

V. M. NEWTON JR. AND THE GENESIS OF
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING OF FLORIDA GOVERNMENT

By

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE
COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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Prior to the January, 1949, inaugural of Florida Governor Fuller Warren, the focus of investigative reporting by Florida newspapers was locally-oriented, if undertaken at all. During a series of journalistic crusades by the Tampa Tribune news staff, directed by V. M. Newton Jr., the scope was broadened to include a fulltime investigative news bureau in Tallahassee. Newton sought performance as a journalistic watchdog on state government, "crusading" in the newspaper's style.

An evaluation of the journalistic impact of that decision was undertaken through tape-recorded interviews and correspondence with principals, examination of published manuscripts and private papers, and a review of Microfilmed newspapers.

The findings of this study indicate Florida journalism's sustained investigative reporting of state government activities began with Newton's establishment of the Tribune's Tallahassee "watchdog" bureau in 1949.