for similarities and differences) to establish general patterns or themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This researcher worked toward saturation of categories through a process of open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in the development of a decision-making process model of government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive crisis events.

Open Coding

During open coding, the raw data collected from the articles were used to identify and develop meaning units. Initial analysis was conducted by simultaneously reviewing articles with an open Excel spreadsheet. The Excel spreadsheet had pre-established labels to assist in establishing meaning units. Established labels were:

1) Source type (article, editorial, letter to the editor, or opinion-editorial).

2) Tone 1 (This refers to whether the overall tone of the article is positive, negative or neutral towards the removal of the flag from state grounds).

3) Tone 2 (This refers to whether any decisionmaker mentioned in the text is described in a positive, negative, or neutral manner)

4) Code (Here the data coders look for the major theme of the article and provide a description, up to three codes were permitted).

Additionally, there was a memo field for each researcher to record thoughts or ideas; or to make comparisons to information as they came to mind. During open coding, both the primary and secondary coder observed the material for the most relevant and consistent information to establish basic meaning units. Basic meaning units were critical words, phrases, or statements found in the data. Labels for the basic meaning units were derived directly from the article. During open coding, the coders also used salient quotations from the data to assist in describing the meaning unit assigned. The coders for this study identified 88 meaning units in the data.

Axial Coding

Coding using grounding theory is a very fluid process. The researcher reviewed the 88 meaning units derived from open coding and proceeded to axial coding by making connections between the concepts and grouping the meaning units into categories. As the coders continued through the articles, fewer new concepts were found, indicating saturation. The 88 meaning units were categorized into 22 groups of concept codes.

The concept codes created were divided into two groups: theory-driven and data-driven. The theory-driven codes were derivative from viewing the meaning units through the lenses of Critical Race Theory, Agenda Setting Theory, and Decision-Making Theory to establish

categories. The data-driven codes were the result of labeling the consistent characteristics of the units intuitively, and the coders coming to a consensus as to the naming of each category. There were nine theory-driven concept codes and 13 data-driven concept codes. Table 1 provides a listing of the theory-driven concept codes and Table 2 give a description and example of each code, which is provided in the Codebook in Appendix G.

Table 1. Theory-Driven Codes

Theory Driven Codes	Feelings of Oppression or microaggression
	Interest Convergence
	Commitment to Social Justice
	Racial Sacrifice Covenant
	Challenges to Dominant Ideology
	Personal Traits
	Political Adoption
	Political Context
	Exploration of Alternatives

Table 2. Theory-Driven Codes, Definitions, and Examples

Code	Description/Definition	Example(s)
Feelings of Oppression or microaggression	Article states or alludes to feelings of less than or other by the minority group due to the presence of the Flag.	“This flag remains a constant reminder of not just the past hate, but the current hate that continues to fester in this state amongst our residents and throughout this chamber,” Williams-Barnes said.
Interest Convergence	Article suggests support for the removal of the Confederate Flag was based upon the receipt of an outside benefit by the majority, such as an economic benefit.	Our “political leaders” received clear messages regarding the demand to remove the Confederate flag from existing businesses and the flag’s negative effect on potential industries coming to South Carolina.
Commitment to Social Justice	Article states or alludes to the desire for social equity, racial harmony, or a world without “-isms.”	“This is a gumbo of opinions and experiences,” Gilich said of Biloxi. “I wanted to make sure, as mayor, that everybody feels welcome.” "The South, and the rest of the nation has made great strides in improving race relations during my lifetime. We still have a way to go. Taking the Confederate flag from the statehouse grounds may be another step in the right direction."
Racial Sacrifice Covenant	Article contains thoughts or actions which convey that the interests of the minority are secondary to the interest or desires of the majority.	"Teens are buying it as a rebellious counter-culture statement against political correctness, Hayes said, and others talk of taking a stand against big government and holding fast to what they hold dear."
Challenges to Dominant Ideology	Article contains statements which reflect the desire to maintain the status quo, reflect self-interest, power, and privilege are the	“To me all the talk about the Klan and the Nazis is a smokescreen for an attack on Southern heritage,” he said. “They want to link everyone who flies the (Confederate) flag with the Klan and Nazis, which I don’t want any part of.”

Code	Description/Definition	Example(s)
	dominant ideology of American society.	
Personal Traits	Article suggests a personal trait or attribute of the decision-maker influenced the decision regarding the Confederate Flag.	"The pain Haley felt, she said, is the same kind of pain many people in the state have felt every time they passed the Confederate battle flag. Pushback was inevitable."
Political Adoption	Article indicates the political posture of the decisionmaker. Suggests the decisionmaker took: 1) no action; 2) action which was fast and symbolic; 3) action which was slow and substantial; 4) action which was fast and substantial; or 5) slow and symbolic.	"In giving the order, Bentley said he recognized the flags' relevance as a part of Alabama's history, but he added that its appropriation by hate groups as a representative symbol could draw attention away from the state's budget issues and constrict lawmakers' time."
Political Context	Article indicates the political context in which a decision regarding the Flag was made.	Our "political leaders" received clear messages regarding the demand to remove the Confederate flag from existing businesses and the flag's negative effect on potential industries coming to South Carolina.
Exploration of Alternatives	Article suggests possible alternatives to the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds, such as: in a museum, on private property.	"As a state, we can survive, and indeed we can thrive, as we have done, while still being home to both of those viewpoints. We do not need to declare a winner and a loser. We respect freedom of expression, and for those who wish to show their respect for the flag on their private property, no one will stand in your way."

Table 3 provides a listing of each data-driven concept code category. Table 4 gives a description and example of each data-driven code, which is provided in the Codebook in Appendix G.

Table 3. Data-Driven Codes

Data-Driven Codes	Inclusiveness
	Economic
	Public Perception of State
	Future Oriented
	Appropriation by Hate Groups
	Acknowledge All Parts of History (Heritage)
	Politically Motivated (personal)
	Politcally Motivated (interest groups)
	Microaggression
	Not About Individual Rights But the Collective
	Discrimation Against Whites
	Honoring the Victims

Table 4. Data-Driven Codes, Definitions, and Examples

Code	Description/Definition	Example(s)
Inclusiveness	Article suggests the need for public spaces to be available to everyone or the right for citizens to feel included in their government.	"Monuments and graveyards may be valuable, solid reminders of the state's history, but the Confederate flag has no place on the official grounds of government, which represents all citizens."
Economic	Article suggests support for the removal of the Confederate Flag was an economic decision.	"Bentley unveiled a partnership with tech-giant Google to build a $600 million data processing center in Jackson County. Tom Strain, lieutenant commander-in-chief of the national Sons of Confederate Veterans and member of Limestone County's Thomas Hobbs Camp, said he sees a connection between the two events, calling the flag removal a "knee-jerk" reaction."
Public Perception of State	Article shows evidence of concern for the public perception of the State by those outside of its boundaries.	"What would the world think?" "The whole world is asking, is South Carolina really going to change, or will it hold to an ugly tradition of prejudice and discrimination and hide behind heritage as an excuse for it?" Neal said.
Future Oriented	Article states or describes feelings of concern for the future.	"What we're really wanting is a flag that charts a different future for our state, that charts a different future for our children and that is about a vision that unites people in the state with each other as well as unites Mississippi with other states in the nation," she said.
Appropriation by Hate Groups	Article describes the Flag's meaning has been appropriated by hate groups, the Shooter (Dylan Roof), racists, etc.	Former state Rep. Boyd Brown, a Democrat, told the crowd, "We have to take Southern pride out of the hands of the racists and the haters."

Code	Description/Definition	Example(s)
Acknowledge all parts of History (Heritage)	Article suggests all history needs to be protected, even parts which may appear unseemly. The Confederate Flag is positioned as a part of Southern Heritage which should be preserved.	Peeler said while he believes the flag has been misused and wrongfully defined by some, he believes the flag still symbolizes heritage and also recognizes the sacrifices made by those who fought in the Civil War. "On all sides it's been a heartfelt and very emotional issue," he said.
Politically Motivated (personal)	Article suggests a personal trait or attribute of the decision-maker influenced the decision regarding the Confederate Flag.	Randolph said Haley had little choice. With the world watching, he said, "There was nowhere else to go."
Politically Motivated (interest groups)	Article suggests interest groups influence or weigh in on the decision regarding the Confederate Flag.	"Our treacherous state Legislature voted to remove it without the consent of the people in our state," the invitation reads. "We, however, owe this opportunity to them. Without their poor judgment and lack of integrity, we would not have this cause."
Microaggression	Article states or alludes to feelings of less than or other by the minority group due to the presence of the Flag.	Patsy Eaddy, a black woman, said there was a "sense of embarrassment" of seeing the flag still flying after all these years. She attended the ceremony to see the important milestone in the civil rights movement.
Not about individual rights but the collective	Article states the display of the Flag on public grounds is not about individual rights (i.e., freedom of speech, freedom of	"Trying to connect the flag issue with the First Amendment is far-flung. Individuals are allowed to fly whatever flags they would like at their houses."

Code	Description/Definition	Example(s)
	expression) but the rights of all citizens.	
Discrimination Against Whites	Article states actions to remove the Flag are acts of discrimination against Whites.	"In fact, the Burtons said the black leaders in Union Springs and the Alabama NAACP are actually discriminating against white Southerners." "It's racial discrimination," Justin said. "We are not racist or radical."
Honoring the Victims	Article reflects the sentiment that the removal of the Flag honors the victims of the Charleston Shooting. The removal of the Flag is in memorial to the victims of the Charleston Shooting.	"For the widow of Sen. (Clementa) Pinckney and his two young daughters, that would be adding insult to injury, and I will not be a part of it," said Rep. Jenny Horne, her voice shaking with tears and emotion.
Act of Healing/Improve Race Relationships	Article states removal of the Flag from public grounds are an act of healing and a measure which can improve race relationships.	"We would like as a city the same chance to heal old wounds that the state got by bringing down the Confederate flag," Adams said.

Selective Coding

In completing the open and axial coding, dominant themes began to emerge. Selective coding which focuses on core phenomenon evolving from the data. In this study, the selective coding came into direct alignment with the research questions posed. There were two themes which emerged from the data collected. These themes were:

1) Key factors in the decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds are:
    a. The response to a triggering crisis event
    b. A desire for inclusiveness
    c. A perception of outside attention or scrutiny
    d. A concern for the economic well-being of the State
    e. The political agency of the decisionmaker
2) Economics, current law, and political expediency influence decisions of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

Theme 1: Key factors to understanding state government officials' decision- making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

These themes also can be paired down further into more abstract categories of why, what, how, interactions, and consequences.

a. The response to a triggering crisis event (why)

This category refers to the presence of a precipitating/triggering crisis event which requires the need for a solution or resolution. Without question, the decision of Dylan Roof to walk into Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church and kill unsuspecting parishioners was not only a tragedy but also a triggering crisis event. The shocking nature of the murders based in hate formed through racism sparked concern in a nation already grappling with racial uncertainty. Learning of Roof's association with white supremacy and the Confederate Flag set

off a nationwide debate as to the appropriateness of displaying the Confederate Flag, particularly on state grounds. The response to a triggering crisis event is the *why* in the decision-making factors. Without the response to a triggering crisis event, there would be no need for decision-making as there would be no disruption or need for intervention. While underlying tensions may have existed for years, the presence of the triggering event catalyzed action. When questioned as to whether the Charleston Shooting was being used as an opportunity to remove the Confederate Flag from state grounds, and whether it would be strong enough to sway opinions regarding the symbol, South Carolina State Representative Doug Brannon stated, "It should be. ... No, I won't say that. It shouldn't have needed to be."

b. A desire for inclusiveness (what)

A desire for inclusiveness refers to the desire for social equity, racial harmony, or a world without "-isms." This category is the *what* that is being sought in decision-making factors. Decisionmakers are seeking public spaces to be available to everyone. Also, the right of citizens to feel included and not an outsider in their government is a key consideration. Several meaning units attested to feelings of less than or other by African Americans at the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds. Other meaning units conveyed feelings of reverse discrimination and bias towards those who supported the continued display of the Flag on state grounds. Key to both frames of mind was the core need for the individual to feel a part of, valued, or included in their government. Decisionmakers try to find means to support this need in their constituency. A descriptive quote of this category found in one Mississippi newspaper

reads: “We are not angry. We are just trying to make America better for everybody—not black folks, not white folks—but everybody.”

c. A perception of outside attention or scrutiny (interactions)

This category refers to the perception of how persons outside of the state or the country view the State. Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina all have a long and checkered history with race. As discussed previously, the agricultural genesis of all three states led to an overreliance on slave labor which led to racial imbalances and injustices for centuries. This is widely known not only throughout the United States but internationally. However, in today’s increasingly globalized society, perceived inequities because of race, gender, or sexual orientation are becoming more and more not tolerated. States, as business entities, do not want to be perceived as “backward” or “bigoted.” Perceptions of outside attention or scrutiny are the key *interactions* decisionmakers factor into decision-making in racially-culturally sensitive events. This is a future-oriented perspective for the decisionmaker. While attempting to ascertain how the outside world is viewing their state, decisionmakers are also reflecting as to what this perception means for the future of their state. This category prompts the decisionmaker to ask: “What would the world think?” The following are three examples of perceptions of outside attention or scrutiny, and its future-oriented outlook as reflected in South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi:

> The whole world is asking, is South Carolina really going to change, or will it hold to an ugly tradition of prejudice and discrimination and hide behind heritage as an excuse for it?

> Bentley defended his action. He said he understands many people see the Confederate battle flag as a symbol of Southern heritage, and that others view it as an image of bigotry and hatred. As governor, he added, he has to do what is in the best interest of the state, and that means overcoming outside misperceptions about Alabama.
>
> What we're really wanting is a flag that charts a different future for our state, that charts a different future for our children and that is about a vision that unites people in the state with each other as well as unites Mississippi with other states in the nation.

d. A concern for the economic well-being of the State (consequences)

This category refers to concern for the economic livelihood of the State. States are business entities. They need to be economically stable to provide for the needs of their citizenry. How a decision will impact their state financially or the *consequences* of a decision is a key factor in decision-making in racially/culturally sensitive matters. Public officials weigh the economic costs of their decision as part of their accountability to the community. Several meaning units involved the financial aspects of displaying the Confederate Flag on public grounds. These units were primarily concerned with the costs of maintaining the Flag on state grounds, the costs of maintaining the Flag in a museum, and the costs of losing business due to the Flag being displayed on public grounds. Two exemplary quotations of this category are:

> Our "political leaders" received clear messages regarding the demand to remove the Confederate Flag from existing businesses and the flag's negative effect on potential industries coming to South Carolina.

> Bentley unveiled a partnership with tech-giant Google to build a $600 million data processing center in Jackson County. Tom Strain, lieutenant commander-in-chief of the national Sons of Confederate Veterans and member of Limestone County's Thomas Hobbs Camp, said he sees a connection between the two events, calling the flag removal a "knee-jerk" reaction.

e. The political agency of the decisionmaker (how)

This category refers to the ability of the political actor or public official to autonomously make decisions. How much political agency an individual has is a key factor in *how* a decisionmaker chooses to carry out a decision. In this research study, an examination of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes were used in the decision-making regarding the Confederate Flag in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina was undertaken. South Carolina removed the Flag with approval from its Governor Nikki Haley and the South Carolina Legislature. Alabama removed the Flag from state grounds through the executive order of Governor Robert Bentley. Mississippi did not remove the Flag, in large part due to the support of its long-time advocate, Governor Phil Bryant. In each scenario, the Governors displayed a high degree of political agency. Governors Haley and Bentley were proponents of the Flag being removed; whereas Governor Bryant was opposed to the Flag being removed from state grounds. Of note, Governor Bryant is a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. The results in the decision regarding the display of the Flag on state grounds corresponds to the thoughts and beliefs of each state's chief executive officer regarding its display. Illustrative quotations from this category are:

[Governor Bentley] “We’re not the state that George Wallace governed over in 1963,” he said. “We’re the state where Gov. Robert Bentley is the governor.”

“On June 24, Bentley ticked off Confederate adherents by taking down the Confederate flags on Statehouse grounds in Montgomery -- the battle flag and the national flags. Gone. No debate. No South Carolina-like media frenzy. Just gone.”

“The person who deserves the most credit is Gov. Nikki Haley. Were hearts changing even before she rounded up that incredible array of political leaders and held that incredible news conference to demand the flag’s removal? Certainly. Certainly, in the public, and I suspect among elected officials. But she helped change even more hearts — helped people focus on the pain and the grace of the people of Emanuel, and the pain caused by the flag.”

“Gov. Bryant has Confederate ancestors like many people in Mississippi do. This is one way we can honor and pay respect to American veterans.” As violent events like the 2015 Charleston church shooting and the 2017 Charlottesville protests have reignited conversations about changing the Mississippi state flag, Bryant, whose state-issued SUV has a state flag license tag on the front, has pointed back to the 2001 referendum in which the state’s voters decided nearly 2-to-1 to keep the current state flag. “Whatever the state flag is or is not should be decided by Mississippi voters,” Bryant said in 2017.

Theme 2: The relevant factors influencing whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

When examining the factors influencing how executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes decision is made regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds, three categories were prominent: economics, current law, and political expediency.

a. Economics

Economics or the concern for the economic well-being of the State has been discussed previously as a key factor in public official decision-making regarding whether the Flag should be displayed on state grounds. Here it is also referred to as a key factor in determining whether executive authority is utilized. Citing the need to attend to the state's budget issues and not constrict lawmaker's time, Governor Bentley made a unilateral decision to remove the Confederate Flag via executive order. A prevalent theme in articles relating to Alabama and Governor Bentley is the relationship between the Governor's executive order and the desire to bring big industries to his State.

b. Current law

Other sources state there were clear indicators businesses would leave South Carolina and other industries would not consider taking up residence in the State if the Confederate Flag remained. This was believed to be a key factor prompting Governor Haley to demand action from her state's legislature on the issue. This category of current law refers to standing or existing law being a factor in determining whether legislative processes are utilized. Nikki Haley

had to consult her state's legislature due to existing law in the state that protected the Confederate Flag and other Confederate memorabilia. The Confederate Flag was protected by the Heritage Act of 2000, which required a two-thirds vote of the South Carolina legislature for the flag's removal (Bellware, 2015).

c. Political expediency

Political expediency refers to a public official or politician acting to advance a political career or completing a public action with selfish motivation or for self-interested reasons. Mississippi Governor Bryant advised that for there to be a change to the status of the Flag in Mississippi it should be put to the voters to decide. This is the only response recorded by the Governor in the wake of the Charleston Shooting. The Governor, who is a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans is a long-standing advocate for the current version of the Mississippi Flag which has an emblem of the Confederate Battle Flag embedded in its design. The Governor's political posture could be described as slow and symbolic. (See Appendix C). He gave little attention to the national outcry against the Confederate Flag, and while over 21 pieces of legislation were introduced in his state both for and against the Flag, no action was taken regarding its display on state grounds.

Summary

In this chapter, the findings of the data collection methods discussed in Chapter III were displayed. The findings were based upon an exploration of Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina, history, demographics and resources and the connection of each state with the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds. (See Comparison Tables 6, 7, and 8.) In addition,

newspaper articles were examined through constant comparative analysis of themes relevant to the research questions posed.

There were two themes which emerged in alignment with the research questions posed. Findings from the study indicated key factors in the decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds are: 1) the response to a triggering crisis event; 2) a desire for inclusiveness; 3) a perception of outside attention or scrutiny; 4) a concern for the economic well-being of the State; and 5) the political agency of the decisionmaker. Also, it was discovered that economics, current law, and political expediency influence decisions of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds. These findings will be further discussed in Chapter V, with recommendations for future research and implications for practice also supplied.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive matters. This was done by analyzing the decision-making processes of public officials regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds through the lenses of Critical Race Theory, Agenda Setting Theory, and Decision-making Theory. These theories informed and grounded the research questions of:

1) What factors are relevant to understanding state government officials' decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds?

2) Under what conditions of public decision making regarding the Confederate flag is executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes used?

Using a grounded theory approach, three different decisions regarding the Confederate Flag in the states of Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina were studied. The research consisted of background studies of each state and the coding of 117 newspaper articles about the display of the Confederate Flag in the three states in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting.

Findings from the study indicated key factors in the decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on state grounds are: 1) the response to a triggering crisis event; 2) a desire for inclusiveness; 3) a perception of outside attention or scrutiny; 4) a concern for the economic well-being of the State; and 5) the political agency of the decisionmaker. Government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive matters requires purposeful decision-making which encompasses inclusiveness, a future-oriented perspective, and the presence of a decisionmaker

with a high degree of agency. In addition, it was discovered that economics, current law, and political expediency influence decisions of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

This chapter discusses the relationship between the factors which emerged during the research study. This chapter also presents a decision-making process model of government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive crisis events, as well as provides recommendations for future practice and study.

Discussion

This research study compared the handling of the Confederate Flag controversy by public officials in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina in the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting. Alabama removed the Flag via executive order. South Carolina removed the Flag with approval from the South Carolina Legislature. Mississippi's Governor advised any removal of the Flag had to be the result of a vote by the citizens of the state. The Confederate Battle Emblem remains embedded in the State's Flag. Examining what factors played into government responsiveness in each of these decisions uncovered two themes aligned with the research questions posed. These themes are addressed in detail in the following sections.

Theme 1: Key factors to understanding state government officials' decision- making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

There were five key factors to understanding decision-making in this racially/culturally sensitive crisis event: 1) the response to a triggering crisis event; 2) a desire for inclusiveness; 3)

a perception of outside attention or scrutiny; 4) a concern for the economic well-being of the State; and 5) the political agency of the decisionmaker.

There appear to be clear relationships between these factors and how a public actor will respond to a racially/culturally sensitive crisis event. These are:

a. If a public actor perceives an issue (triggering crisis event) to be a high public priority (outside attention/scrutiny), they are more likely to act *(interest convergence-critical race theory; political adoption-agenda setting).* Conversely, if a public actor perceives an issue (triggering crisis event) to be a low public priority (outside scrutiny/attention), they are less likely to act *(racial sacrifice covenant-critical race theory; political adoption-agenda setting theory).*

In this relationship, the triggering crisis event is viewed by a decisionmaker as being a high or low public priority. High public priority refers to having a high degree of outside attention/scrutiny. This scrutiny can be in the form of media attention or public protests. If a public actor sees the event as a high public priority, he or she is more likely to act on the matter. These results align with the tenets of critical race theory and agenda setting theory. Interest convergence is the principle that situations change only when the issue aligns with the needs of the dominant culture (Bell, 2004). According to Walgrave and Van Aelst (2016), media coverage effects the attention political actors give to an issue. The rate of political adoption of an issue can range from no adoption to fast and substantial (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006).

In this study, both Governors Haley and Bentley perceived the issue of the Charleston Shooting to be a high public priority. Haley sought to bring a level of peace to her state which

had been rocked by the murders and sought to cope with the festering racial issues the Confederate Flag had again exposed. Governor Bentley wanted to squash the ability of the Charleston Shooting and the subsequent uproar regarding the Confederate Flag to interfere with his legislative agenda and state budgeting. In this way, the interests of Governors Haley and Bentley (dominant culture) converged with the needs of persons who were advocating for racial/social justice. Perceiving this event as a high public priority caused the Governors to take action which was fast and symbolic.

Contrariwise, if a public actor perceives an issue (triggering crisis event) to be a low public priority (outside scrutiny/attention), they are less likely to act *(racial sacrifice covenant-critical race theory; political adoption-agenda setting theory)*. A low public priority refers to a low degree of outside scrutiny, protests, or media attention. The rate of political adoption in such instances appears to be either no action or action which is slow and substantial. These results are associated with Bell's principle of racial sacrifice covenant. Racial sacrifice covenants are thoughts or actions which convey that the interests of the minority are secondary to the interest or desires of the majority (Bell, 2004).

In this study, Governor Bryant treated the aftermath of the Charleston Shooting as a low public priority. There was a clear gap in the amount of data from newspapers in Mississippi as opposed to the states of Alabama and South Carolina. The Governor did not address the issue. When asked about replacing the state's flag due to the controversy, the Governor maintained it was a matter best left to voters. Bryant's actions relayed a lack of importance to the Charleston Shootings and demonstrated that the feelings of oppression or other felt by minorities were of

secondary importance to upholding tradition. Governor Bryant took no action or slow and substantial action in response to what he perceived as a low public priority.

b. Media attention plays a role in the level of government responsiveness *(agenda setting theory).*

This relationship means there is an association between the degree of media attention given to the triggering crisis event, racially/culturally sensitive symbol or icon, and the level of government responsiveness. Agenda setting theory acknowledges the power of the media to impact the public agenda (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002). The volume of articles written regarding the Charleston Shooting was understandably greater in the state of South Carolina. Second to South Carolina was Alabama with Mississippi providing the least number of articles. In addition, the tone of the articles from Alabama and South Carolina appeared to be very future-oriented and concerned about the perception of the state by those outside its borders. This public pressure through the media in South Carolina and Alabama played a role in the level of government responsiveness towards the issue and the decisions made. Conversely, the dearth of media attention on the matter in Mississippi also attributed to the public officials being less likely to act on the removal of the flag from state grounds.

c. If the agency of a public actor is strong, coupled with a desire for inclusiveness, they are more likely to act *(commitment to social justice-critical race theory).*

In this relationship, the agency of a public actor is considered strong if he can autonomously make decisions. A desire for inclusiveness is defined as a desire for social equity, racial harmony, or a world without "-isms." When the presence of both attributes exists in a

crisis event, the public actor is more likely to act. This is in keeping with the commitment to social justice tenet of critical race theory. In this tenet of critical race theory, subjects work to eliminate all forms of subjugation of all people (Delgado, Stefanic, & Harris, 2012; Solórzano & Yasso, 2002; Litowitz, 1999).

Governors Haley and Bentley held strong political agency, yet they also expressed a desire for inclusiveness and social equality. Each acted with deliberate speed to remove the Flag from their state capitals. Conversely, Governor Bryant was an actor with strong political agency who did not indicate concern for inclusiveness. Governor Bryant was a long supporter of the Confederate Emblem embedded in the state's flag and a vocal advocate of leaving the matter to vote/referendum. As such, he was less likely to act in support of the removal of the Flag from state grounds. Interestingly,

> Observers say a lack of political leadership in Mississippi republican-lead House and administration on the issue is maintaining the status quo in the state despite growing national sentiment against symbols of the Confederacy (CNN Wire, 2016).

Thusly, government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive matters requires purposeful decision-making which encompasses inclusiveness, a future-oriented perspective, and the presence of a decisionmaker with a high degree of agency.

Theme 2: The relevant factors influencing whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds.

Economics, law, and political self-interestedness influence decisions of whether executive authority, vote/referendum, or legislative processes are used in decision-making regarding the display of the Confederate Flag on public grounds. In the case of Alabama, the decision to use an executive order to remove the Flag from public display on state grounds was fueled by economics. In South Carolina, while Governor Nikki Haley desired to remove the flag from state grounds, she was prohibited by state law in doing so via an executive order. Upon 2/3 vote of the South Carolina Legislature, the Flag was removed from the state capital. In Mississippi, a politician's ties to the Confederate Flag and his efforts to avoid political pressure influenced his decision that the issue needed to be decided by a vote. The emphasis on economics, the law, and political expediency are consistent with critical race theory literature, especially the concept of interest convergence. There appear to be clear relationships between these factors and how the public actor responded to the racially/culturally sensitive crisis event. These are:

a. Public actors who view their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes against an issue are like their constituency are less likely to act. Conversely, public actors who view their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes for an issue are like their constituency are more likely to act. In short, the triggering crisis event provides an avenue to discourage or encourage

action on an issue the public actor already "cares about" (Elmelund-Praestekaer & Wien, 2008; Walgrave & Van Auks, 2016).

b. Public actors that view themselves as leaders of the public are more likely to act. If a public actor believes she has the responsibility of leading her constituency in sensitive issues, she will be more likely to act via executive authority. Whereas, if the public actors that views themselves as representatives of the public are less likely to act. The public actor in this case will seek to put the issue to a vote or referendum.

Decision-Making Process Model of Government Responsiveness in Racially/Culturally Sensitive Crisis Events

A decision-making process model of government responsiveness in racially/culturally sensitive crisis events was developed from the data and grounded in the theories of Critical Race Theory, Agenda Setting Theory, and Decision-Making Theory. The model displayed in Figure 1, delineates the steps a public actor would take at the onset and during a crisis event which is

racially motivated.

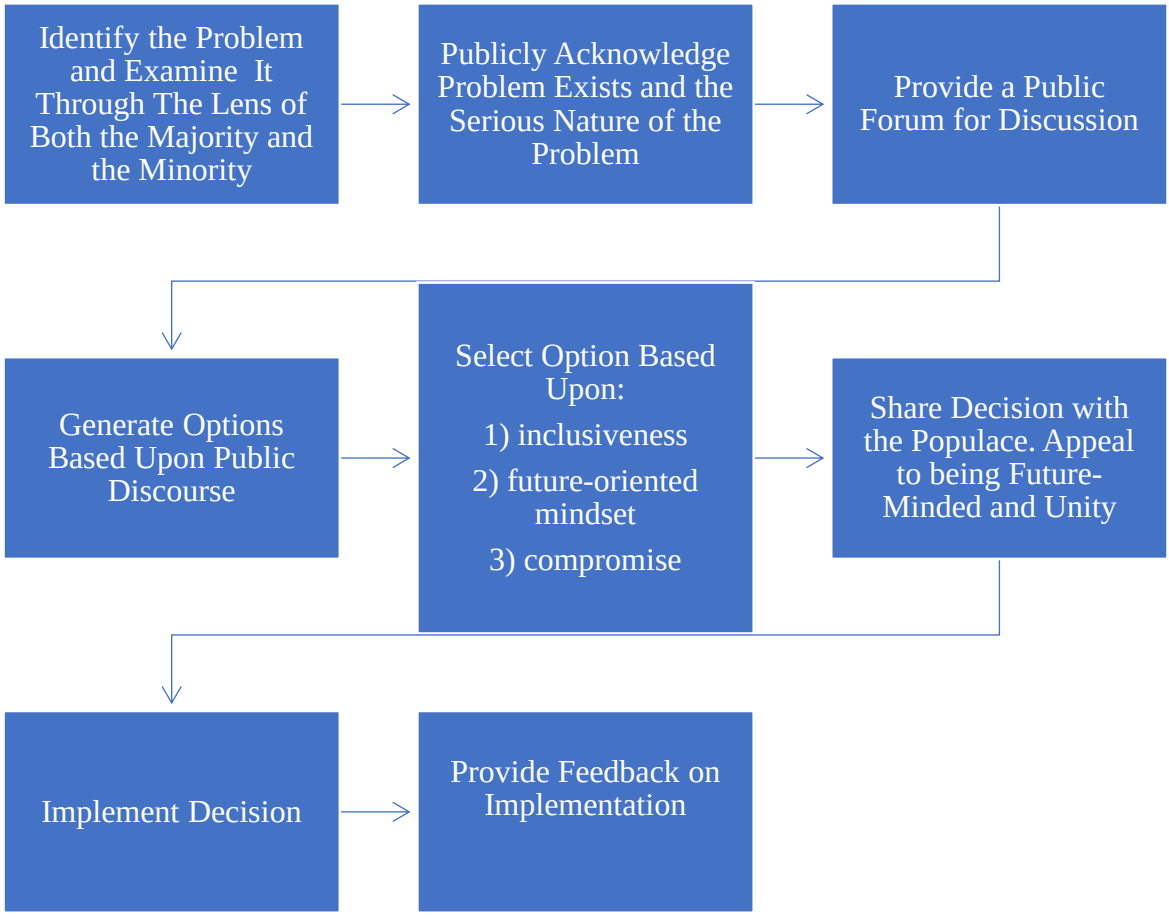

Figure 1. Decision-Making Process Model of Government Responsiveness in Racially/Culturally Sensitive Crisis Events

Recommendations as A Result of This Study

Recommendation 1

Decisionmakers need to be clear as to their role and how they view themselves as a public actor. Does the decisionmaker view themselves as a representative of the people or as a leader of the public?

Recommendation 2

Decisionmakers need to be future-oriented when handling racially/culturally sensitive crisis events. Leaders should attempt to draw constituents away from past-based thinking and direct them toward present or future needs.

Recommendation 3

Decisionmakers need to consider alternative solutions which would involve a compromise between the opposing values.

Recommendation 4

Decisionmakers should ensure avenues in which as many constituents as possible have an opportunity to be heard and allow for discourse. “That may best begin with an open conversation among all sides in which each group works hard to listen and understand the needs and desires of all others. Only then, can a good balance be struck through compromise” (Natchez Democrat, 2016).

Recommendation 5

Public officials should acknowledge the seriousness of the crisis and be proactively engaged in solution mining.

Recommendation 6

After a decision has been reached, public actors should attempt to explain the rationale to the public, call for unity, and appeal to future orientation or forward thinking.

Recommendation 7

Public actors should work to build cultural awareness and sensitivity. Recognizing that the dispute is not truly about the symbol itself, but about the loss of power, or a lack of power, and begin to work on establishing equity.

Recommendation 8

In the decision-making process, the step of public report or feedback on the status of actions taken should be added.

Implications of This Study

Practical

The potential for increased violence and upheaval due to racially sensitive matters warranted a closer examination of the processes by which public officials make decisions regarding polarizing cultural symbols, such as the Confederate Flag. The research findings from this study are provided as practical tools which can be implemented in a racially/culturally sensitive crisis event. The findings from this study can be used to foster improved government efforts at responding to matters of a highly charged emotional nature. The steps can be taken to ameliorate tensions and to establish a sense of balance and social equity in racially sensitive crisis events. The decision-making process model delineated calls for discourse and attempts to eliminate feelings of lack of or loss of power which heighten conflict. The model also encourages a feedback loop to promote feelings of inclusiveness and belonging among the citizenry.

Academic

This research study fills the gap in research and knowledge regarding decision making, bureaucratic and policy responsiveness, and race. This research study provides greater insight into the intersectionality between decision-making, bureaucratic and policy responsiveness, and race. Decisions regarding racially/culturally sensitive matters warrant a balanced, nuanced approach. Additionally, this study adds to the body of grounded theory work which is placed within a critical race framework as a social change agent. This is particularly useful in the field of Public Affairs as public officials are often called upon to differentiate between the wants and needs of opposing groups (often falling along racial lines). Public decisionmakers would benefit from the results of this study in establishing a systematic framework for issues of this nature.

Recommendations for Future Research

According to Malagon, Huber, and Velez (2009), placing grounded theory within a critical race framework, such as the one employed by this study, furthers the advancement of qualitative critical race research by building theory, challenging previous scholarship, and acting as a tool for social change. Future studies employing grounded theory within a critical race framework in the evaluation of other racially/culturally sensitive symbols or icons would garner data helpful to creating greater social equities. Using this theory and methodological approach in studies of other inequalities (such as gender, sexual orientation) may also prove insightful.

Consideration should also be given to employing these approaches using a data source other than newspapers. Newspapers, due to the present digital age are becoming less accessible

and during this study attempting to use the newspaper search engines often was unwieldy and time-consuming. Using social media mediums such as Facebook or Twitter may provide valuable information in a richer context.

Table 5. List of States in the Confederacy and their dates of succession

States in the Confederacy (13)

AL – Alabama, January 11, 1861

AR – Arkansas, May 6, 1861

FL – Florida, January 10, 1861

GA – Georgia, January 19, 1861

LA – Louisiana, January 26, 1861

KY- Kentucky, November 1861

MO-Missouri, November 1861

MS – Mississippi, January 9, 1861

NC - North Carolina, May 20, 1861

SC - South Carolina, December 20, 1860

TN – Tennessee, June 8, 1861

TX- Texas, February 1, 1861

VA – Virginia, April 17, 1861

Table 6. Comparative History of Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina

	Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
Pre-Civil War	Heavily inhabited by Native Americans known as "Creeks."	Choctaw, Natchez, and Chickasaw Tribes resided in the territory.	Many small tribes resided in the territory. The largest tribes were the Cherokees and the Catawbas.
	Formerly territory of Spain, France, and Great Britain.	English, Spanish, and French explored and settled the region.	Settled by English, Spanish, French, and Barbadians.
	Agriculture based, particularly cotton.	The #1 producer of cotton among the states. Also, a strong producer of sugar and tobacco.	Strong agriculture base of rice, indigo, and cotton crops.
	African slaves constituted 45% of the population.	55% of the population was Blacks.	Blacks made up 57% of the population.
Statehood	22nd State to join the Union.	20th state to join the Union.	8th state to join the Union.
	Joined the Union on December 14, 1819.	Joined the Union on December 10, 1817.	Joined the Union on May 23, 1788.
Secession	4th state to secede.	2nd state to secede.	1st state to secede.
	Seceded from the Union on January 11, 1861.	Seceded from the Union on January 9, 1861.	Seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860.
Civil War	Briefly was the capital of the Confederacy.	Vicksburg considered Confederate stalwart and impenetrable.	First shots of the Civil War fired upon Fort Sumter.
	Contributed 122,000 soldiers to the conflict.	Contributed 80,000 soldiers to the conflict.	

	Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
	35,000 Alabamans died fighting during the Civil War.	27,000 Mississippians died during the Civil War.	Between 5,000-17,500 South Carolinians died in the conflict.
	$300-500 million in property damage.	Railroad systems, roads, and bridges demolished.	Total war waged upon South Carolina as punishment for being the first to secede.
	Last Confederate surrender in Citronelle, AL on May 4, 1865.	The Fall of Vicksburg was a psychological blow to the Confederacy.	
Reconstruction	Southern Democrats lobbied power creating a 1901 Alabama Constitution which disenfranchised Blacks and poor Whites.	New Black Codes were instituted by the Mississippi legislature to restrict the civil and political rights of freed slaves.	Black Codes rewritten to continue social control of slavery.
	Rejoined the Union July 13,1868.	Rejoined the Union February 23, 1870.	Rejoined the Union July 9, 1868.
Post Reconstruction and Civil Rights	Racial apartheid and persistent terrorism towards African Americans led to the Great Migration (1915-1930).	Dixiecrat Party adopted the Confederate Flag as a symbol of resistance to Civil Rights.	Democrat Party maintained control for over 75 years.
	Sixteenth Street Church Bombing	Murder of Medgar Evans.	*Board v. Board of Education*
	Birmingham Protests	Kidnapping and Murder of Emmitt Till.	Strum Thurmond nominated as President from the Dixiecrat Party.
	Selma Marches Increased voting by African Americans		

	Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
	due to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Today, 25% of Alabama legislators are Black.	Mississippi is reported to have more black public officials than any other state, a testament to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Connor v. Finch*.	

Table 7. Comparative Demographics and Resources of Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina

	Alabama	**Mississippi**	**South Carolina**
Population	4,874,747	2,984,100	5,024,369
Gender	51.6% Female 48.4% Male	51.5% Female 48.5% Male	51.5% Female 48.5% Male
Age	16.5% 65 and older	15.5% 65 and older	17.2% 65 and older
Race(s)	White 69.2% Black 26.8%	White 59.2% Blacks 37.8% Hispanics 3.2%	White 68.5% Blacks 27.3% Hispanics 5.7%
Education	84.8% high school diploma 24% bachelor's degree or higher	83% high school diploma 21% bachelor's degree or higher	86% high school diploma 26.5% bachelor's degree or higher
Income	$44,758	$40,528	$46, 898
Poverty	17.1% Ranked 44th in Poverty Ranked 49th in Hunger and Food Security	20.8% Ranked last in Poverty Ranked last in Hunger and Food Security	15.3% Ranked 37th in Poverty Ranked 30th in Hunger and Food Security
Resources/Industry	Crops, livestock, timber, aerospace, service sector	Agribusiness (broilers, cotton, soybeans, catfish, cattle), manufacturing, service sector, mining, gambling	Tourism, agribusiness, manufacturing, strong location and transportation network

Table 8. Connection to the Confederate Flag of Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina

	Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
Display of the Confederate Flag on State Grounds before the Charleston Shooting	The state flag of Alabama adopted in 1895 features the Confederate Battle Flag.	The State of Mississippi is the only state flag that incorporates the entire Confederate Battle Flag Emblem into its design.	South Carolina began displaying the Confederate Flag on state grounds in 1961 during the commemoration of the 100-year anniversary of the commencement of the Civil War.
	Four Confederate Flags were flown on the State Capitol with the State Flag at a Civil War Memorial to Alabamans who fought in the Civil War.	Voters in 2001 decided by a 2:1 margin to keep the State Flag. The design has been in use since 1894.	Four Confederate Flags flew over the State Capitol with the State's flag.
Decision Made Regarding the Display of the Confederate Flag on State Grounds in the Aftermath of the Charleston Shooting	On June 24, 2015, Governor Robert Bentley gave an executive order to have the Flag permanently removed from state grounds.	There has been no vote/referendum, executive or legislative change to the status of the Confederate battle emblem being displayed on public grounds or within the Mississippi state flag in the aftermath of the Charleston Church Shooting.	Governor Nikki Haley with the assistance of the State's Legislature removed the Confederate Flag from state grounds in South Carolina on July 10, 2015.

APPENDIX A: THE FLAGS OF THE CONFEDERACY, ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, AND SOUTH CAROLINA

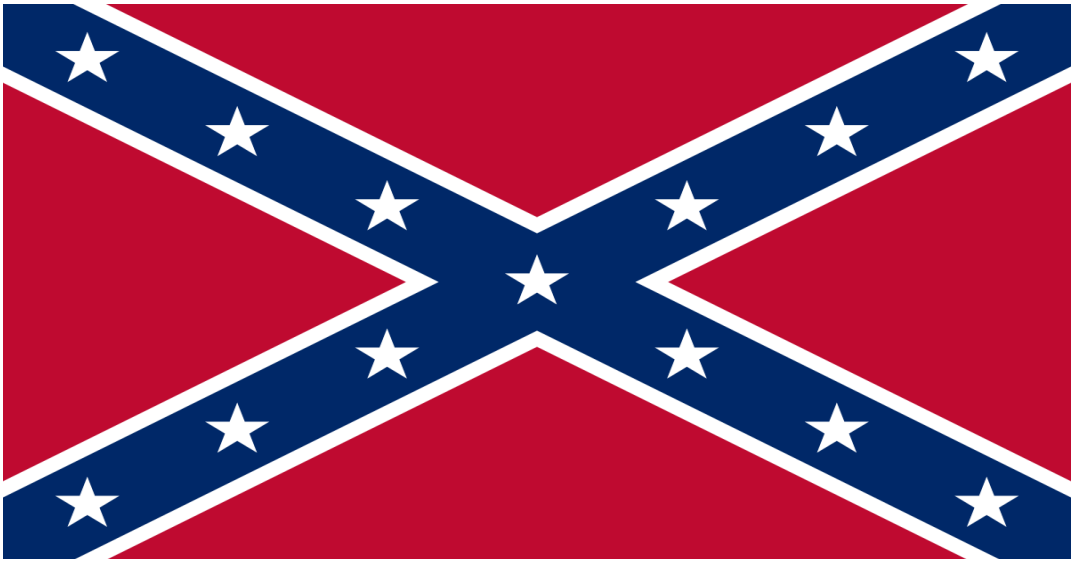

Figure 2. Confederate Battle Flag

Figure 3. Alabama State Flag

Figure 4. Mississippi State Flag

Figure 5. The Flags of South Carolina

APPENDIX B: CRITICAL RACE THEORY AT A GLANCE

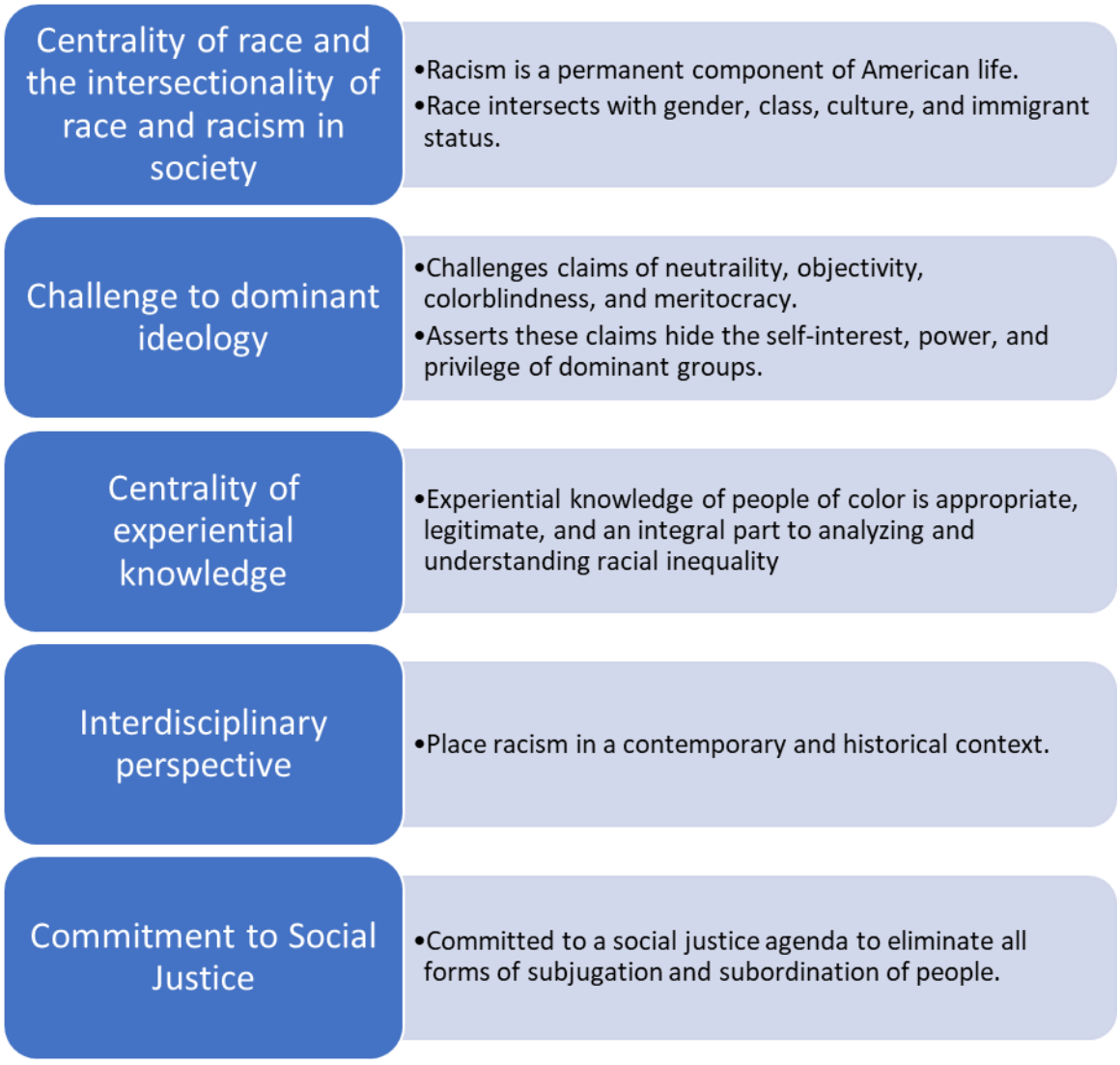

Figure 6. *Critical Race Theory* at *A Glance*

APPENDIX C: ADAPTATION OF WALGRAVE AND VAN AELST'S CONTINGENCY MODEL OF POLITICAL AGENDA SETTING BY THE MEDIA

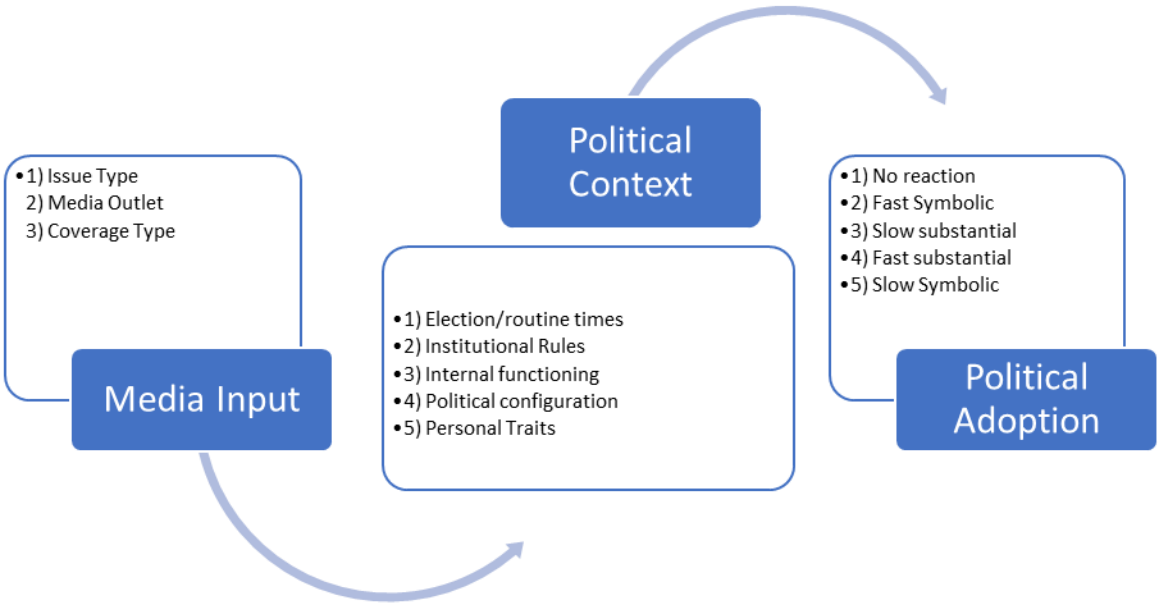

Figure 7 Adaptation of Walgrave and Van Aelst's Contingency Model of Political Agenda Setting by the Media

APPENDIX D: THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Figure 8. Decision Making Process Model

APPENDIX E: CONCEPTUALIZATION MAP OF BUREAUCRATIC RESPONSIVENESS

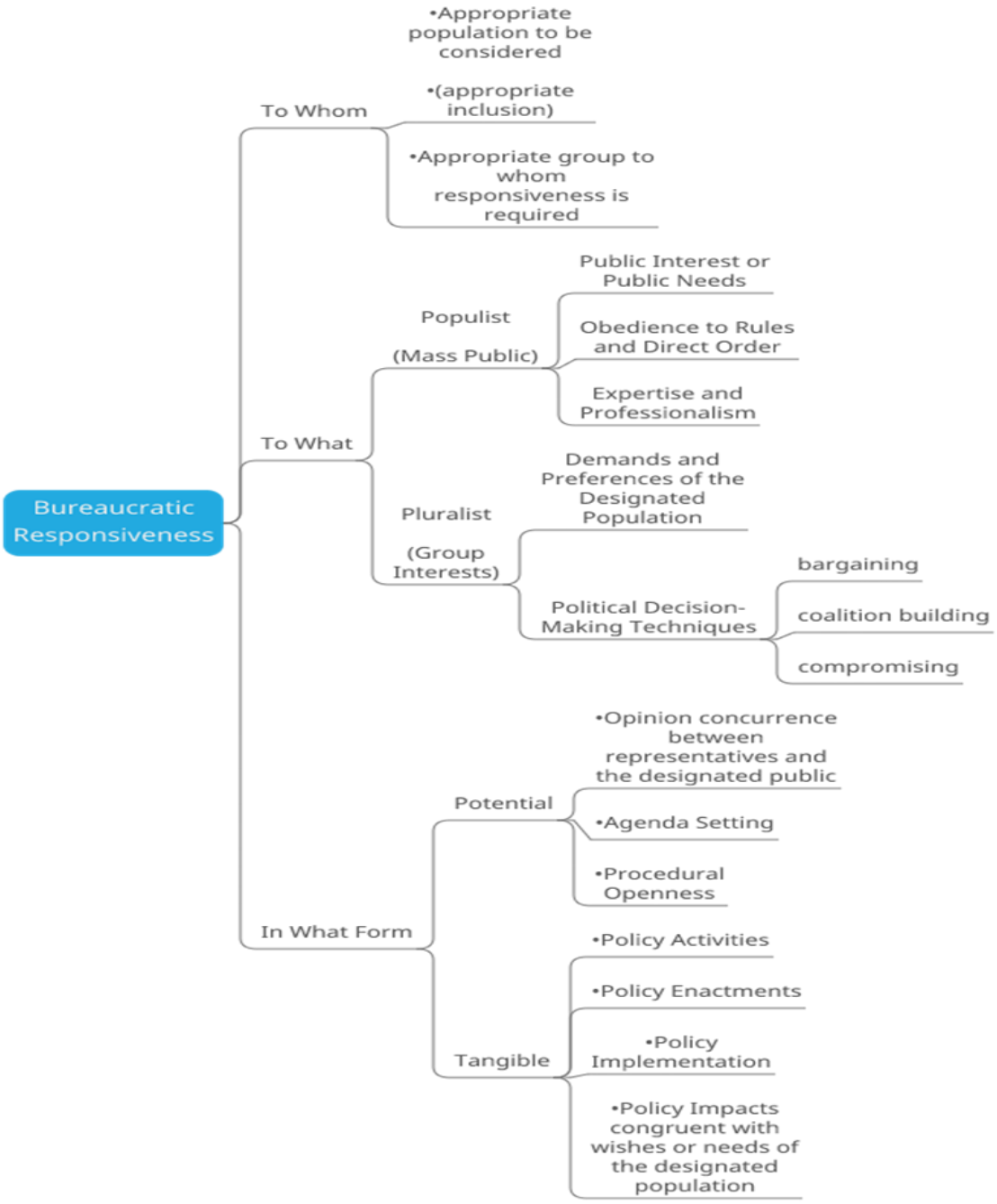

Figure 9. Conceptualization Map of Bureaucratic Responsiveness

APPENDIX F: EXCEL DATA SPREADSHEET

Date	Title	Source Type	Publication Name	Relevant	Tone 1	Decisionmaker Referenced	Tone 2	Code 1	Code 2	Quote	Thoughts/Ideas

Figure 10. Excel Data Spreadsheet

Spreadsheets were separated by State (Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina).

For the *Source Type* category, enter either: article, opinion-editorial, editorial, letter to the editor

For the *Relevant* category, enter either: yes or no (this is whether this article is relevant to the research questions posed); if no provide a reason as to why.

For the *Tone 1* category, enter either: + (positive), - (negative), or +/- (neutral) as to the overall tone of the article.

For the *Tone 2* category, enter either: + (positive), - (negative), or +/- (neutral) as to the overall tone of the article towards the decision-maker.

APPENDIX G: CODEBOOK

The coding is to be performed using Microsoft Excel. A separate spreadsheet is to be used for each state (Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi).

G-1. Step. 1: All articles except those listed below must be coded. Articles that ***must not*** be coded are:

a) Those articles which solely reference Confederate Flag license plates; Confederate Statues; Confederate monuments; or other memorabilia.
b) Those articles not relevant to the research questions posed.
c) Those articles which solely reference Confederate Flag discussions in states other than Alabama, South Carolina, or Mississippi.
d) Those articles from states other than Alabama, South Carolina, or Mississippi.

G-2. Step 2: Code the Type of Article

Article:	A piece written to convey news; a news story.
Editorial:	Piece written by an editor of a publication stating an opinion on an issue or matter.
Letter to the Editor:	Letter written by readers of a publication to its editor regarding a topic or issue of concern.
Opinion-Editorial (Op-Ed):	Written piece expressing the opinion of an author who is not a person on the paper's editorial board.

G-3. Step 3: Code Tone of Article

Enter either: + (positive), - (negative), or +/- (neutral) as to the overall tone of the article. This refers to whether the overall tone of the article is positive, negative or neutral towards the removal of the flag from state grounds. *Ask:* Does this article appear to support of or against the removal of the flag from state grounds? If the tone is unclear, select neutral.

G-4. Step 4: Code Tone of Article Towards the Decisionmaker

Record whether any decisionmaker mentioned in the text is described in a positive, negative, or neutral manner. Looking for overall tone towards the decisionmaker. *Ask:* Is this article considered good or bad news for the decisionmaker? If the tone is unclear, select neutral.

G-5. Step 5: Code the Source Type for Meaning

1) Look for major themes related to the research questions and record them.
2) Record verbatim quotations to illustrate the category chosen.

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